

International Development and Development Education: Challenging the Dominant Economic Paradigm?

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International Development and Development Education: Challenging the Dominant Economic Paradigm?

“The views expressed herein are those of the author and can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the Community Foundation”.

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Glossary

CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD)
DE	Development Education
DEAR	Development Education and Awareness Raising
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
G8	Group of Eight: an inter-governmental forum from 1997 until 2014 incorporating Russia into the Group of Seven, or G7 (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, United States). It returned to G7 after Russia was removed in 2014.
G20	Group of Twenty: an intergovernmental forum of 19 countries and the European Union (EU), includes the G8 countries and Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea and Turkey.
GCE	Global Citizenship Education
GVC	Global Value Chain
IFI	International Financial Institutions (incl. IMF and World Bank)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NGDO	Non-Governmental Development Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
UN	United Nations
WTO	World Trade Organisation

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Summary

1. This report is primarily concerned with the international development and development education sectors in the island of Ireland. It presents the findings of research into the sectors' attention to the current dominant economic system, i.e. neoliberalism/'free market' economics, and its influence on poverty, inequality and injustice. The report places the findings of the research in the context of the sectors' education work with the public. The research primarily draws on material available from the island of Ireland, with a particular focus on selected organisations, but includes references to information from elsewhere in Europe.
2. Underpinning the research are two assumptions, namely that:
 - for their work to have lasting impact, international development and development education efforts need to give attention to 'root causes' of poverty, inequality and injustice and involve the public in investigations of and responses to those causes;
 - and that to do so requires attention to structural-systemic (economic) processes and ideologies.
3. Research into literature produced by leading organisations and networks in the two sectors, and posted on their websites, is added to by the results of a survey questionnaire and of two seminars involving respondents from the sectors. The research findings give an indication of the generally limited work done within and by the sectors in respect of education work that explores root causes of poverty, inequality, and injustice and their relationship with global economics.
4. The report suggests that in order to address root causes of poverty, inequality and injustice, it is important to place specific cases into a broader, systemic context. In reviewing literature to do with systems thinking and its potential role in international development and development education, the report suggests that:
 - systems thinking encourages and requires a view of the world that recognises multiple relationships, complexity and dynamism;
 - thinking about systems gives an approach that assists in managing our understanding of the complexity of development;
 - creating "some modest [public] comprehension of key traits and mechanisms of the world system, with emphasis on theories and concepts that may increase intelligent consciousness of global change" (Hanvey 1976: 19) can support a sustained, lasting change based on understanding, including of personal relationships to and roles in that system.
5. In highlighting the systemic nature of the issues, the report makes use of an adaptation of the Development Compass Rose (Tide, 1995) which assists in highlighting the relationships between economics and social, natural-environmental and political affairs: drawing out how initiatives in one area affect phenomena in other systemic areas. The Development Compass Rose is used in the report to summarise and categorise issues emphasised by sampled policy analyses and to illustrate core characteristics of the current economic system.
6. Given the importance of economics in exploring the causes of poverty, inequality, injustice, the report gives particular attention to the currently dominant, global economic system of neoliberalism. Development of neoliberal/'free market' theory, policies and practices is summarised in the report, followed by descriptions of core characteristics of the economic system and its underpinning ideology. Amongst the characteristics highlighted are:
 - priority given to individual (personal and business) initiative in organising economic activities, without significant state direction on what those activities should or should not be;
 - state regulatory activities that are primarily concerned with ensuring a largely unfettered access by corporations to markets within and between countries;

- The influence of collective, civil society organisation on economic affairs, including about the distribution of gains from economic activity, is limited or actively discouraged;
 - An introduction of a profit model in public services through privatisation and public-private partnerships, e.g. in health, transport and education provision.
7. The report explores how the international development and development education sectors in their policy analyses and education practices relate to issues of poverty, inequality and injustice, and to the global economic system. In doing this, websites of the Irish agencies ActionAid, Children in Crossfire, Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide, Irish Aid, Oxfam, Plan, Trócaire, UNICEF, World Vision, Dóchas (the Irish network for international development and humanitarian organisations), and IDEA (the network for development education in Ireland) are reviewed. Reference is made, too, to information from the European Union, European Commission and CONCORD (the European confederation of relief and development NGOs).
8. From introductory webpages of the selected international development agencies it seems that issues to do with 'children', 'people' and 'poverty' come high on the agenda of the sector in Ireland. In terms of engaging the 'domestic' public in their issues, NGDO activities focus on fundraising, with advocacy-campaigning also mentioned by many. Reference to education is typically absent, and where it is mentioned, it is overwhelmingly concerned with work overseas and not related to the public in Ireland. In exploring policy analyses produced by the international development sector, the research finds that most of the selected international development organisations:
- either do not develop policy analyses that relate to their work;
 - or, if they do, these are not readily found on their websites;
 - or they do not make them publicly available.
9. Reviews of policy statements and analyses, where these are readily available, show that Irish Aid, European Union and European Commission highlight the issues they want to focus on but do not provide a significant, let alone comprehensive and systemic analysis of reasons for the existence of the issues. Amongst sampled NGDOs in Ireland, ActionAid, Oxfam and Trócaire (as well as Dóchas and CONCORD), however, have produced such policy analyses. These policy analyses typically make explicit reference to the effects of the currently dominant global economic system. The analyses find, for instance, that the results of current economic relations are such that they lead, amongst others, to:
- increasing income and wealth inequalities and growing poverty;
 - increased (social, economic and political) marginalisation of poorer communities;
 - public finance austerity measures reducing community and individual resilience and social protection;
 - industrial agricultural processes negatively affecting the natural environment.
10. Issues identified by the agency analyses are related to the core characteristics of neoliberalism. Comparison of the characteristics of the neoliberal system with the issues highlighted by policy analyses suggests a clear relationship between identified current issues of poverty, inequality, injustice and their cause in the global neoliberal system.
11. The report continues by exploring what is being done by the international development and development education organisations in their education work on the identified issues and their causes. Given the fundamental critique which Dóchas, ActionAid, Trócaire, Oxfam and CONCORD have of the current dominant global economic system, the expectation might be that significant outreach activities are carried out that involve the public in education efforts that aim to develop understanding, and explore and discuss options. However, ActionAid and Oxfam - as well as various other NGDOs - appear not to have dedicated education programmes that explore these issues, let alone ones that investigate the global economic system with their 'domestic' publics. An exception is Trócaire whose education work does relate to a number of the issues highlighted by their policy analysis.
12. Many of the selected NGDOs appear not to take part in the Dóchas working group focussed on development education, nor are they a member of IDEA, the Irish development education network.

The latter promotes as a benchmark for quality development education a 'Code of Good Practice for Development Education' which includes reference to the need for an educational practice that "[explores] the Root Causes of local and global injustices and inequalities in our interdependent world" (IDEA, n.d.).

13. Despite the existence of the Code, however, when looking into the projects and resources that have been produced by the development education sector in the previous decade, it is noticeable that little consideration seems to be given to systematic explorations of global economics or of root causes of poverty, inequality and injustice. The report draws on other research into this and related issues, quoting from such research that "Many resources [...] present simplistic analyses of issues ..." (Daly et al., 2017: 32).
14. The survey questionnaire, that assists in informing the research, collected responses of international development and development education practitioners in both the island of Ireland and elsewhere in Europe. Although questionnaire responses were limited and cannot be taken as representative of those involved in the sectors, they generally confirm findings from the literature and website investigations.
15. Overwhelmingly, questionnaire respondents are of the opinion that development of conceptual knowledge and systems awareness are highly important when discussing global development. They are also, by a large majority, of the opinion that neither the international development nor the development education sector give anywhere near adequate attention to explorations with the public of the economic causes of poverty, inequality and injustice and of responses, through education, to the global neoliberal system.
16. Two seminars (one involving participants from Ireland, the other mainly involving those from elsewhere in Europe) aimed to further explore the issues highlighted by the research. Participants suggested that amongst the reasons for the lack of attention to the issues highlighted by the research were:
 - a fear of loss of funding, given that discussion of the issues might be seen as controversial or going against established (government or other funder) policies;
 - a lack of confidence in either knowledge or skills to introduce or facilitate discussion about the issues;
 - a lack of political will amongst organisations to draw practical consequences from stated intentions regarding poverty, inequality and injustice, or regarding development education.
17. The research for this report had a limited scope by focussing on sampled information about the sectors. Although the findings are representative they do not comprehensively cover either sector. Part of the intention of the research and the report is that it leads to further considerations of the issues by both sectors. On the basis of the research outcomes, including through responses from those engaged in the sectors, it would be worthwhile to instigate a wider exploration of the issues, in particular through a broader and deeper engagement of the Dóchas and IDEA memberships, investigating what the consequences of the findings might or should be for their organisations and for their engagement with the 'domestic' public.

1 Introduction



(Quotations source: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>)

Purpose and scope

This report, produced for the Centre for Global Education and Financial Justice Ireland, is concerned with the attention given to the dominant global economic system by the Irish international development and development education sectors. It draws on research involving reviews of documents from both sectors, responses to a survey questionnaire and two seminars with participants involved with the sectors. Although the research is primarily concerned with information from the island of Ireland occasional reference is made, too, to sources from other parts of Europe.

More specifically the report aims to provide a reflection on the extent to which:

- governmental and other international development sector policy documents and
- development education sector intentions and activities consider and incorporate a critical analysis of the currently dominant form of economics, i.e. neoliberalism, in their education work with the public.

In addition, the report reflects on:

- what may help or hinder these sectors in giving attention to global economic systems in their education work with the public.

Research for this report is based on the assumptions that:

- in order to effectively contribute to sustained change that addresses and aims to overcome poverty, inequality and injustice, the international development sector needs to give public attention to the global processes and structures that cause, exacerbate or maintain poverty, inequality, injustice;

- in order for development education interventions to make a meaningful contribution to such a sustained change, they need to incorporate economic systems perspectives in their activities.

In other words, the assumptions are that * international development and development education agencies need to give attention to ‘root causes’ of poverty, inequality and injustice and involve the public in investigations of and responses to those causes, if their work is to have a lasting impact, and that * to do so requires attention to structural-systemic economic processes and ideologies.

Over the years a number of international development and development education articles have given attention to the (potential) role of the sectors in considering global economics (for example, Bryan, 2011; McCloskey, 2020; Gyoh, 2018). However, such articles appear to be largely discussions of the issues rather than an investigation into how they manifest themselves. Since there seems to be a lack of evidence on the extent to which the issues of global economic systems are discussed in international development and development education reports – and how they are used by the sectors in their ‘constituency education’ (Lissner, 1977: 133-202¹) – it is hoped that this report starts to fill a gap that will be filled in further through more detailed research and attention by the international development and development education sectors.

The report, then, is not based on an exhaustive investigation into the issue: written information referred to is sourced from easily and publicly available documentation from selected Irish and EU governmental and non-governmental websites, i.e. ActionAid, Children in Crossfire, Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide, CONCORD, Dóchas, European Union, IDEA, Irish Aid, Oxfam, Plan International, Trócaire, UNICEF, World Vision. The agencies were selected on the basis of their international recognition and suggestions from the clients of this research. Conclusions drawn are not necessarily valid for all those involved in the respective sectors. The selection does, however, reflect work done within and by the sectors.

The ‘international development sector’ is interpreted here as involving those governmental and non-governmental initiatives and interventions that, for instance:

- “advance human rights, and combat poverty and hunger [...] essential to building a secure, stable world where people can live in dignity and without fear” (Irish Aid, n.d. A: 1);
- “strengthen learning, influence and collective action [of non-governmental development organisations, towards] a world without poverty in which everyone has the right to live in dignity” (Dóchas, 2021);
- involve “the reduction and, in the long term, the eradication of poverty” (European Union, 2017: 6);
- “promote sustainable economic, social and human development, addressing the root causes of poverty” (CONCORD: <https://concordeurope.org/about-us/>, accessed 28 February 2022).

The report sees the ‘development education sector’ as involving government and civil society communication and education activities that stimulate public awareness and understanding of, skills for, and responses to global development issues, particularly in respect of local and global issues of poverty, inequality and injustice.² This involves, for instance:

- “a lifelong learning process [helping] people to critically explore how global justice issues interlink with their everyday lives and how they can act to build a better world [...] in an increasingly globalised world with immense challenges, such as [...] entrenched poverty and growing inequality ...” (Irish Aid, n.d. B: 4);
- enabling “people to understand the world around them and to act to transform it. [Working] to tackle the root causes of injustice and inequality, globally and locally to create a more just and sustainable future for everyone” (IDEA: <https://www.ideaonline.ie/about-IDEA>, accessed 27 January 2022);
- “EU citizens, in particular youth, are empowered and actively engaged in promoting sustainable development, including addressing global challenges (notably global inequalities and ecological crises)” (European Commission, 2021: 15).

1 I.e. the information, education, campaigning, action opportunities that NGOs provide to and for their supporters, participants and the public about the issues that are of concern to those organisations. Although examples given by Lissner may sometimes be out of date, the basic approaches to development education (what Lissner calls ‘global awareness versus conscientisation’) are still very pertinent.

2 ‘Development education’ is used since this is the common term in Ireland to describe such activities, including until recently by Irish Aid. Irish Aid in its latest relevant strategy is using the term ‘global citizenship education’ (Irish Aid, n.d. B).

The interpretation of development education that is applied in this report, is concerned with both the process and the content of education, i.e. the active involvement of people in a learning and action process that enquires into, reflects on, discusses and responds to local and global development issues (Ishii, 2003 [quoting FAO & JUNIC, 1975]; McCloskey, 2014; Fricke et al., 2015; Bourn, 2015; IDEA, n.d.). However, attention to pedagogical or communications strategies that are inherent to quality development education is largely absent. Instead the focus is on how issues of poverty, inequality, and injustice can be viewed and clarified through systems thinking about neoliberalism.

Methodology

The process in developing the report was based on:

- A scan of selected international development and development education websites, primarily from Irish sources. From the list of Dóchas members nine agencies were selected for particular review (ActionAid, Children in Crossfire, Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide, Oxfam, Plan, Trócaire, UNICEF and World Vision). In addition, Irish Aid, IDEA, European Commission and CONCORD sites were drawn on. The websites were scanned in the period from end of January to mid-March 2022 (see the References section for details);
- Literature review, involving publications relevant to the research and documents sourced from the referred to websites;
- A questionnaire circulated to approximately 170 recipients including, in Ireland, to members of the Dóchas development education working group, NGDO contacts, and members of IDEA, and, elsewhere in Europe, to contacts with those previously involved in EU supported Development Education and Awareness Raising programmes and projects;
- Two seminars involving 22 participants discussing findings of the research and the challenges and opportunities for increasing attention to economic systems thinking in international development and development education sector education work.

Content overview

The following two sections provide a context for the findings and discussions reported in the later sections. Section 2 discusses the relevance of 'systems thinking' in investigating economic processes and root causes. It suggests that an adapted 'Development Compass Rose' (Tide, 1995) can be a useful tool in exploring, categorising and systemising different economic, social, political and natural-environmental phenomena. Section 3 explores the main characteristics of neoliberal, 'free market' processes and how its economic policy recommendations and practices drive, or at least relate to social, decision-making and natural-environmental processes.

Section 4 summarises the set-up and main responses to the questionnaire.

Section 5 then turns to the international development and development education sectors: investigating the core concerns of sampled agencies and outlining the main intentions of what is seen, in Ireland, as good practice in development education.

Section 6 provides an overview and summary of the policy analyses that have been produced by some of the international development agencies: describing their main findings and conclusions regarding agriculture, inequality, IMF policies and austerity measures.

In section 7 the attention is focussed on the development education sector and how it relates to the issues highlighted by the documents reviewed in the previous section.

Drawing on ideas and discussions in the two seminars, section 8 explores key challenges and opportunities for the two sectors in giving attention to global economics and its systemic processes.

Section 9 provides a conclusion to the report and makes a number of suggestions for work that, it is hoped, can build on this research.

An Appendix gives details of the questionnaire and the responses received.

2 Systems Thinking to Explore Economic Processes and 'Root Causes'

- In exploring economic processes and 'root causes' of poverty, inequality or injustice, how can systems thinking assist?

Understanding economic processes and addressing 'root causes' of poverty, inequality or injustice, requires an ability to place specific cases in a broader context.

Earlier development theories and practices (e.g. those focussed on 'modernisation' during the 1960s and 70s) may have seen development as involving 'introducing A which will automatically lead to outcome B' (Leeson, 1988; Harriss, 2019; Polanyi Levitt, 2022)³. However, in supporting, creating, promoting or understanding 'development', the world appears to be more complex and dynamic than that and requires thinking through questions like 'what influences the doing and reception of A? what might hinder B being achieved? how does C influence the process between A and B?'⁴ By answering those questions 'development' is seen as involving a process in a structure that depends on dynamic relationships between different parts and events (Ramalingam, 2013; Green, 2016).

Rather than identifying causal, mechanistic, relationships only (e.g. between A and B), systems thinking allows development phenomena or problems to be placed within a broader context, helping to increase the depth of explanations for the existence of the phenomena and the variety of possible interventions that may assist in addressing the problems. Thinking about systems - i.e. "a set of things working together as parts of a mechanism or an interconnecting network; a complex whole"; "a set of principles or procedures according to which something is done; an organized scheme or method" (Social Innovation Academy, n.d.) - gives an approach that assists in managing our understanding of the complexity of development, in addition allowing for an exploration of questions such as "What will happen if we make decision A as opposed to decision B?" (Hanvey, 1976: 20); the choice that is made will have consequences for other parts of the system.

Systems thinking enables the asking of a different set of questions about development, poverty, inequality, injustice or (economic) processes by, for example:

- Viewing phenomena and events not in isolation but as systemically (and dynamically) interconnected;
- Viewing the whole as more than the sum of its parts, that "parts are [...] abstractions, the nature and workings of which cannot be understood save in their relationship with the entire system" (Pike and Selby, 1988: 29);
- Not assuming that change involves a simple cause and effect relationship, but in its place seeing change as non-linear (Ramalingam, 2013: 141-142);
- Being able to identify or highlight likely different experiences or perspectives to do with an issue depending on where in the system someone is located;
- Not assuming that in resolving a specific individual issue the underlying, systemic cause of the issue will be addressed.

Systems thinking encourages and requires a view of the world that recognises multiple relationships, complexity and dynamism (Anderson and Johnson, 1997). Ignoring those aspects can lead to "simplistic analyses [which has] led researchers, practitioners and policymakers to lose sight of what was actually happening [and justifying] the adoption of standardized blueprints, [...] often to the advantage of certain groups, and to the detriment of overall outcomes" (Ramalingam, 2013: 357). However, "The systems view in itself [...] does not guarantee that hidden or subtle factors will automatically be revealed. For that we must turn to a variety of independent inquiries which have attempted to isolate and measure such factors" (Hanvey, 1976: 20). Nevertheless, "however much we may have to compartmentalise for practical purposes, everything, in the final analysis, is woven into a multi-layered, multi-dimensional web of interactions" (Pike and Selby, 1988: 27).

3 A way of thinking and operating that is reflected in, for example, traditional logical framework analysis (Chambers and Pettitt, n.d.).

4 'Theory of Change' approaches to planning and implementing are more akin to this way of thinking and operating (Vogel, 2012).

Illustrating how the world can be understood as both one and as a series of relationships and interrelated systems may be shown through an adaptation of the 'Development Compass Rose' (Tide, 1995). The usual cardinal points of the compass (North, South, East, West) are replaced by Nature, Society, Economy and Who decides? (i.e. politics). The resulting 'compass' enables investigation of a locality, of an issue, or of a process: raising questions or identifying features that relate to, for example, social organisation and culture (S), production and trade (E), decision making and power (W) and the natural environment (N).

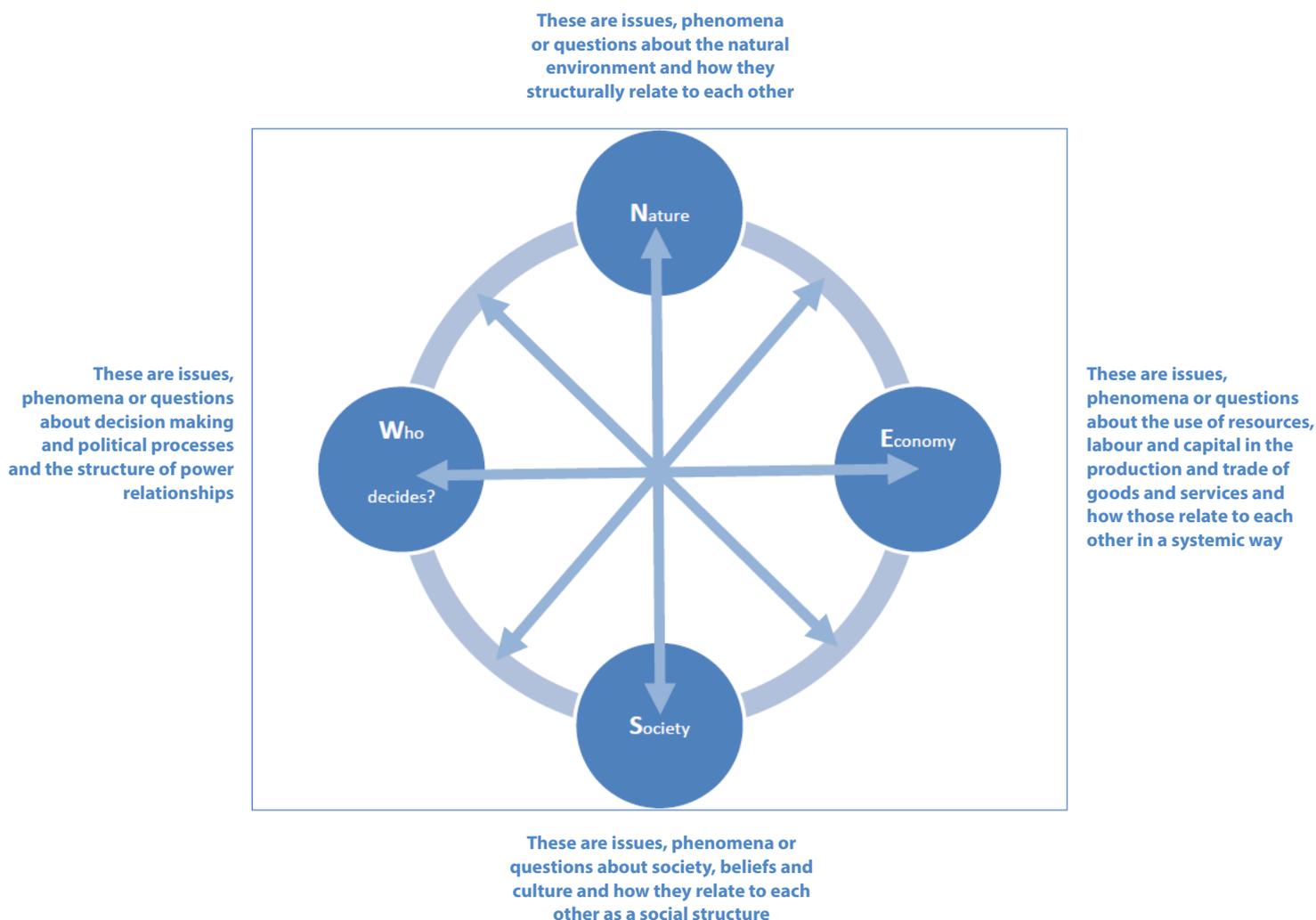


Fig. 1. Exploring systems through a Development Compass Rose approach (adapted from Tide, 1995)

In between the four main cardinal points the compass provides an opportunity to explore the relationship between, for example, the impact of economic activity and systems on the natural environment (NE), the decision making process that enables or prevents protection of the natural environment (NW), the way in which people are organising themselves to create change (SW), or the accessibility or not of economic activity to particular groups in society (SE). Similar relationships exist between Natural and Societal systems, e.g. the attitudes that people in a locality have towards their natural environment, and between Economic and Who decides? political systems, for instance, about decisions to do with the division of benefits from economic activities.

Enquiry into issues or localities can take place at a variety of (interconnected) geographical scales, by relating locally observed systems (for instance, to do with access to food in Dublin⁵) to those that operate at a national level (e.g. Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027⁶), at an international level (for instance the European Union's

5 For example, following up on issues highlighted by <https://www.dublinlive.ie/news/dublin-news/nearly-quarter-stressed-guilty-dublin-23180094>

6 For instance, <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/76026-common-agricultural-policy-cap-post-2020/> and https://environmentalpillar.ie/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/EnvironmentalPillar_SWAN_SCC_Agricultural_Food_Policy.pdf

Common Agricultural Policy⁷), or at a global scale (e.g. the operation of the global food system⁸). In addition, the compass can also be used to investigate how such systems operated historically and how that influences the current dynamics and processes.

Using the Development Compass Rose provides an approach that enables a focus on the relationship between sometimes seemingly disparate situations or phenomena, drawing attention to the interconnected and circular nature of the world and the role of structures that influence or determine a particular situation. Using the compass in this way as an aid to systems thinking can assist in observing specific events or situations and through that identifying the underlying structures that drive those events and patterns. Understanding (or at least trying to understand) structures that promote or maintain poverty, inequality or injustice, gives a chance to identify options in creating short-term as well as long-term solutions to such persistent problems.

As far as issues of poverty and economic processes are concerned, and of the issues that underpin, drive or are a result of it, systems thinking would appear to be a key tool, particularly in discussing and analysing 'root causes'. Hence, in aiming to create sustained, lasting change, based on an understanding of those root causes, attention to global systems thinking is a significant requirement for the international development sector (e.g. see Ramalingam, 2013; Veltmeyer and Bowles, 2022: part IV).

In development education, attention to creating "some modest [public] comprehension of key traits and mechanisms of the world system, with emphasis on theories and concepts that may increase intelligent consciousness of global change" (Hanvey, 1976: 19) can support such a sustained, lasting, change based on understanding, including of personal relationships to and roles in that system. A large majority of survey respondents would concur with these opinions by finding that "conceptual knowledge and systems awareness when discussing global development" is (extremely) important.

7 See for example: https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/new-cap-2023-27_en and <https://europeanstudiesreview.com/2021/07/30/eus-common-agricultural-policy-explained/>

8 For instance, <https://www.fao.org/food-systems/en/> and <https://www.metabolic.nl/about/#about>

3 Neoliberalism/'Free Market' Economics: The Dominant Economic System

- What are the characteristics of the current dominant global economic system?

Searching for internet and literature references to the term 'neoliberalism' will give an indication that it is a contested concept with multiple meanings (Williamson, 2002; Eagleton-Pierce, 2016; Rowden, 2016; Harvey, 2019; Babb and Kentikelenis, 2021). For some writers its definitions have become so multivarious as to be unhelpful in explaining global economics, for others the term is pejorative with adherents preferring to use 'free market' terminologies, for again others policies ascribed as being neoliberal are disowned as such by their authors. However, for others, including for the majority of questionnaire respondents and seminar participants, the term 'neoliberalism' helps in conceptualising the currently dominant global economic system. Despite differences in the interpretation and types of neoliberalism (see, for example, Dobre, 2019) it is possible to identify a number of core characteristics that can assist in clarifying the concept and its relationship with phenomena of poverty, inequality and injustice.

One way of starting such an identification is by quoting from an article written by Milton Friedman and published in 1951. In this he pointed out what he felt were:

- errors of what he called "the faith" in and operation of post-war economic "collectivism" and the role of the state in influencing or directing the development of the economy; and
- errors of 19th century individualist philosophy based on *laissez-faire* with "almost no role to the state beyond maintenance of order and the enforcements of contracts" (Friedman, 1951).

Friedman proposed "A new faith [that] must avoid both errors. It must give high place to a severe limitation of the power of the state to interfere in the detailed activities of individuals; at the same time, it must explicitly recognize that there are important positive functions that must be performed by the state". For Friedman, key characteristics of "the doctrine sometimes called neo-liberalism" were:

- "the fundamental importance of the individual";
- "the goal of competitive order", meaning a role for the state in:
 - > "[establishing] conditions favorable to competition";
 - > "[preventing] monopoly";
 - > "[providing] a stable monetary framework";
 - > "[relieving] acute misery and distress";
- "the [protection of] citizens [...] against the state by the existence of a free private market; and against one another by the preservation of competition" (Friedman, 1951).

In opposition to what he argued was the dominant thinking and practice supportive of 'collectivism' and the state's influence on the direction of the economy, Friedman advocated the initiative and enterprise of private individuals and their ability to freely trade between each other, including across borders (Clarke, 2005: 1)¹⁰. Friedman suggested that although suggestions along the lines he proposed were, in 1951, starting to be thought about, it might take "some twenty years or more [...] between a change in the underlying current of opinion [in society] and the resultant alteration in public policy".

It took indeed another 20 or so years before measures relating to Friedman's 'new faith' were included in the economic policies of a country, namely Chile after a military coup in 1973 against the elected government of Salvador Allende. Influenced by economists brought up in the 'Chicago school of economics' (Dorn, 1997), of which Friedman was a leading scholar, the policies in Chile after the coup, amongst others forcibly 'liberated' the labour market from regulatory controls, abolished collective organisations that might interfere with economic policies

9 "There is justification for subsidizing people because they are poor [...] There is no justification for subsidizing farmers as farmers rather than because they are poor" (Friedman, 1951).

10 For 'individual' also read 'company' or 'enterprise' since a company is considered to be 'legal person' who "enjoys as much as the same rights and is subject to as much as the same duties as a natural person". For 'private individuals' one can therefore also read 'private companies'. <https://www.lawteacher.net/free-law-essays/business-law/company-is-a-legal-person-business-law-essay.php>

(such as trade unions), privatised or closed communal, state or para-statal services (including many community health centres), and abolished import and export controls across most economic activities (Eagleton-Pierce, 2016: 168; Harvey, 2019: 12).

The Chilean 'experiment' was built on during the 1980s by UK and US governments as a response to high levels of inflation and stagnation in capital accumulation, employment and economic growth. For advocates of Friedman's 'new faith', including the UK government of Margaret Thatcher (1979-1990) and the US government of Ronald Reagan (1981-1989), the economic situations their countries found themselves in was a consequence of the collectivist post World War II approach to "Redistributive policies, controls on the free mobility of capital, public expenditures and welfare state building ..." (Harvey, 2019: 14). Policies of these early adopters of the 'new faith' involved the abolition of rules that might prevent individuals and companies from implementing their economic initiative, the reduction or abolition of a socially collective role in the economic process of trade unions and other CSOs, and the privatisation of state or community owned businesses (such as water and electricity supply, transport provision, health services).¹¹

In relation to the 'development' of 'underdeveloped' or 'developing' countries, arguments in favour of neoliberalism and in opposition to state interference in economic affairs were frequently voiced during the 1970s and 80s, including by economists and politicians. However, for the neoliberal approach to become globally dominant, the debt crises of the 1980s and 90s provided an important impetus. After the 1970s oil crisis and subsequent increases in petroleum export revenues by oil exporting countries, the international banking system recycled many of those revenues (in dollars) as economic development loans to, amongst others, low and middle income countries. Anticipated economic growth in those countries, which was meant to pay for the interest and eventually pay back the loans, however, did not materialise. When dollar interest rates were increased in the early 1980s many countries could no longer pay the interest that was due, starting with Mexico in 1982 (Eagleton-Pierce, 2016: 72; Harvey, 2019: 20-25; Babb and Kentikelenis, 2021: 5).

To address the (debt) crises that affected many of their countries, various Latin American economists and policy makers suggested a number of national policy adjustments. A number of these built on policy reforms introduced by the Thatcher and Reagan governments by reducing the role of the state, e.g. in the provision of subsidies to import-substituting enterprises or in the agricultural sector (Eagleton-Pierce, 2016: 42-43). The 'Latin American Adjustment: how much has happened?' publication of 1990 brought these suggestions together. The book's editor, economist John Williamson, contributed an article that focussed on describing those suggestions that appeared to have gained support from, amongst others, the IMF, World Bank and the US Treasury (all based in Washington DC). Williamson described ten policy areas where these agencies felt reform was beneficial, assuming that the inclination to apply them would be determined by "the standard economic objectives of growth, low inflation, a viable balance of payments, and an equitable income distribution" (Williamson, 1990).

Together the ten policy instruments became known as the 'Washington Consensus', arguably becoming the main vehicle for neoliberalism in the IMF, World Bank and (later) the WTO (Harvey, 2019: 32-34; Babb and Kentikelenis, 2021, also see <https://www.piie.com/commentary/speeches-papers/did-washington-consensus-fail>).

"For supporters, the Washington Consensus was shorthand for the list of reforms [...] that were necessary to overcome debt problems and unlock the development potential of low- and middle-income countries. For opponents, the term was used to describe the scourge of radical market-oriented reforms that trapped countries in conditions of dependency and underdevelopment [...] For friends and foes alike, the Washington Consensus was associated with a fundamental, unprecedented, and large-scale reorientation of developing-country policies" (Babb and Kentikelenis, 2021: 2).

As a condition for support in addressing the debt crisis, the international financial institutions (IFIs) of the World Bank and the IMF made the principles of the Consensus a corner stone of their work, not only across Latin America, but also in Africa, Asia and, after 1989, in Eastern European states. 'Market liberalisation' became the ethos of the IFIs: loans to countries became conditional on the successful implementation of 'structural adjustment programmes' (Eagleton-Pierce, 2016: 42-44; Goldin, 2016: 29-36; Harvey 2019: 29-34; Babb and Kentikelenis, 2021:

11 Another form of collectivism, however, was given greater say, namely that of shareholders and business managers. On this see, for example, Harvey, 2019: 9-68.

6-8). The argument was that “Reforms might impose short-term pain, but in the long term, reformers would achieve sustained growth and development” (Babb and Kentikelenis, 2021: 8). That the argument appeared to be convincing to policy makers of countries that suffered the pain was significantly due to both IFI staff and many of the affected country’s policy makers having been educated in, typically, US and UK universities where economics was in alignment with or based on the neoliberal concept as advocated by Friedman since the 1950s (Babb and Kentikelenis, 2021: 8-9; ActionAid et al., 2021: 7, 16).

Policy area	Prescriptions
<i>Fiscal policy</i>	Fiscal discipline: avoid large government budget deficits (no more than 1-2% of GNP)
<i>Public spending</i>	Reduce expenditure on indiscriminate subsidies; target spending on health, education and (to some extent) infrastructure
<i>Taxation</i>	Tax base should be broad and marginal tax rates should be moderate
<i>Interest rates</i>	Should be determined by the market (rather than public authorities), and positive
<i>Exchange rates</i>	Should be determined by the market (rather than public authorities), and competitive (to foster export-oriented economies)
<i>Trade policy</i>	Remove restrictions on foreign imports
<i>Foreign direct investment</i>	Remove restrictions on foreign direct investment
<i>Privatization</i>	Sell state-owned enterprises to private firms
<i>Deregulation</i>	Remove excessive regulations on economic activity
<i>Property rights</i>	Property rights should be secure

Table 1. *The Washington Consensus policy reform list*
(source: Babb and Kentikelenis, 2021, adapted from Williamson, 1990)

The result of the structural adjustment, market liberalisation policies, however, was far from positive. For example, “By 1995 [...] thirty-seven sub-Saharan countries had received structural adjustment loans. GNI [gross national income] per capita in the region fell by 27 per cent from \$668 in 1980, when the first programmes were put in place, to \$482 when they were abandoned in 2002” (Goldin, 2016: 34). Reforms typically led to increased unemployment and costs of living, and to increasing poverty. They were often accompanied by hunger and riots, and where growth did occur any benefits tended to accrue to a small segment of society - both in ‘developing’ countries and in the countries that were driving neoliberal policies globally (Eagleton-Pierce, 2016: 43-44).

Since around the turn of this century, the response to the results of the 1990s market doctrine has, initially, been a move away from a rigid fundamentalist approach to the inclusion of broader development aims. A ‘move away’ but not an ‘abolition’: the role of a ‘free’ private market outside state controls, with business largely able to invest, produce and trade as it sees fit, remained in place, as did other efforts to reduce the role of the state in directing social-economic affairs. However, in addition to fiscal, trade and ‘good governance’ policies, there was a somewhat greater recognition of the need for the state to give attention to stimulating investment in issues such as education, health and other social and physical infrastructure, typically through ‘public private partnerships’. Design of the Millennium Development Goals and, later, the Sustainable Development Goals can be seen as an example of this (Eagleton-Pierce, 2016: 44-45; Goldin, 2016: 34-36).

Not all countries were interested in following the IFI’s advice, at least not regarding fiscal discipline. Amongst the abstainers China was by far the most significant. The country’s initially slow (1978 onwards) and then rapid (since c. 1998) opening up to global economic relationships and its internal economic transformation was very much based on a “mix of Keynesian deficit-financing of infrastructural projects [...] and a more free-wheeling neo-liberalism of privatization” (Harvey, 2019: 40).

The opening up of China, together with reductions globally in import, export and investment controls (affecting food, industrial and trade systems) has, since the 1990s, contributed to a new wave of economic globalisation. In economic terms that wave is well-illustrated through the operation of 'global value chains': a production process across multiple countries, with individual firms not producing the whole product but specialising in a specific task.¹² At least half of the world's trade now involves global value chains - as compared with 1970 when it was around 35 per cent (World Bank, 2020: 19). It typically involves multi-national corporations who have contracted a firm in a particular country to produce a particular component and/or who have invested in setting up a firm in a particular country to produce a component: making use of the 'comparative advantage' that particular countries have - be it in raw materials, cheap labour, technical expertise, research, or consumer power.¹³

The financial crisis of 2008, the COVID-19 pandemic (2020 - ongoing) and, most recently, increasing inflation are questioning the value and sustainability of the global value chains advocated by the World Bank and the neoliberal/free market ideology of the IFIs and many governments. The consequences of these events have shown:

- an increasing worldwide and in-country (income and wealth) inequality and related social, political and environmental inequalities (Chancel et al., 2022: 13 and Chapter 2; McCloskey, 2020A);
- an increase in questioning of the efficacy of reliance on worldwide trade, particularly where basic goods (such as food) are concerned¹⁴;
- cost of living crises affecting the economically poorer parts of societies in both the global North and the global South.¹⁵

Over the decades, neoliberalism has gone through a number of adjustments. Ignoring different orientations (see for instance Dobre, 2019) and at the risk of over-simplification, a number of core trends can be identified:

Neoliberal approaches	Characteristics	Consequences (partly drawing on findings in section 6)
1 The 'new faith' (Origin: 1950s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of: • Private enterprise; • Trade liberalisation (in and between countries); • Financial discipline of governments: 'living within one's means' and therefore limiting debts; • The state's role in ensuring the above; • Restriction/abolition of social organisation in the economic process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Its growth as the dominant 'modern economics' philosophy in university courses since the late 1950s/early 1960s; • A reinforcement of the belief in 'modernisation' based on infinite economic growth.
2 Early adopters (Chile, US, UK) (Origin: 1970s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privatisation of public and state enterprises such as public transport and health care; • Free mobility of capital between sectors and countries; • Restrictions on the organisation of labour and other social solidarity organisations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rising inequality; • The (re-)establishment or reinforcement of a business class with direct influence on the state's policy making; • Reduced investment in public sector activities.

12 Unlike in 'traditional' trade in which e.g. developing countries produce raw materials that are exported, either as raw materials or in a semi-processed form, to an industrialised country for further processing and/or selling to consumers. Global value chains instead involve multiple transactions across different countries.

13 (1) Data on global trade and in particular of global value chains are notoriously inaccurate and in conflict with each other. Other internet sources, e.g. OECD and WTO, give figures of 70 or even 80% as the value of GVCs in the global trade.

(2) The banking crises of 2008 and their after effects, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic are likely to have seen a (possibly significant) reduction in the trade in global value chains which may lead to a permanent retraction: bringing production processes closer together in one or a few countries (see World Bank, 2020).

14 E.g. see <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/apr/21/globalisation-supply-chain-crisis-COVID-vaccines-self-sufficiency>

15 For example, see <https://www.thejournal.ie/ireland-inflation-5706700-Mar2022/> and <https://inews.co.uk/news/world/cost-of-living-countries-how-dealing-with-crisis-energy-price-cap-cheap-bread-1549648> (accessed 18.5.22).

Neoliberal approaches	Characteristics	Consequences (partly drawing on findings in section 6)
3 The Washington Consensus/ structural adjustment (Origin: late 1980s - early 1990s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of the above characteristics in indebted countries (and Eastern Europe); • Austerity packages including social security and public sector wage bill reductions; • Wage restraint for public private sector workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced growth; • Increasing power inequalities: with primacy increasingly given to multi-national companies and investment firms; • Economic and social dislocation as a result of: increasing unemployment, poverty and inequality; • Profits from economic activity accruing to a small group of beneficiaries.
4 Integrated globalisation (Origin: late 1990s - early 2000s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural integration of the above at a global level, exemplified through 'global value chains'; • Public-private partnerships for e.g. infrastructural projects (such as in health care, public transport); • A (partial) increase in state attention to its role in ensuring e.g. education and health provision, environmental protection (e.g. in response to the Climate Crisis). However, the 2008 economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic (re-)prioritised austerity policies in many countries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public-private partnerships, often leading to 'profits for the private sector, losses for the public sector'; • Increasing income, wealth and social inequality in both (post-) industrial and 'developing' countries.

Table 2. A tentative characterisation of neoliberal 'generations'

Given that 'modernising' the economies of countries to stimulate economic growth is seen as a key purpose of neoliberalism (Williamson, 1990; Eagleton-Pierce, 2016: 97-102), what has been the result on economic growth?

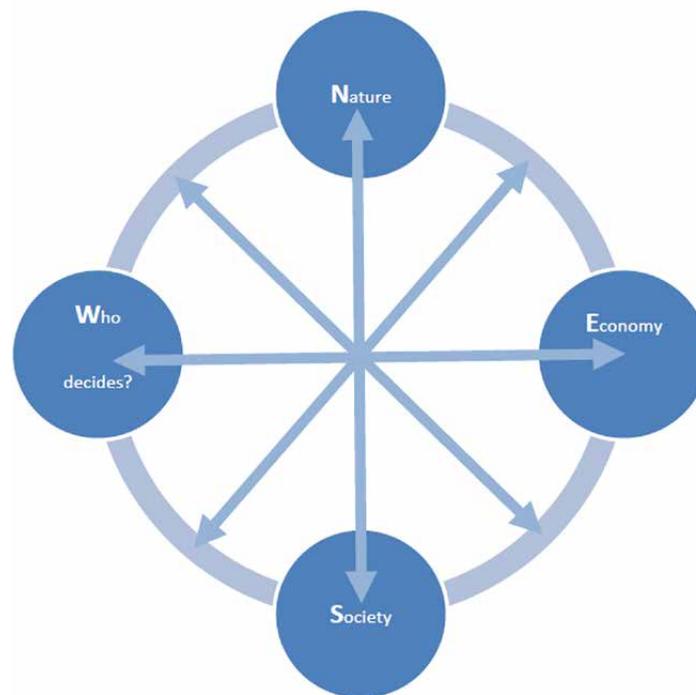
- From 1913 to 2012, average per capita world output growth was 1.6 per cent per year, with greatest growth taking place in Asia (2.0 per cent);
- **From 1950 to 1970**, i.e. largely the period in which state supported and enabled 'collectivism' was in vogue, both in newly independent and in industrialised countries, **per capita world output grew by 2.8 per cent per year**, with the greatest growth taking place in Europe (3.8 per cent);
- **From 1970 to 1990**, i.e. during the initial introduction of neoliberal reforms, **per capita world output grew by 1.3 per cent per year**, with the greatest growth taking place in Asia: 3.1 per cent;
- **From 1990 to 2012**, i.e. during the period of structural adjustment and increased globalisation, **per capita world output grew by 2.1 percent per year**, significantly due to economic growth in Asia of 3.8 percent (primarily owing to China, which followed a mix of Keynesian and neoliberal policies).
- **From 2008 to 2021**, i.e. following the financial crisis of 2008 and its subsequent austerity measures, and the COVID-19 pandemic starting in 2020, **per capita world output grew by 1.1 percent per year**, with reductions in per capita world output in some years (2009, 2021).

Sources: Piketty, 2014: 94 (1913-2012), and <http://wdi.worldbank.org/tables> (2008-2021)

To summarise: putting the key characteristics of the neoliberal system outlined above in an adapted Development Compass Rose gives a picture along the lines shown in Figure 2.

- The natural environment is seen as a (free and largely unlimited) resource.
- Many publicly owned 'commons' are privatised.

- Private enterprise decides on use and allocation of resources, labour and capital in a country and across the globe.
- The state's role is primarily limited to enabling (unrestricted) imports and exports, and (foreign) investments, and to ensuring 'fiscal discipline' with low and often regressive taxation.
- Decisions on taxation and policies favour the economically powerful rather than the social and environmental stakeholders in society.



- Individual initiative and 'drive' as means to stimulate and achieve economic growth.
- Economic development dependent on investor priorities.
- Collective and public service provision, e.g. in health, transport and education, is privatised.
- 'Open' borders for imports and exports; global value chains exemplify successful economic globalisation and interdependence.

- Civil society organisation (e.g. through trade unions and NGOs) is limited, ignored, discouraged or actively made impossible.
- Privatisation of public services to do with e.g. health, transport, education.
- Social (and economic) inequalities are addressed through 'equality of opportunity' rather than through 'equal opportunities'.
- The role of the individual rather than the collective is highlighted, for instance: "There is no such thing [as society]! There are individual men and women and there are families [...] and people look to themselves first." (UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, 1987: 'Women's Own' magazine quoted at <https://newlearningonline.com/new-learning/chapter-4/margaret-thatcher-theres-no-such-thing-as-society>)

Fig. 2. A Development Compass Rose of example characteristics of the neoliberal economic system

4 Questionnaire Responses

- How do questionnaire respondents experience the issues of this research?

During the review of websites and related documents, a questionnaire was circulated that aimed to get ideas on how those involved in the international development and development education sectors experienced and viewed the issues of the research. This section highlights the set-up and main findings while further sections in this report draw attention to particular aspects of the questionnaire. (Details of the questions and answers can be found in the Appendix).

Potential survey respondents included members of the Dóchas Development Education Working Group, other contacts in Irish NGOs, the membership of IDEA and contacts with development education/GCE/Global Learning practitioners and academics elsewhere in Europe. This led to approximately 170 contacts via email. In addition, the Centre for Global Education and Financial Justice Ireland each posted information about the survey via their social media accounts.

In total 29 responses were received. Just over half of the respondents were based in the island of Ireland, with the remainder based elsewhere in Europe or (in the case of one respondent) in Africa. Although the responses cannot be taken as representative of the two sectors they nevertheless provide a valuable sample of experiences and opinions, giving an insight into how the issues are perceived.

The majority of respondents were involved in education, life-long learning or other communications work - either as an employee in an NGO, as a freelance consultant, or as a government/government agency employee.

Approximately one-quarter of respondents were employed in the international development sector (all of them in NGOs), nearly half of these were employed as CEO or Chief Operating Officer. Unlike amongst the organisations selected for review (see section 5), almost half of the NGOs represented in questionnaire responses developed and implemented education/life-long learning activities (in addition to fundraising and, for most, advocacy-campaigning).

The focus of the respondents' work in the past three months had been primarily on environmental and/or on social issues of global development. Recent involvement by respondents in political or economic issues had been of a lesser concern, but attention to 'explaining economic processes and systems that affect development' was seen as important in the practice of more than half of the respondents' organisations.

More than half of the agencies respondents worked for, including all of the NGOs, produced policy research or other publications analysing (aspects of) global development. This is significantly more than the organisations sampled for this research (see Sections 5 and 6).

In the opinion of respondents, conceptual knowledge and systems awareness were highly important when discussing global development. This, according to respondents, would be particularly the case for awareness and knowledge of natural systems/ecologies (and only slightly less so in the case of economic, social-cultural or political systems).

Three-fifths of respondents were of the opinion that 'relating examples of poverty, inequality or injustice to a broader economic context or system' was very important and generally not difficult. In the opinion of approximately three-quarters of respondents using concepts such as 'capitalism' and 'neoliberalism' was useful in explaining global development issues. However, half of respondents felt that using such terms in communications with the public was not helpful.

When asked if the international development sector is doing enough to explore the economic causes of poverty, inequality and injustice more than four-fifths of respondents, including those employed within the international development sector, felt that this was not the case.

When asked a similar question about the attention given by the development education sector, a similar response was given, including by those employed within the sector.

awareness of the structures, rules and institutions that impact on poor communities, and of the differing cultures and norms around the world.

- The key to good development education is to highlight the increasing interdependence of societies and individuals”;

Development education is seen as:

- “... an active learning process based on inclusion and co-operation, enabling people to move from basic awareness of global issues to personal action. It is helping Irish people work towards global literacy: an awareness and understanding of global issues, how these issues affect society as a whole, and how individuals’ attitudes, decisions and actions can fit into this web of world affairs.”

In relation to Dóchas’ membership the group has as its tasks:

- “To enhance learning and exchange good practice in Development Education amongst Dóchas members;
- To advocate for the role of Development Education in the development effectiveness debate;
- To engage in a proactive and concrete way in issues affecting development education at European level;
- To advocate for deeper and extended inclusion of Development Education into the fabric of Development Activity conducted by Dóchas members”.

The all-island Irish network of development education, **IDEA**, representing “over 80 members involved in the practice, promotion and advancement of Development Education in formal, non-formal and informal settings” describes development education in Ireland as aiming to:

- “empower learners of all ages to become active global citizens, by delivering life-long, quality Development Education” (IDEA 2021).

The reason for its existence include the climate, economic and political crises that people and society face which:

- “... challenges how we view international development and how we achieve equality, justice, and a sustainable world. By strengthening global citizenship, sustainability, democracy and human rights, Development Education is at the heart of society’s response to the challenges we face.”

To address these challenges, IDEA and its members set themselves the task to:

- “reverse growing threats to democracy and the growth of racism and anti-immigrant opinion, and to move rapidly to sustainable living [...];
- ... empower learners of all ages to become active global citizens by delivering life-long, quality Development Education ...”.

What IDEA understands as ‘quality development education’ is summarised in a ‘Code of Good Practice for Development Education’ (IDEA, n.d.) to which some 38 IDEA members are signed up to (however signatories do not include ActionAid, Christian Aid, Oxfam and World Vision, who are not members of IDEA). The Code is referenced by both Irish Aid and Dóchas. One of the components of the Code is that educational practice should include explorations of the “Root Causes of local and global injustices and inequalities in our interdependent world”.

Code of Good Practice for Development Education

12 Core Principles

Educational Practice



01 Contribute to **Knowledge** in Ireland about global development



02 Explore the **Root Causes** of local and global injustices and inequalities in our interdependent world



03 Be explicit about the **ethos** of Development Education



04 Encourage **Critical Thinking** in our exploration of local and global justice issues and seeking of solutions



05 Use **Participatory, Creative** methodologies



06 Produce and use **Quality Resources and Materials**, based on continuous learning



07 Build **Skills** for **Informed, Meaningful Action** that is **Collective** in nature



08 **Imagine** and **Explore Solutions** for a better world



09 Actively and consistently **Reflect** and **Learn** from our own Development Education practice and participants' feedback

Organisational Practice



10 Have a clear **Development Education Strategy** and **Action Plan**



11 Reflect the **Key Values** of Development Education



12 **Advocate** for **Quality Development Education**

Fig. 6. The 'Code of Good Practice for Development Education - 12 core principles' (source: IDEA, n.d.)

6 Documentation Review: Analyses of the Systems that drive Poverty, Inequality, Injustice

- How do reports produced by selected international development agencies relate issues of poverty, inequality and injustice to global economics?

A glance at sampled international development agency websites suggests that most organisations:

- either do not develop policy analyses that relate to their work;
- or, if they do, these are not readily found on their websites,
- or they do not make them publicly available.

A number of the agencies present case study reports of work which they support, but few provide a synthesised analysis of that work placing it in a broader global development context. Which raises the question if international development sector agencies are serious about their intentions, such as those mentioned in section 5: they may be, but they certainly (with exceptions) don't draw attention to the underlying systemic issues that affect their causes. Those that do provide an easily (website) accessible analysis are introduced below. Given the importance of the European Union institutions and of European networks in directing, enabling or influencing global development efforts - including in Ireland -, reference is made, too, to a number of European documents. Although, with the exception of a document by CONCORD, they (and Irish Aid) don't analyse the issues they plan to deal with, they do provide a reference point for work by NGOs and development education.

Irish Aid and European Union

Irish Aid's *'A Better World'* policy for international development, published in 2019, (Irish Aid, n.d. A) gives attention, amongst other issues, to the need to develop sustainable agri-food systems. The document implies that a focus on "increasing yields through conventional models [has led to] natural resource depletion, environmental degradation and biodiversity loss". "Great progress [in lifting] people out of poverty over the past 50 years" has been made according to the document, "However, advances have not been equally distributed around the globe". Problems are exacerbated by "Conflict, the impact of climate change and intensifying inequality ..." and "Threats to human rights and civil society space [that] undermine the basis for peaceful sustainable development in many contexts". The policy identifies various characteristics of the changing context for international development. An analysis of why the identified issues exist is absent and no attention is given to an analysis of global economic processes that affect, cause or underpin such issues.

Irish Aid's policy and policy analysis relates to that of the **European Union**. The policy document that currently frames the EU's support for global development is *'The New European Consensus on Development: "Our World, Our Dignity, Our Future"'* (European Union, 2017). Taking its lead from Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (UN, 2015), the Consensus provides "the framework for a common approach to development policy that will be applied by all EU institutions and the Member States [...] it will guide the action [...] with all developing countries" (European Union, 2017: 4). Like the Irish Aid policy, the EU document does not provide an analysis of the causes of the problems it tries to address.

The document's five main headings are taken from Agenda 2030 with an overview of how the EU and its Member States will contribute to each:

- **People:** including actions to eradicate poverty and hunger, tackle inequalities, promote human rights (including women and girls' rights), social protection and community resilience (e.g. in respect of climate change), and promotion of "well managed migration [...] that [...] can make positive contributions to inclusive growth and sustainable development" (p 17);
- **Planet:** including commitments to the Paris Agreement (UN, 2015B), addressing energy poverty, promoting resource efficiency and sustainable production and consumption, supporting rights of indigenous and local communities, counteracting biodiversity loss and desertification;
- **Prosperity:** including highlighting the importance of micro, small and medium sized enterprises

- (MSMEs) in sustainable development, supporting investment in sustainable development by providing investment guarantees for the private sector, tackling illicit financial flows, encouraging sustainable agriculture and fisheries and agro-ecological practices, mainstreaming digital technologies;
- Peace: including support for human rights and fundamental freedoms and an enabling space for civil society, addressing the “root causes [of poverty, conflict, fragility and forced displacement] ranging from exclusion, inequality, food insecurity, human rights violations and abuses, impunity and the absence of rule of law, to environmental degradation and climate change” (p 33);
 - Partnership: including coordination and joint programming of EU and Member State actions; fostering more inclusive multi-stakeholder partnerships (including with CSOs and the private sector).

The **European Commission’s** *Staff Working Document: Implementation of the new European Consensus on Development – addressing inequality in partner countries* (European Commission, 2019) goes into more detail about the effects of economic, social, political and environmental inequalities. As far as sustainable development is concerned, the paper draws on (external) researches that highlight, that:

- Inequality acts as an obstacle to sustainable economic growth;
- Inequality is an obstacle to poverty reduction;
- Inequality is a threat to democracy, social cohesion, and peaceful and resilient societies;
- Inequality is holding back women, girls, and other discriminated groups;
- Income inequality has a negative impact on other sustainable development outcomes.

The paper makes the point that between 1988 and 2013 inequality between countries decreased while inequality within countries “increased between the late 1980s and 1990s and then stabilised in the 2000s and 2010s.” (European Commission, 2019: 7). The paper notes that “inequality as measured by the share of income held by the top 10% of population has increased almost everywhere. [...] The trends are similar if one focuses on wealth, rather than income”, quoting an Oxfam briefing paper that shows that “in 2018 26 people owned the same wealth as the bottom 50% of the world population [...] down from 43 people the year before” (Ibid: 9). The document continues by providing an overview of some of the EU development cooperation policies and initiatives that are relevant to addressing income inequalities through employment and other economic activities, through taxation and other financial policies, and through public expenditures. As with the EU’s Consensus document and Irish Aid’s development strategy, little or no attention is given to an analysis and explanation of the issues from a global economic system perspective.

Irish NGOs, Dóchas and CONCORD

While relevant Irish Aid, EU and EC papers are primarily concerned with highlighting the action frameworks they wish to apply in their work, selected documents produced by some NGOs provide a more analytical approach of global development practices – combined with suggestions on how poverty, inequality and injustice can be better addressed.

During the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, **Dóchas**, the network of Irish NGOs, produced a briefing paper on ‘International Development and Humanitarian Action in a Time of COVID-19’ (Dóchas, 2020). The paper makes the point that “after five years, we are seriously off-track to reach the Global Goals by 2030” and that “COVID-19 threatens to roll back the development gains so hard-won by the most marginalised communities across the world” (Ibid: 3). The paper points out that:

- “Extreme poverty is not being eradicated” (quoting the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, Philip Alston¹⁸) and that “the UN projected the poverty rate among women [to] increase by 9.1% because of the pandemic and its fallout” (Ibid: 4);
- Global hunger, including undernourishment and undernutrition, has been rising since 2015: “This means that roughly 8.9% of the world’s population are hungry today” (Ibid: 4);
- “COVID-19 has overwhelmed and stretched even the most well-resourced health systems in the world [presenting huge challenges] in the world’s poorest countries where health systems are chronically underfunded and understaffed” (Ibid: 7);

18 For a discussion of Philip Alston’s assessment see, for example, McCloskey 2020B

- Action to limit global greenhouse gas emissions are currently inadequate, including in Ireland, and “increasing support to the poorest countries to enable them to take action [...] is also necessary if global climate goals are to be achieved” (Ibid: 8);
- The pandemic “is threatening to erase decades of progress for women and girls”, magnifying existing inequalities and injustices, not only for women and girls but also for people with disabilities and others in marginalised communities (Ibid: 10-12);
- The “unprecedented disruption to education [caused by the pandemic] has the potential to roll back substantial gains made on education in recent decades [with long-term effects on] poverty reduction, health and well-being, inclusive quality education and gender equality” (Ibid: 12).

The paper comes to the conclusion that:

- “The current economic system has concentrated power and wealth in the hands of a few [...] The response to spiralling inequalities has been woefully inadequate, continuing instead to promote extractive economic models that serve narrow interests, to the detriment of the sustainability of the planet and the welfare of its people, and in particular the poorest and most marginalised” (Ibid: 6).

The paper continues by highlighting what it sees as the importance of Ireland increasing its official development assistance (ODA) and its humanitarian assistance in emergencies and crises, showing that Ireland is some way off the official OECD Member State commitments to increase their ODA to 0.7 per cent of GNP (in Ireland in 2019 this was 0.32 per cent). The paper concludes by recommending that Ireland implements the suggestions of the latest OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Peer Review (of 2020), namely to “develop mechanisms for analysing the impact of its domestic policies on developing countries, identify potential inconsistencies, discuss action to address these with all stakeholders ...” (Ibid: 15). Noting that the DAC Peer Review positively commented on “Ireland [having] received international recognitions for its development education strategies”, the Dóchas paper makes the point that “Development Education has the potential to bring about large-scale positive societal change to create a just, equal and sustainable society and fulfil the commitments of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” (Ibid: 15).

The European network **CONCORD**, of which Dóchas is a member, produced the *‘Inequalities Unwrapped - an urgent call for systemic change’* paper in 2019. Partly written in response to the EU’s Consensus and Staff Working Document (see above), the paper focuses on economic, social, political and environmental inequalities arguing that “Inequalities [...] are no accidents of fate”. Instead, “They are the result of specific actions and policy choices by people in power”. Reducing them, however, “is a complex issue that demands a systemic approach” (Concord, 2019: 1).

The paper discusses the existence of economic inequalities between the richest and poorest people in the world, which, within countries, have increased since 1980. It finds that:

- a major reason for such inequalities is “the way our economic system prioritises returns to shareholders over everything else” (Ibid: 4), for example with income earned by investment companies and income for those at the top of an enterprise rising disproportionately more than income for those in the middle or at the bottom;

and that:

- taxation systems exacerbate economic inequalities by government decisions that make them less progressive or even regressive. Austerity measures, introduced after the 2008 financial crisis, cut back on public services and social protection (largely of benefit to the poorest members of the public), but overwhelmingly protected the interests of the rich.

The paper highlights that “socially constructed norms that privilege one group over others” (Ibid: 6) lead to various forms of social inequality, which express themselves in, for instance, discriminatory language, laws, or physical infrastructure. In turn that discrimination involves unequal access to social rights and services, restricting for particular individuals or groups access to health care, education, water, housing, or food and nutrition. Research for the paper finds that economic and social inequalities often reinforce each other: underfunding of public services combined with the privatisation of public services, which then adopt a commercial approach, leading to exclusion of those who are not able to pay which exacerbates, for instance, gender inequalities.

Considering political inequality (“structured differences in the allocation of political resources”, Ibid: 8) Concord’s paper draws attention to:

- inequality in access to political decision making and the link between political inequalities and power imbalances, many of which originate in social or economic inequalities based on “ethnicity, religion, civil status, disability, education and socioeconomic status”;
- unequal access to decision making is typically made worse by weak democratic institutions and poor governance, with the result that decisions are taken in favour of the interests of powerful elites and business over that of citizens and social organisations;
- restrictions placed on the role of civil society and CSOs in advocating or organising for alternative strategies.

Regarding environmental inequalities, the paper draws on research that shows that countries in the global South are significantly more affected by climate change than those in the global North: often to devastating effect. The paper finds that the situation in which 10 per cent of the world’s population is responsible for over 50 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions (which drive climate change) has a proportionally much higher impact on the poorest (who contribute least to greenhouse gas emissions). The consequence of this is that “People already experiencing social, economic and political inequality are disproportionately negatively impacted by climate change (women, children, older people, indigenous peoples, migrants, rural workers, persons with disabilities, people living in poverty)” (Ibid 10).

Access to natural resources and the adverse effects of climate change are “further exacerbated by the expansion of industrial agriculture to the detriment of family farming and small-scale food producers [...] especially so for small-scale female food producers” (Ibid: 10).

To address these multiple and interlinked inequalities the paper calls for “a systemic approach, by addressing the concentration of wealth and power” (Ibid: 11). The paper (Ibid: 11-21) provides various suggestions on how this can be done, involving transformation of the economic, political and social systems that currently create, maintain or increase inequalities both between and within countries.

ActionAid’s ‘*We Need Targeted Strategies to Redistribute Power and Resources to Women*’ (ActionAid, 2022) highlights the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the position of women. It reports that “women are systematically excluded from decision making”, that “The pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities between women and men in almost all areas of life” and that there has been a “rolling back on hard-won achievements on women’s rights”. To counteract this situation the article suggests that there is a “need to address the nature and structure of the global economy that exploits the people of the global south at the expense of consumption in the North – addressing how economic ideology, trade, taxation, corporate human rights abuses - compound gender inequality” (Ibid).

Some of the issues highlighted in this article are explored in more detail in a report that reviews IMF documents relating to fifteen countries: investigating the effect of austerity measures on the ability of governments to deliver public services (ActionAid et al., 2021: *The Public versus Austerity – why public sector wage bill constraints must end*). The report draws attention to the effects of neoliberal policies, in particular wage constraints that affect governments’ abilities to deliver quality public services. Illustrated by quotes and case studies from staff working in public frontline institutions and from IMF reports concerning the fifteen investigated countries, the report highlights:

- The paradox in the rationale for wage bill constraints in the public sector: “The dominant rationale used for cutting the public sector wage bill is to address lack of fiscal space - or put more positively, to create more fiscal space for development [...] cutting recurrent spending on the public sector wage bill to free up funds to invest in capital expenditure on public services” (ActionAid et al., 2021: 33);
- The diversion of infrastructural spending from education and health infrastructures to spending on physical infrastructures which are deemed as more beneficial to development (Ibid: 36);
- The private sector taking on (and charging fees for) public services: “[Reducing] the footprint of the government in the economy by leveraging the private sector” (Ibid: 37), with “a senior IMF economist who commented: ‘The public sector should only provide services where the private sector cannot make a profit’ [...] which] implies that the prime purpose of government should be to maximise shareholder profits rather than expand the public good” (Ibid: 38). The consequence of this is that “when you have to pay for access to health or education, women and girls are the first to be excluded” (Ibid: 43);

- The reduced influence of trade unions (Ibid: 39);
- The effect of public wage constraint policies on a country's ability to meet its international human, economic and social rights obligations, the Sustainable Development Goals, and its potential undermining of action on climate change (Ibid: 42-43).

The report comes to the conclusion that:

- "neoliberalism has been oversold for forty years and has stifled the very growth and development it was supposed to value" (Ibid: 5);
- dogmatism often underpins neoliberal policies: for instance, cutting public wage bills regardless of the size of the public sector or of the tax income to GDP ratio (Ibid: 22-25);
- "an overall cut or freeze [in public sector expenditure] can create all sorts of unintended pressures and distortions" that hamper or undermine development (Ibid: 25).

How social, economic and environmental inequalities relate to, and reinforce each other in the agricultural sector is researched in the **Trócaire** report '*Food Democracy: feeding the world sustainably*' (Trócaire, 2018). The paper investigates and discusses competing visions for the future of agriculture and food systems, researching on one hand the current 'input-intensive' system and on the other hand 'agroecological' approaches, relating each approach to opportunities to end hunger and ensuring the right to adequate food for all.

The analysis finds that increasing food insecurity and high levels of malnutrition are hampering achievement of the SDG goals to do with food security and nutrition, and to do with climate change. A significant, if not *the* cause of this is the current input-intensive food system which is leading to increased socioeconomic inequalities, economic migration and environmental degradation. While most food in the world is produced by family farmers, most investments in development of the agricultural sector are geared to agri-businesses whose profit orientation and employment practices mean that decent livelihoods are elusive for many they employ (Trócaire, 2018: 4-5). This in turn leads to particularly young people and men leaving rural areas, increasing a process of 'feminisation' in agriculture. Systematic gender discrimination means that women have less access to resources (land, credit, extension services support) than men, which helps to explain "why the majority of people living in hunger are female" (Ibid: 5).

The report suggests that it is vital to integrate geographically and economically isolated small farmers into the agricultural and food system. Current developments, however, with an emphasis on industrial intensive agriculture based on monoculture, mean that "an ever greater share of the value and power moves up supply chains [and away from farmers, leading to growing] inequality between an increasingly concentrated number of agri-business corporations and the hundreds of millions of peasant farmers" (Ibid: 5). "While small scale farmers continue to produce the largest share of the world's food, they are doing so on a declining share of farmland" (Ibid).

Alongside the economically detrimental effects of input-intensive agriculture, the environmental impact of the industrial system is "a major driving force behind the planet's environmental degradation" (Ibid: 6), increasing greenhouse gas emissions and reducing biodiversity.

To address the issues highlighted the report calls for a "transition from the current industrial system towards food systems that achieve high productivity, but also promote biodiversity, resilience and social equity" (Ibid: 7). To achieve this the paper sees it as fundamental to support the "ability of the poor and marginalised to take a lead (and exercise power)" (Ibid: 20). However, the paper also sees barriers to an adoption of an alternative, agroecological system in the current situation, namely:

- A concentration of power in corporate interests;
- A policy environment that favours intensive agricultural practices;
- Investment flows that focus primarily on productivity;
- A lack of public resources for research, innovation, training and extension services in support of small farmers;
- A disconnect between producers and consumers in that "demand for fast food and the expectation of cheap abundant food has contributed to a relative devaluation of food and major food waste in developed countries" (Ibid: 19).

Although the report places its findings and conclusions in a systemic context, it does not explicitly relate this to an overall global neoliberal system and ideology: those connections are largely left implicit.

Oxfam's report *'Inequality Kills - the unparalleled action needed to combat unprecedented inequality in the wake of COVID-19'* (Oxfam, 2022) draws on researches into the effects of current development policies where it finds "Widening economic, gender, and racial inequalities" (Oxfam, 2022: 2).

The report highlights that there has been a surge in monopoly power, with fewer, larger corporations dominating a range of industries. That monopoly power is shown, for example, in the production of life-saving vaccines where "pharmaceutical monopolies artificially [restrict] the supply and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines [...meaning that ...] millions of people die in countries with limited vaccine access" (Ibid: 16).

Unequal distribution of the profits from the growth in monopolies has meant that from 1995 to 2021, the 50 per cent least wealthy in the world captured 2 per cent of the global wealth growth, while the top 1 per cent of wealthy people captured 38 per cent of that growth (Ibid: 21). In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has, during 2021, led to increased inequalities between countries as well as growing inequalities within countries (Ibid: 36). This is affecting women and in those in Black and Minority Ethnic groups in particular: exhibiting and exacerbating existing gender and racist discriminations (Ibid: 23-24).

In investigating causes of inequalities that exist, the report draws attention to 'economic violence' that "directly [harms] the majority of humanity and the planet, with people living in poverty, women and girls, and racialized and oppressed groups hit the hardest"; a violence that is, if not caused at least supported by "economic policies and political and social culture [which] are perpetuating the wealth and power of a privileged few" (Ibid: 25). As examples of such economic violence the report draws attention to inequalities in access to health care which, quoting a study by *The Economist*, "has consistently high explanatory power" in driving COVID-19 deaths amongst those who are, for example, poor, belong to Black communities, or have low levels of formal education - significantly more than deaths amongst those who are not poor, who are White or have higher levels of formal education (Ibid: 28). The report also finds that "Countries that have pursued austerity policies have higher COVID-19 fatality rates" and that "in the European Union [...] privatization [of health services] has debilitated countries' ability to respond to the pandemic" (Ibid: 28).

The report finds that COVID-19 has led to an increase in gender-based violence, "fuelled by inequality - and [...] compounded by economic violence" (Ibid: 30), with coronavirus response funding by International Financial Institutions largely ignoring its existence: a situation the report sees as "rooted in unequal and violent policies and economic strategies" (Ibid: 31). This is exhibited by, for instance, "an overrepresentation [of women] among underpaid and unprotected workers around the world", and in "unpaid care work as the responsibility of women and girls" (Ibid: 32). Economically the pandemic has "disproportionately pushed women out of employment" and reduced their income in the informal economy by some 60 per cent (Ibid: 32).

In an investigation into the climate crisis the report draws attention to inequalities in wealth and power that perpetuate and exacerbate the climate crisis. Inequality in the emissions that drive climate change not only exist between rich countries and poor countries, but particularly between the richest people and the rest of humanity: "Analysis of emissions by income group shows that over-consumption by the world's richest people is the primary cause of today's climate crisis" (Ibid: 34). The report argues that at the heart of this is an economic model "based on grossly carbon-intensive growth, which largely meets the needs of those who are already rich but is loading the greatest risks onto those living in poverty [...] It is the poorest people who have contributed least to [the climate] crisis who suffer the most" (Ibid).

Concluding remarks made in the report relate to:

- The "structural and systemic policy and political choices that are skewed in favor of the richest and most powerful people result in direct harm to the vast majority of people around the world" (Ibid: 18);
- The existence of systemic structures and processes that support inequality meaning that "Only systemic solutions will do to combat economic violence at its root and lay the foundations for a more equal world" (Ibid: 14).

Poverty, inequality, injustice: interrelated, systemic issues

Authors of most, and possibly all, of the NGDO reports discussed in this section suggest that there is a clear and direct relationship between *economic* systemic causes (i.e. the characteristics of the neoliberal system) not only with economic effects, but also with *political* (Who decides?), *social* and *natural-environmental* repercussions, with different social, political or environmental phenomena then feeding back into economic organisation. The issues highlighted by the reports can be brought together in the Development Compass Rose (see Figure 7 on the next page). When comparing Figure 7 with the characteristics of neoliberalism shown in Figure 2 (section 2) a series of cause-and-effect relationships and feedback loops can be identified: highlighting a dynamic and interconnected system that finds its origin in an ideology (“a set of beliefs or principles”, “a theory or set of beliefs”¹⁹) and its consequences for people.

19 <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/ideology>

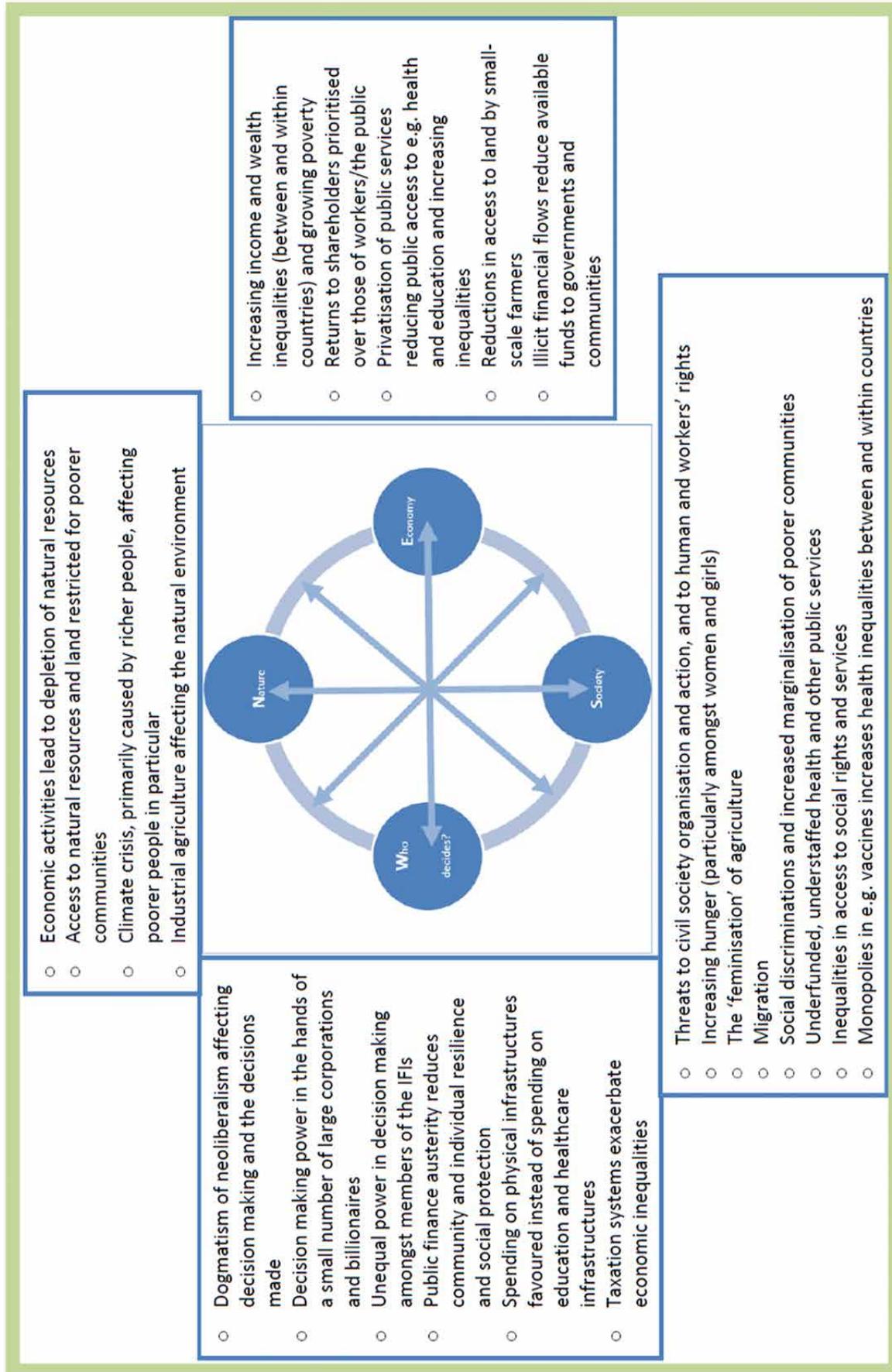


Fig 7. A Development Compass Rose of issues highlighted in selected NGDO reports

7 Exploring Root Causes and Neoliberalism through Development Education

- What do international development and development education organisations, in their work with the public, do with the concept and ideology of neoliberalism as an explanation of ‘root causes’?

According to respondents (see the Appendix) “explaining development processes or issues” and “explaining economic processes and systems that affect development” are (extremely) important in the work of the organisations they are involved in. That work is particularly carried out through public campaigning-advocacy activities and, in the case of organisations with a development education programme also through education and lifelong learning activities.

Responses of the international development sector

Given the significant and fundamental critique which Dóchas, CONCORD, ActionAid, Trócaire and Oxfam have of current developments and the operation of the economic system, the expectation might be that the organisations will aim to disseminate that assessment to the wider public, engaging that public in investigations, discussions and the drawing of conclusions that lead to action in order to transform the existing system. All three Irish NGOs, Dóchas and Irish Aid, as well as CONCORD, include references on their websites about their (implicit or explicit) intentions to involve the public.

Agency	Strategy statements relevant to work with the public in Ireland	Relevant public outreach activities
Irish Aid <i>Global Citizenship Education Strategy 2021-2025</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for “a lifelong educational process which aims to increase public awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing, inter-dependent and unequal world”. • “Challenging stereotypes and encouraging independent thinking [helping people] to critically explore how global justice issues interlink with [the public’s] everyday lives and how they can act to build a better world”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants programme supporting civil society initiatives.
Dóchas <i>Interim Strategy 2021 and https://www.dochas.ie/assets/Files/DEG-ToR.pdf</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene, lead and promote “coordinated action to drive and influence policy change and public debate in Ireland”. • “Data driven public engagement material is tested to strengthen public understanding of international development”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dóchas Development Education working group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sharing learning, knowledge and experiences (of DE and advocacy) amongst members; • work on the implementation of the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messaging.
CONCORD https://concordeurope.org/cross-cutting-priorities/#	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We work on five cross-cutting issues [incl. Global Citizenship Education] by monitoring developments in these areas, advocating for change and integrating them into our three core priorities [i.e. Inequalities and sustainable economy; Policy coherence for sustainable development, and Financing and funding for sustainable development].” • “Global Citizenship Education plays an important role in building consensus towards a truly sustainable future based on human rights, gender equality, justice and democracy.” “However, Global Citizenship Education needs greater recognition, political support, policies and decent funding.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site mentions as “Change we want to see” as a result of its GCE work recognition of the need for “People-centred policies: EU policies are more people-centred”, “Global community: People everywhere play an active role in the global community”, and “Social economy: People and policy-makers understand how policies are inter-connected”. • However, explicit GCE activities are not mentioned on the site and the latest GCE related work dates from 2018 (to do with funding for GCE).

<p>ActionAid https://actionaid.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/A-just-and-caring-world-for-women-and-children.pdf and https://actionaid.ie/campaigning/</p>	<p>The 'ActionAid Ireland Strategy 2022 to 2027' includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Address the systemic and structural causes of gender-based violence". • "... connect learning from women in the South to the North (building on previous work to end female genital mutilation (FGM) in Ireland) as part of our ambition to decolonise aid and to shift power and privilege". • "... connect structural issues of inequality and injustice in the Global South to policy work in Ireland." • "...seek to diversify and grow not only our supporter base, but also explore new partnerships ..." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organisation's 'Take action' page does not make explicit reference to its strategic intent. Instead the page mentions three public actions: 'Organise a fundraiser', 'Become a Child sponsor', and 'Write a letter [to the child you sponsor]'. No mention is made to education activities in Ireland but on the 'Campaigns, Policy and Advocacy' page reference is made to a petition on the Occupied Territories Bill, lobbying to provide Equal Access to COVID-19 Vaccines, lobbying for a national action plan on Female Genital Mutilation, and campaigning on Fair Taxation.
<p>Oxfam https://www.oxfamireland.org/provingit/issues-we-work-on, https://www.oxfamireland.org/getinvolved/campaign and https://www.oxfamireland.org/sites/default/files/oxfam_annual_report_2020-2021.pdf</p>	<p>The Annual Report 2020-21 makes reference to a.o.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "We challenge injustice and inequalities, shaping collective understandings and solutions". <p>The report also mentions the existence of (an Irish Aid funded) public engagement programme, and of campaigns relating to the consequences of COVID-19 and the climate crisis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organisation's 'Campaigning for Change' webpage refers to campaigning for Equal Right to Refuge (highlighting the discrepancies between e.g. responses to Ukrainian and non-European refugees), ending the blockade of food and medicine in Yemen, and supporting the rights of Palestinians. • Reference to education, involving the Irish public, appears to be absent.
<p>Trócaire https://www.trocaire.org/about/strategy/</p>	<p>Trócaire's strategy mentions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Fostering a culture of global solidarity in Ireland through engagement, awareness and campaigning" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trócaire's work with schools involves resources and activities that relate to the issues of the 'Food Democracy' report. • The organisation's campaigns work relates to Human Rights (and climate change), 'Building Back Better' proposals to respond to the consequences of COVID-19, the illegality of Israeli settlements in the Palestinian territories, and the need for Climate Justice in mitigating and adapting to the climate crisis.

Table 3. Engaging the public: a summary of selected agency intentions and activities based on their websites.

While Irish Aid and Dóchas play a largely facilitative role (in providing funding or in facilitating exchanges between members), the NGOs ActionAid, Trócaire and Oxfam (and CONCORD) advertise activities that aim to involve the public. However, with the possible exception of Trócaire - in its policy and education work on the food system - few if any of these public activities address the *systemic structures* that their reports provide detailed criticisms of. According to survey respondents who work in international development agencies, reports such as those summarised in the previous section are primarily used:

- "As the basis for targeted information and/or lobbying (e.g. of policy makers)", and
- "Circulated to supporters for information and/or to others who are interested".

Although most survey respondents are of the opinion that international development (and development education) organisations are generally good (sometimes very good) at "placing disparate development issues in a broader systemic context", and that they frame their responses to such issues "with reference to global economic processes", most are also of the opinion that drawing attention "to (aspects of) the economic causes of poverty, inequality or

injustice” is not significantly important - neither in public campaigning-advocacy activities, nor in fundraising and PR work, nor in lobbying of decision makers. Education and lifelong learning activities appear to be the main vehicle for drawing attention to these issues. However, as is seen from sections 5 and 7, the attention to this by most of the selected Irish NGOs is largely absent.

Although all respondents find that giving attention to “explorations of the economic causes of poverty, inequality and injustice” is important for the international development sector, more than four-fifths of survey respondents are of the opinion that the international development sector is “not doing enough” in this respect.

NGDO websites and survey responses suggest that research and related policy reports that deal with economics are typically not used as a means to educate and involve the wider public. As one survey responder suggested: “I have a sense that [development] organisations [...] are not as focussed on the economic factors contributing to poverty as they used to be [...] The focus is more strongly on a range of inequalities such as around gender and race rather than a more specific focus on poverty reduction or particular economic philosophies and systems that lead to extreme poverty.” A view of NGDO websites appears to bear this out: there is a lack of *public* engagement activities involving a holistic-systemic approach to the structural economic issues that cause inequality, injustice and poverty. The absence of a dedicated development education programme in most NGOs will almost certainly contribute to this.

Which begs the question, partly further explored in section 8: if NGOs do not engage the public in structured explorations of and discussions about the current global (neoliberal) economic system, how much do they want to change that system, and what stops them from developing education work that addresses the systemic nature of poverty, inequality and injustice?

Development education sector responses

Readily accessible information from within the development education sector does not give a sense of the extent to which the sector gives attention to the current global economic system and its relationship with root causes of poverty, inequality and injustice.

EU Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) grant schemes launched in the period 2011 to 2018 led to support for 22 projects that included implementation in Ireland. According to summary descriptions of the projects, three included references to ‘economy’, five to ‘system’, twelve to ‘justice’, ten to ‘poverty’, and one to ‘inequality’ (EU DEAR, n.d.). Titles of seven of the 22 projects, with references to tax justice, illicit capital flight, social and solidarity economy, the IMF’s development role, the effects of the 2008 financial crisis, and to financing for development, give an indication that they *may* have been concerned with the global economic system. However, without going into detailed reviews of each of the projects the extent to which the economic processes and systems are explored is not immediately apparent.

According to an audit of development education resources produced in Ireland between 2013 and 2016, themes and issues covered by the publications were primarily concerned with those shown in Figure 8 (see next page). Themes such ‘Debt & Trade’, ‘Social Economy’, ‘Poverty, Wealth & Inequality’, ‘Development’, ‘Hunger, Food and Agriculture’ (together covering 19 per cent of the audited resources) are likely to explore and discuss economic issues. As with the EU DEAR projects mentioned above, the extent to which they place such discussions in a systemic, conceptual context is unclear. However, the authors of the audit note that from their assessments “Many resources [...] present simplistic analyses of issues ...” and “much extant material [in the context of the SDGs] is simply PR focused rather than educationally analytical” (Daly et al., 2017: 32 and 39).

Clear cut information about the attention given to the global economic system, let alone the concept of neoliberalism, within the development education sector is therefore not available, but indications are that it is likely to be minimal. Partly in confirmation of this, most survey respondents are of the opinion that “The development education sector is not doing enough to explore the economic causes of poverty, inequality and injustice”, with 86% agreeing with this statement. This may relate to what a number of authors have described as a ‘de-politicised’,

uncritical policy and practice in development education (Kearns, n.d.; Bryan, 2011), a sentiment that is echoed by a number of questionnaire respondents, e.g. "... there is very little critical reflection on the actual framing of political/economic systems of a country"; "... the recent emphasis on emotions, climate anxiety and self-care take away from the more political aspects to DE work".

For Irish Aid, with the inclusion of the Code of Good Practice for Development Education in its current GCE Strategy, for Dóchas members taking part in the network's DE working group, and for IDEA members signed up to the Code of Good Practice, explorations of the 'root causes' of poverty, inequality and injustice are a fundamental part of the intention and aim of development education. **The question then is: what stops the sectors from giving those root causes that attention in their work with the public, what hinders them in exploring neoliberalism through education activities, and what opportunities might there be for doing this?**

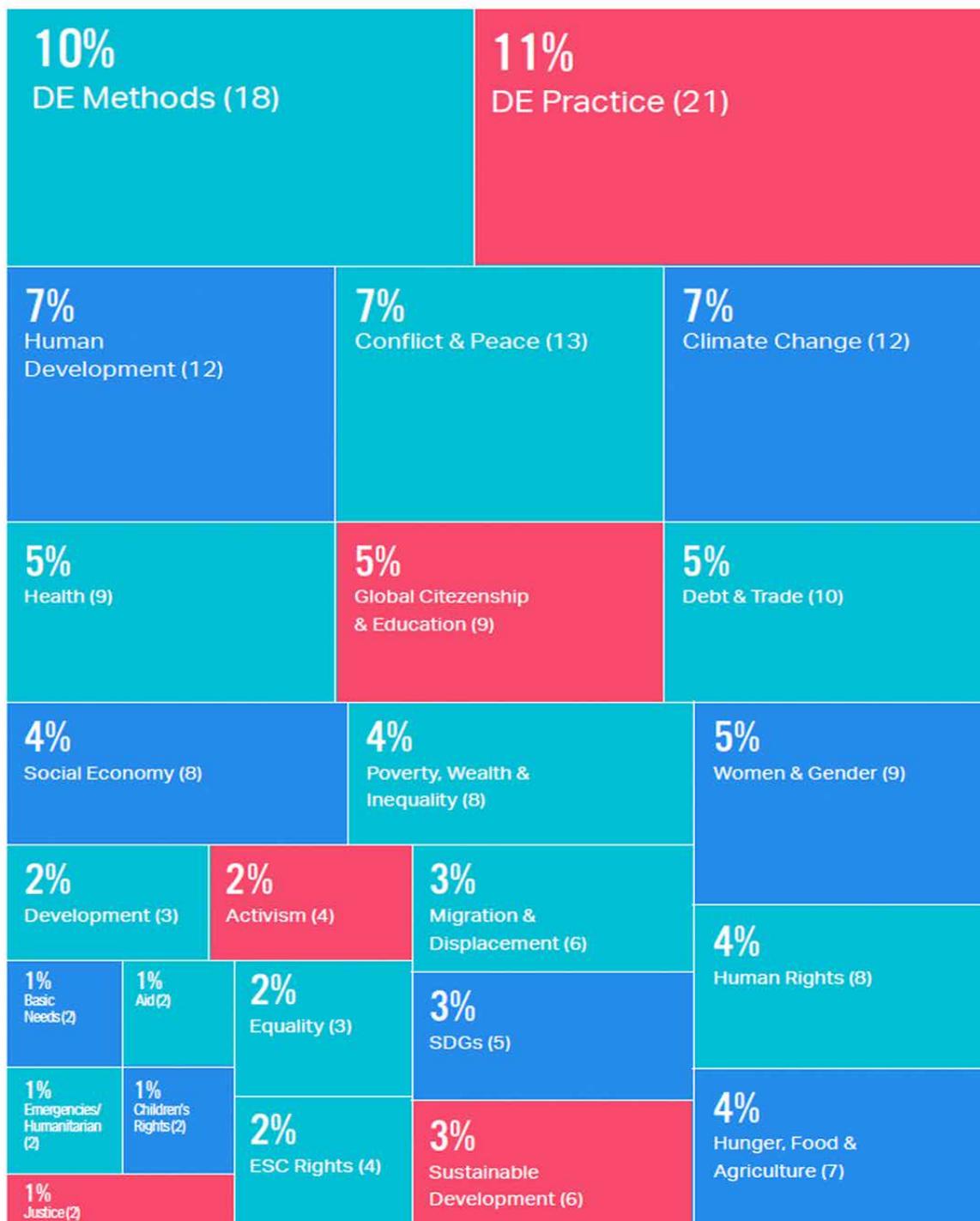


Fig. 8. Themes and Issues in Development Education Resources in Ireland 2013-2016 (source: Daly et al., 2017)

8 Challenges and Opportunities for Development Education

- What are some of the challenges and opportunities to engage the public in exploring and responding to root causes of poverty, inequality and injustice and their relationship with the dominant economic paradigm?

Seminar responses

Two seminars were held on 15 and 17 June 2022 to gather the thoughts and opinions of development education and NGDO practitioners about the relevance of the research findings to international development and development education. The seminar on 15 June was attended by practitioners from Ireland and the seminar on 17 June mainly by practitioners from other EU countries. Participants discussed questions to do with why the sectors are not engaging the public in exploring neoliberalism as a root cause of existing poverty, inequality, injustice; what the challenges and opportunities are to engage the public in an exploration of global economics, i.e. neoliberalism; what role the development of systems thinking skills can play in creating public understanding and responses to neoliberalism, poverty, inequality, and injustice; and what, if anything, can be or should be done by the international development and development education sectors to address the research findings.

Twenty-two participants, from Ireland and elsewhere in Europe, took part in the seminars. In one capacity or another all were involved in development education or other approaches to lifelong learning. The remainder of this section draws on their discussions and suggestions. Quotes are from participants in the seminars unless otherwise indicated.

'Global awareness' and 'conscientisation'

NGDOs (and development education organisations) typically "convey to people the message 'that the world's course can be changed and that there are some actions by which they personally can produce an effect in that direction'" (Lissner, 1977: 137). But the disposition of people 'to do something' cannot be taken for granted.

Advocacy (and fundraising) campaigns primarily build on expressions of existing public empathy or compassion (particularly in the case of fundraising campaigns) and relate to the audience's existing perceptions and understanding of reality and how that reality may be changed through their involvement (particularly in the case of advocacy campaigns) (Lissner, 1977: 138-145; Lattimer, 1994: 329-336; Kingham and Coe, 2005: 84-88; Darnton and Kirk, 2011; Green, 2016: 179-195).²⁰ As section 5 indicated, awareness of the issues in the sampled international development agencies is primarily focussed on 'overseas', and where it involves reference to the 'here' it focusses on fundraising or, in some cases, on how policies and behaviour 'here' can affect people 'there'. Most work done by the international development sector therefore is based on 'global awareness' (Lissner, 1977: 138), addressing the public's existing empathy, compassion and understanding of reality: investigations into the systemic nature of root causes of that issue is typically absent.

For such attention to root causes to happen, awareness needs to include a recognition of the local conditions 'here' and 'there' as part of a globally interrelated system - involving a process of 'conscientisation' or 'transformative learning' (Lissner, 1977: 138-145; Fricke et al., 2015: 14-23 and 45-51; Bourn, 2022: 121-138). This includes development of, for example:

- a critical awareness of personal identities, positions and experiences;
- analysis of the situation in which those personal identities, positions and experiences operate;
- explorations and dialogue about different experiences and (actual or possible) different responses to the situation;
- decisions about those responses leading to future actions.

(drawing on work by, for instance, Freire, 1970 and Hope and Timmel, 1984).

20 Also see for instance: <https://www.muster.com/blog/advocacy-campaigns>, and https://learningpartnership.org/sites/default/files/resources/pdfs/Guide_DevelopingEffectiveAdvocacyCampaigns.pdf (accessed 10.3.22).

In aiming to address the root causes of poverty, inequality, or injustice the challenge is to move from global awareness approaches - primarily based on audiences' existing empathy, compassion and perceptions - to conscientisation approaches - primarily based on personal-local-global experiences and personal understandings of the systemic nature of reality. The absence of dedicated education programmes in international development sector organisations makes it virtually impossible for most NGOs to even attempt to do this. However, also for those organisations that do have a development education remit there are various challenges to overcome.

Education and root causes

The need for contextualisation and conscientisation, if education is to make a meaningful contribution to overcoming issues of poverty, inequality and injustice, is already recognised in one of the first definitions of development education. Produced in 1975 by the FAO and the Joint United Nations Information Committee that definition describes the objective of development education as:

“to enable people to participate in the development of their community, their nation and the world as a whole. Such participation implies a critical awareness of local, national and international situations based on an understanding of social, economy and political process.

Development education is concerned with issues of human rights, dignity, self-reliance and social justice in both developed and developing countries. It is concerned with the *causes* of underdevelopment and the promotion of an understanding of what is involved in development, of how different countries go about undertaking development, and of the reasons for and ways of achieving a new international, economic and social order.

The objectives of development education can be achieved through formal and non-formal education but, in the formal context in particular, they inevitably imply fundamental educational reforms” (Ishii, 2003: 9, emphases added).

Since then various other descriptions and definitions of development education have been designed: typically changing terminologies, for example from the binary ‘developed’ and ‘underdeveloped’ to a continuum that relates the diverse local to one world, and introducing a focus on, for instance, environment/ecology, skills development, attitude and disposition change, action, and/or pedagogy. Within these different definitions and practices, attention to placing specific issues in a broader, structural, perspective sits somewhere along a continuum from giving no attention to analyses of global contexts, to one where a world systems analysis forms the focus of attention (Mesa, 2000; Andreotti, 2006; Bourn, 2015: 31-34; Fricke et al., 2015: 14-23).

As implied by the quotation above, to be education “understanding of social, economy and political [and environmental] process” using critical awareness has to be a part of any activity that aims to address (root) causes of poverty, inequality and injustice. That involves:

- stimulating engagement with causes and effects through analysis (“the act of studying or examining something in detail, in order to discover or understand more about it”);
- applying critical thought (“using careful judgment”);
- contextualisation (“the fact or process of considering something in its context = the situation within which it exists or happens”); and
- systems thinking, which helps in understanding, and in examining and assessing options of what can be done and why something, if anything, should be done.²¹

Without such work, information provision by NGOs or by the development education sector is likely to remain in the sphere of ‘global awareness’, i.e. not primarily concerned with addressing root causes (McCloskey, 2014; Bourn, 2015; Green, 2016). Without a move to public ‘conscientisation’ it is likely that organisational statements and straplines, such as those quoted in sections 5 and 7, will just stay that: straplines and statements, at best added to by “resources [that] present simplistic analyses of the issues” or “simply PR focussed rather than educationally analytical” (Daly et al., 2017: 32 and 39).

Why not?

The reason for an absence of dedicated education programmes in the international development sector may include an argument favouring specialisation: NGOs focus on overseas work and leave the work to do with education in the 'home country' to others. However, such a specialisation and 'division of labour' is, given their statements of intent inappropriate, particularly not in a globalised, interdependent world in which the development and humanitarian agencies operate.

Another, possibly more important, reason for a lack of education programmes in the international development sector may be that contextualisation, let alone conscientisation, is seen as too contentious: drawing public attention to the existence of similar issues in the 'home' country - about which there will be conflicting opinions, because they touch people personally - which could have a negative effect on fundraising.

Fear of possible loss of funding from government sources may be a further reason for not engaging the public in exploring root causes that include considerations of the neoliberal/free market philosophy. Since the 1970s/80s policies of many governments (and the EU) - and hence funders of many NGO and development education activities - are based on such a philosophy. For a number of seminar participants, the lack of the sectors engaging the public in explorations of root causes and neoliberalism is "strongly connected to funding - no one wants to compromise that". In that context one participant asked "Are INGOs in a comfort zone?", while another felt that "INGOs have got comfortable in the system": (potentially) biting the hand that feeds is felt as too dangerous. The same statements, however, would also appear to apply to much work in the development education sector.

As is clear from previous sections, the political will of many international development and development education organisations to act on stated intentions often appears absent, even though opportunities exist, for instance in the references of Irish Aid's GCE strategy to the Code of Good Practice for Development Education (Irish Aid, n.d. B) and in the European Commission's DEAR Programme references to empowerment of citizens in addressing global inequalities (European Commission, 2021: 15).

A lack of (external) funding for projects or activities that are explicitly geared to raising the issues of the economic-political causes of poverty, inequality and injustice was also noted by participants. However, the point was also made that relating the issue or theme of a project or activity to a broader (systemic) context should generally be possible through a development education approach.

Given that, for the past 40 years, neoliberal ideology has played such a central role in Irish and European economic, social, political and environmental affairs, it is probably not surprising that people and organisations, including NGOs and development education organisations, have taken on board some, or possibly many, neoliberal features, for instance where they relate to individualism (Taylor-Gooby and Leruth, 2018). One of the seminar participants exemplified this by mentioning the sectors' "focus on individualism e.g. carbon footprints [which has meant a] lack of tools for collective measures".

A similar compartmentalisation and focus on single rather than structural issues was mentioned by another participant who noted the "attention on SDGs, and other sector priorities, such as the amount of development assistance as [a percentage of] GDP, [which] results in there being areas/topics that it's ok to question and others that are not, that are almost taboo". The current, often uncritical, focus on the SDGs was mentioned by participants as appearing to promote awareness of issues that are "a mile wide, but only an inch deep".

Other discussions at the seminars included attention to the problem of language: exploring systems is complex. How to make that complexity - of concepts, relationships and their implications - understandable in plain language, without terminologies that are 'a turn-off', is a challenge. It almost certainly "doesn't fit into a tweet", which may lead to organisations not even trying to communicate to a wider public about it because they feel they lack the communication or facilitation skills to do so.

Related to that, seminar participants also drew attention to a lack of confidence (amongst organisations, teachers, youth workers, development education practitioners) to discuss complex issues. For example, many teachers may feel they lack the knowledge to discuss such issues, no doubt not helped by the absence in formal education curricula

of attention to economics - or global politics. Building confidence of, for example, educators will require a recognition that “they cannot and do not have to know everything”: drawing on expertise that is available elsewhere, including amongst students, can assist in developing confidence. Development education’s role in promoting, for instance, facilitated learning and conceptual understanding can assist in addressing that lack of confidence.

Opportunities

Good quality development education, as for instance implied by the Code of Good Practice for Development Education (see Figure 6 in section 5), can provide a counter balance to fears about funding, controversy, perceived lack of knowledge, or other insecurity. Whilst not shying away from contentious issues, quality development education offers an open-ended educational process²² “by which people, through personal experience and shared knowledge:

- Gain experience of, develop and practice dispositions and values which are critical to a just and democratic society and a sustainable world;
 - Engage with, develop and apply ideas and understandings which help explain the origins, diversity and dynamic nature of society, including the interactions between and among societies, cultures, individuals and environments;
 - Engage with, develop and practice capabilities and skills which enable investigation of society, discussion of issues, problem-tackling, decision-making, and working co-operatively with others;
 - Take actions that are inspired by these ideas, values and skills and which contribute to the achievement of a more just and caring world”.
- (Regan and Sinclair, 2002: 50)

The current global economic situation, with increasing inflation and rising costs of living, would appear to give ample opportunities for organisations concerned with global poverty, inequality and injustice to make links between what is happening ‘overseas’ and what is happening in Ireland and other EU Member States: challenging (in the sense of “questioning or expressing doubt about the truth or purpose of something”²³) the ‘free-market’, neoliberal, global economic system’s role in causing, exacerbating or maintaining that poverty, inequality, injustice.

As seminar participants suggested, storytelling, providing “clear entry points to the issue to show how this economic system affects people’s lives and the planet”, gives opportunities to relate personal and communal experiences of a ‘domestic’ public to other perspectives and experiences, using, for instance, a Development Compass Rose (Tide, 1995) to ‘map’ the experiences. Combining this with information from, for example, the World Inequality Report and its related information about individual countries (Chancel et al., 2021), and information from the Nevin Economic Research Institute (Nugent, 2021), and relating those to, almost daily, media reports on inequality, injustice, poverty, could provide a starting point.

As mentioned previously, most sampled international development agencies do not produce systemic analyses of the issues they try to address. Most, if not all, however, do produce case studies relating to the experiences of people typically in other parts of the world (another part of the world that may be just around the corner from where we live). These and various other internet and social media sources, as well as personal contacts, can provide the means to explore commonalities (and divergences) of experiences from across a range of situations: building a picture of how each relates to the processes of the global economic system and developing and deepening the active involvement of people in a learning and action process that enquires into, reflects on, discusses and responds to local and global development issues.

22 Instead of a close-ended process in which the reasons for and consequences of problems and their solutions are pre-determined. E.g. see Braun, 1981.

23 <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/challenge>

9 Conclusions and Potential Next Steps

The research described in this report explored the extent to which (the Irish) international development and development education sectors consider and incorporate a critical analysis of the currently dominant form of economics, i.e. neoliberalism, in their education work with the public.

That investigation was based on the assumptions that international development and development education agencies need to give attention to 'root causes' of poverty, inequality and injustice and involve the public in investigations of and responses to those causes, if their work is to have a lasting impact, and that to do so requires attention to structural-systemic economic processes and ideologies.

Based on the information gathered - which admittedly is not comprehensively reflective of all of those involved in the sectors - it appears that both sectors give little attention to these issues. Reviewed websites and documents from Irish Aid and the European Union give virtually no attention to it although they relate many of their policy proposals to aspects that have a clear economic basis. Most NGOs, whose web based information was drawn upon, do likewise not give attention to the global economic system in which they operate.

Those relatively few NGOs that do develop and publish policy analyses relating to their issues and that clearly place their findings in a broader global economic framework, typically name the current economic system as the, or at least a major, cause of poverty, inequality and injustice which they experience through their work. Those causes relate closely or are identical to the ideology and practice of neoliberalism which has become the mainstay of global economics since the 1970s.

Although reported NGO findings and analyses may be a basis for occasional advocacy work of the agencies and dissemination to existing supporters, they do not, in most agencies, form the basis for education or other engagement work with a wider public. Public activities of both those agencies who publish policy analyses and reports and those that do not appear to focus on 'global awareness raising' rather than on 'conscientisation' (i.e. development of a critical awareness of the Irish public's own experiences and position vis-à-vis the situation and through that designing and implementing actions to change the systemic nature of the situation). The absence in virtually all of the sampled agencies of a dedicated education programme that could stimulate such a process of conscientisation is noticeable in this respect. Despite the intentions of the agencies, as expressed in their 'what we do' webpages, this leads to the question if most of the agencies and the international sector as a whole is effective in, or even serious about, making a lasting and fundamental impact on global, systemic, poverty, inequality, and injustice.

The development education sector too appears to give little attention to a systemic exploration of root causes of poverty, inequality, injustice. For many development education organisations the intention, as expressed in, for example, the 'Code of Good Practice for Development Education', is there but resources and projects initiated by the sector, with a few notable exceptions, give little indication that economic systems thinking is high on the agenda.

There are various reasons why this is the case some of which relate to:

- Presumed or real restrictions on governmental and other funding not being available or being lost to organisations if neoliberalism and/or root causes of poverty, inequality and injustice are highlighted;
- A lack of confidence in addressing the issues appropriately (in the organisations and amongst those they work with), including in terms of approaches to raising, discussing, exploring the issues and in terms of conceptual understanding;
- A seeming absence of political will amongst many organisations to act on their stated (anti-poverty, or educational) intentions.

In addressing such obstacles both the current economic situation, with its growing inequalities, and the approaches of development education, with its use of participatory explorations of knowledges, skills and actions, would

appear to give ample opportunities for the international development and development education sectors to enable people to participate in development - through a process of enquiry, discussion, reflection and response.

Potential next steps

The introduction made clear that the research for this report had a limited scope. Part of the report's intention is that it leads to further considerations of the discussed issues - by both the international development and the development education sectors. On the basis of the research outcomes, including through responses from those engaged in the sectors, it would be worthwhile to explore some of the issues through more detailed work, in particular through:

- A broader and deeper engagement of the Dóchas and IDEA memberships in exploring these issues and their consequences for their organisations and sectors.

This could usefully involve further investigations into and discussions, with relevant organisations and their staff, about:

- How the stated intentions of organisations (for example regarding poverty, inequality and injustice) are or can be addressed through educational approaches that involve the public in explorations of the global economic system;
- How the practices of organisations, that are currently often focussed on 'single' issues, can incorporate the facilitation of global systems thinking in their work, in particular through approaches that actively include people in a process that enquires into, discusses, reflects on and responds to the dominant global economic system.

References

Website sources referred to in Section 5

These were accessed at various dates in January-March 2022

International development sector:

- ActionAid: <https://actionaid.ie/about-us/what-we-do/>, and (in section 4) <https://actionaid.ie/take-action/>
- Children in Crossfire: <https://www.childrenincrossfire.org/what-we-do/>
- Christian Aid: <https://www.christianaid.ie/about-us/our-aims>
- Concern: <https://www.concern.net/what-we-do>
- Dóchas: <https://www.dochas.ie/about/>
- Irish Aid: <https://www.irishaid.ie/what-we-do/>
- Oxfam: <https://www.oxfamireland.org/provingit/issues-we-work-on>
- Plan International: <https://www.plan.ie/about-plan/what-we-do/>
- Trócaire: <https://www.trocaire.org/about/>
- UNICEF: <https://www.unicef.ie/about/our-story/>
- World Vision: <https://www.worldvision.ie/about/world-vision/>

Development education sector:

- Irish Aid GCE Strategy 2021-2025:
<https://irishaid.ie/media/irishaid/publications/Global-Citizenship-Education-Strategy.pdf>
- Dóchas Development Education Working Group (Background and Principle Objectives):
<https://www.dochas.ie/assets/Files/DEG-ToR.pdf>
- IDEA Vision 2025: https://irp.cdn-website.com/9e15ba29/files/uploaded/IDEA_Vision2025_DigitalPlusCover_0107.pdf

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Appendix: the Questionnaire

A questionnaire (entitled: "Economics of global development and the international development / development education sectors") was circulated in emails to IDEA members, Dóchas DE Working Group members, other contacts in the international development sector and relevant contacts elsewhere in Europe held by the researcher. The survey was also advertised via the Centre for Global Education and Financial Justice Ireland Facebook accounts. The survey was introduced as follows:

Welcome to this survey. The survey explores the extent to which the international development / development education sectors engage with global economic issues as part of their communications and education work.

The survey forms part of a small research project, organised under the auspices of the Centre for Global Education, Belfast, and Financial Justice Ireland. It is funded by the Community Foundation for Ireland All-Island Fund.

The survey should take about 5 to 10 minutes to complete, although answers to open ended questions may take longer. Apart from the first three questions, all questions are optional. Your individual answers will be treated confidentially and will not be shared with others. In case of problems in completing the questionnaire or in case of other questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

To start please continue. Thank you for your participation!

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29 responses were received. The responses cannot be considered an accurate reflection of opinion in the international development and development education sectors since, for example, respondents were self-selected and would have had some interest in economics and its relevance to international development/ development education. However, responses do give a sense of the experiences and opinions of a sample of collaborators in those sectors.

With the exception of answers to question 5 and 6, and to a lesser extent questions 8 and 9, when comparing responses from a particular category of respondents (i.e. based on type of organisation) with other categories no significant differences were found. The results of the questionnaire are therefore shown without a breakdown into different categories of respondent.

*Responses to all questions were N=29 unless shown otherwise.
Full percentages shown have been rounded to the nearest full percent.*

Questions 1 to 4 were concerned with the respondents' role, type of organisation, and recent priorities for work.

1. What is your job title or occupation?

- CEO/Chief Operating Officer: 14 %
- Education officer/adviser: 24%
- Teacher, lecturer: 24%
- Other: 38% (including (global) education consultants, education evaluators, trade unionist, academics, directors (development education institution/centre))

2. What type of organisation do you work in (Select the option that best describes your situation).

1. Education/Lifelong learning/communications NGO/CSO or network, including 'Other education institution': 34%
2. International development NGO/CSO or network: 24%
3. Academic institution: 14%
4. Government department or govt agency mainly concerned with education/lifelong learning/communication: 3%
5. Other: 24%

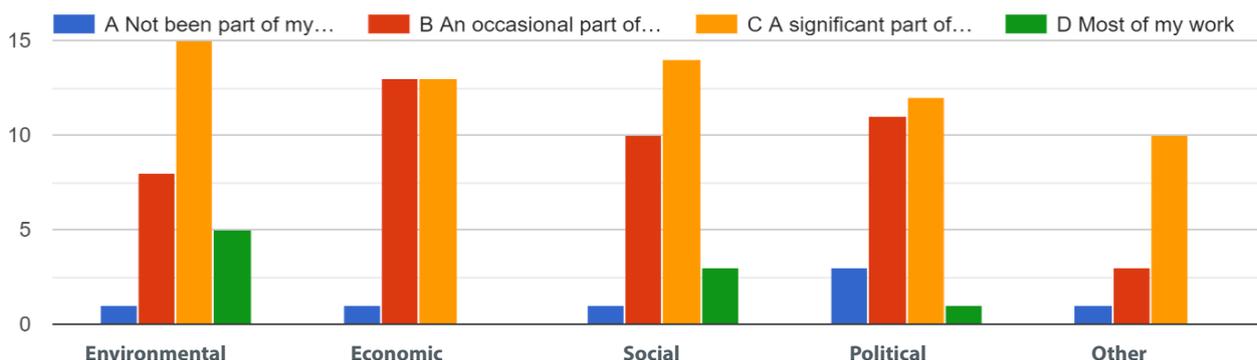
If you answered 'Other' in the previous question, please say briefly what this is
7 responses

- Setting myself up as a freelance consultant - was Education Lead at [an NGDO].
- Freelance
- Association of Local Authorities
- Development education centre, including community development
- Local community and peace building centre
- Currently freelancing and offering my services to various organisations (mainly NGOs)
- Consultancy in development, human rights, and education sector

3. Where is your main residence?

1. The island of Ireland: 52%
2. England, Scotland, Wales: 28%
3. Italy: 10%
4. Other: 10% (2 other countries and 'Africa')

4 During the past three months, which of the following global development themes have been of concern to you in your work



- (1) **Environmental issues, such as climate change:**
- i. A significant part or most of my work: 69%
 - ii. An occasional part of my work: 28%
 - iii. Not part of my work: 2%
- (2) **Social issues, for instance to do with social inequality, injustice, racism, gender:**
- iv. A significant part or most of my work: 55%
 - v. An occasional part of my work: 34%
 - vi. Not part of my work: 11%
- (3) **Economic issues, e.g. to do with poverty, economic inequality):**
- vii. A significant part or most of my work: 44%
 - viii. An occasional part of my work: 44%
 - ix. Not part of my work: 12%
- (4) **Political issues, such as issues to do with decision making or the power to influence decisions:**
- x. A significant part or most of my work: 44%
 - xi. An occasional part of my work: 38%
 - xii. Not part of my work: 18%
- (5) **Other issues:**
- xiii. A significant part or most of my work: 34%
 - xiv. An occasional part of my work: 10%

If you included 'Other' in the previous question, please say briefly what this is.

N=13

- We have been talking about the war in Ukraine
- Intercultural understanding/Peace education
- GCE on the harm caused by volunteering in and supporting orphanages overseas
- Wellbeing and mental health
- GCE / DE in our practice involves all of the above and more. The interdependence between those issues is key.
- Global learning
- Overall management
- Human rights, children's rights, the stories of children in other countries
- Part of my work has been to support the consultation process towards a new European GE Declaration
- General management
- degrowth, colonialism, extractivism
- Anything connected with democratic participation and active citizenship
- Imperialism

Questions 5 to 9 were largely concerned with the practice of the respondents' organisation.

5. Does your organisation ... (please select all those that apply)

N=26

- | | |
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| 1. Produce research or other publications analysing (aspects of) global development? | 54% |
| 2. Produce policy recommendations to do with (aspects of) global development? | 42% |
| 3. Make use of research or other publications produced by others to inform the content of your work? | 92% |

In responding to this question, those involved in an NGDO tended to refer to all three options while others showed a greater focus on 'making use of research ... produced by others' with a lower emphasis on 'producing research' and 'producing policy recommendations'.

6. How does your organisation make use of the research or those publications?

(Please select all that apply)

N=26

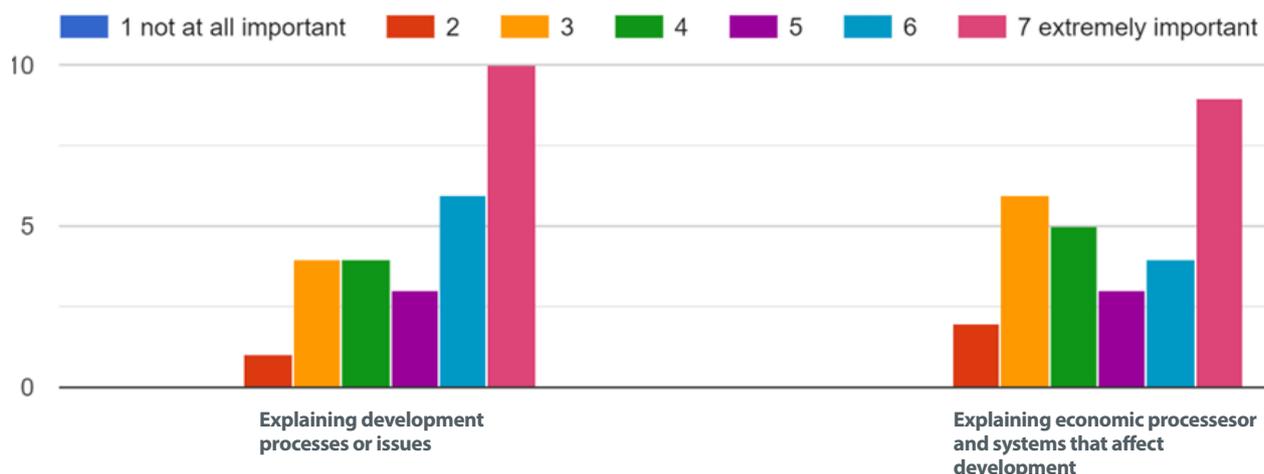
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|--|-----|
| 1. In developing and implementing education/lifelong learning activities: | 81% |
| 2. Circulated to supporters for information and/or to others who are interested: | 50% |
| 3. As the basis for targeted information or lobbying: | 42% |
| 4. In developing advocacy-campaigning actions: | 31% |
| 5. In developing and implementing fundraising and/or organisational PR activities: | 23% |

Those involved in an NGDO mentioned fewer occurrences of use of such resources in education/lifelong learning activities (approx. half of NGDO respondents) and a slightly higher use of such resources in 'targeted information/lobbying' and 'advocacy-campaigning'.

7. In the practice of your organisation, how important are each of the following?

Please give a rating using a 7-point scale where 1= not at all important and 7= extremely important.

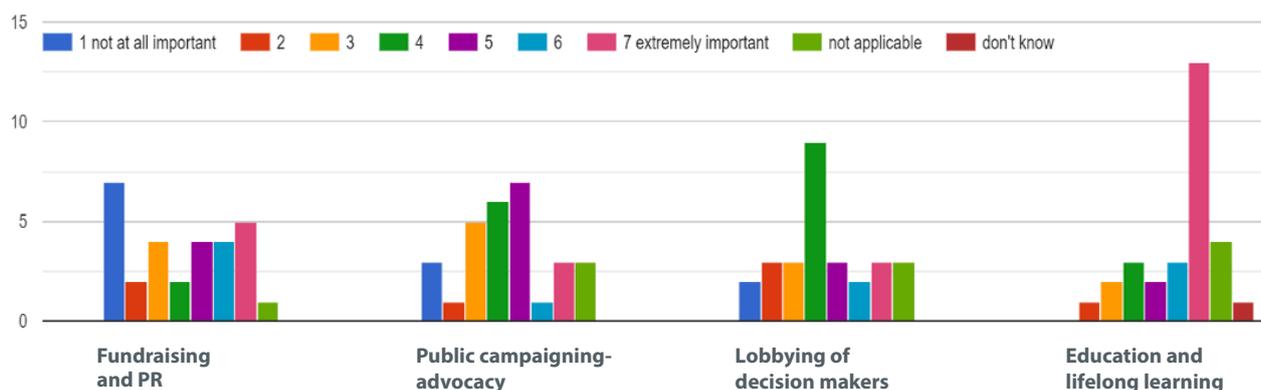
The left hand scale shows the number of responses for each option.



8. In drawing attention to (aspects of) GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT, how important are each of the following in the work of your organisation?

Please give a rating using a 7-point scale where 1= not at all important and 7= extremely important.

The left hand scale shows the number of responses for each option.

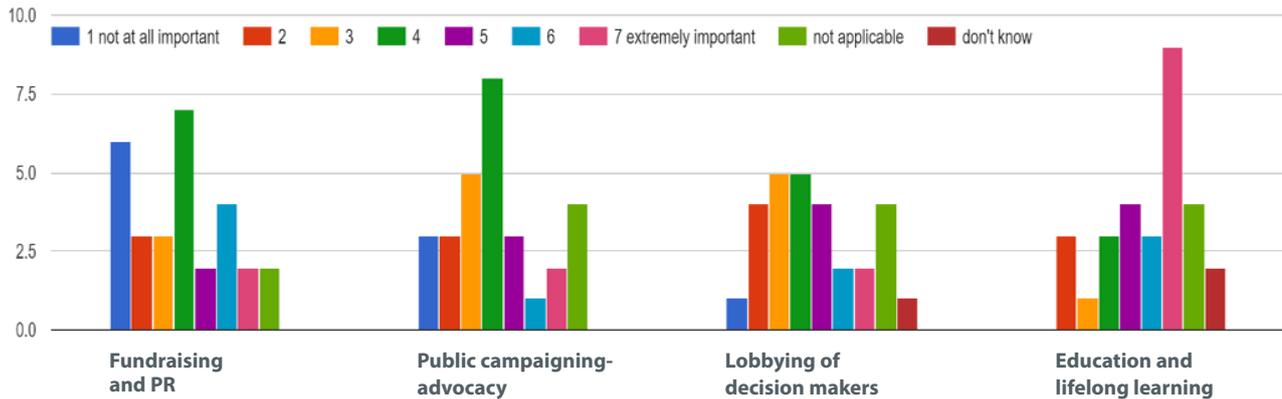


In this and the following question respondents involved in NGOs gave slightly greater importance to Fundraising and PR, Lobbying of decision makers, and Public campaigning-advocacy - and correspondingly somewhat less importance to Education and lifelong learning - than respondents involved in other organisations.

9. In drawing attention to (aspects of) the ECONOMIC CAUSES of poverty, inequality or injustice, how important are each of the following in the work of your organisation?

Please use a rating using a 7-point scale, with 1= not at all important and 7= extremely important.

The left hand scale shows the number of responses for each option.

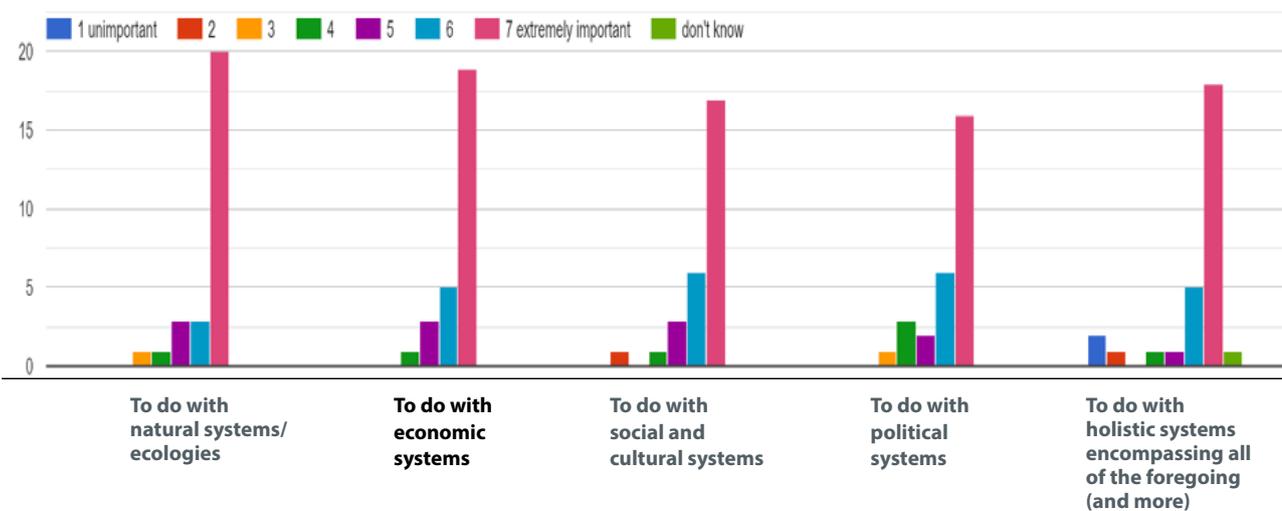


Questions 10 to 14 asked about the opinion of respondents to do with aspects of the research.

10. In your opinion, how important are conceptual knowledge and systems awareness when discussing global development, i.e. an ability to think and reflect on the systemic nature of the world?

Please use a rating using a 7-point scale, with 1= unimportant and 7= extremely important.

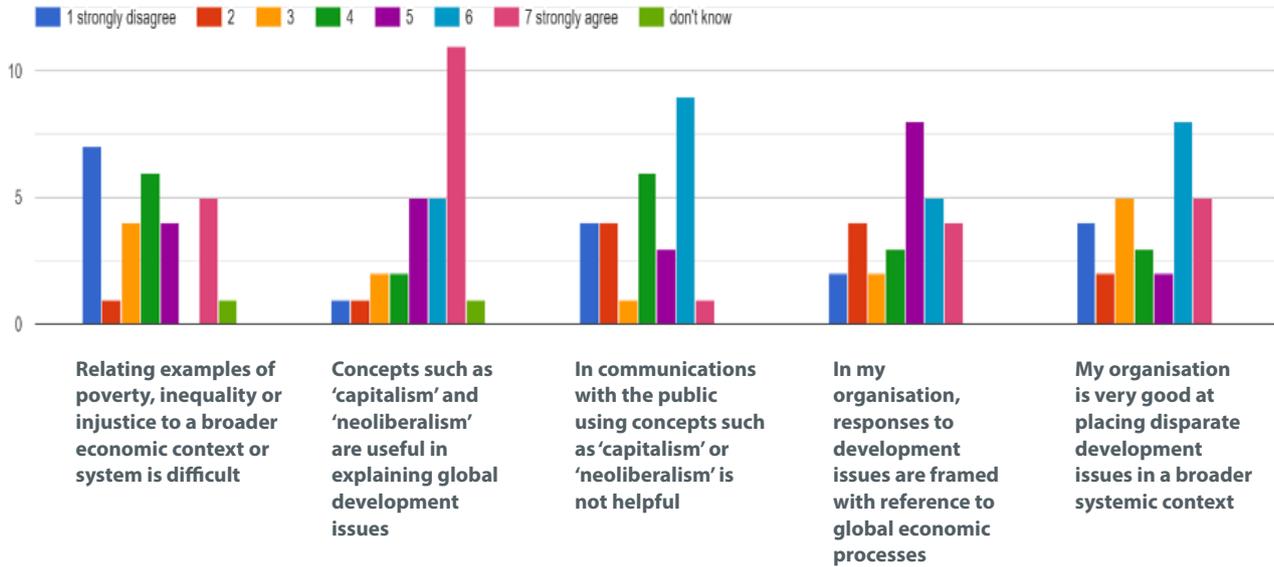
The left hand scale shows the number of responses for each option.



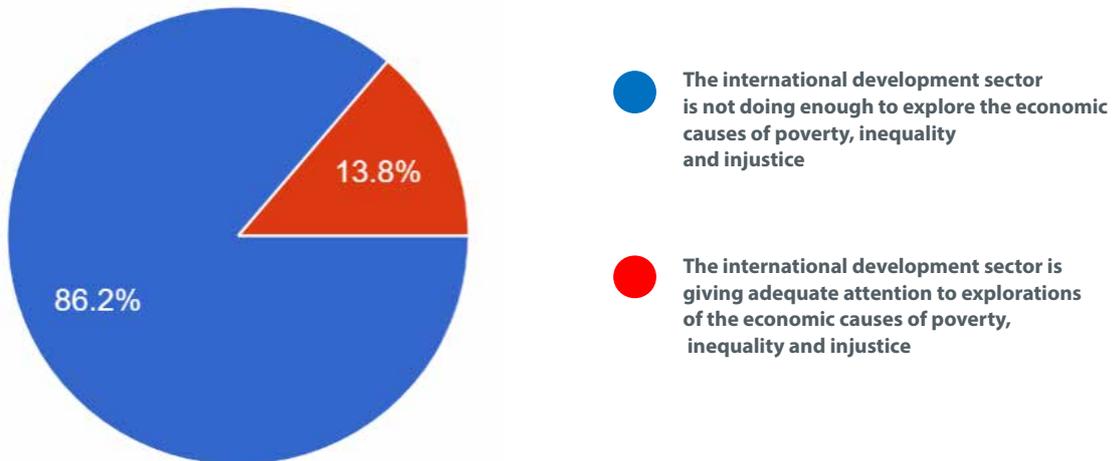
11. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Please use a rating using a 7-point scale, with 1= not at all important and 7= extremely important.

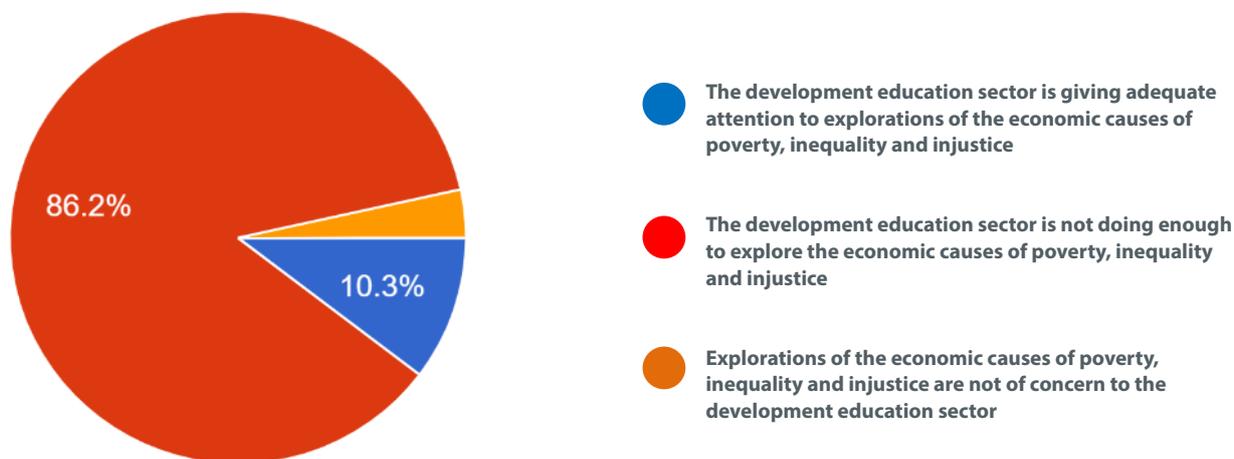
The left hand scale shows the number of responses for each option.



12. From the following two statements about the international development sector, which do you MOST agree with? (In this context 'the international development sector' encompasses NGOs/CSOs, government departments and agencies (incl. in the European Commission), concerned with global aid and development policies and actions.)



13. From the following three statements about the development education sector, which do you MOST agree with? (In this context 'the development education sector' encompasses NGOs/CSOs, government departments and agencies (incl. in the European Commission), concerned with awareness raising and education actions about, for or in global development.)



14. Which other factors, not mentioned previously, are important in considering the economics of global development and its relevance to the international development organisations and/or development education programmes?

N=23

- "Other factors, not mentioned previously are important in considering the economics of global development and its relevance to international development organisations and/or to development education programmes.
 - (1) To provide capital to improve a new and an existing business
 - (2) This may improve our maturity confidence and self-reliant
 - (3) The act of matching a person with a job
 - (4) To sustain a livelihood those reducing youths involvement in crimes
- Social and structural issues that impact the economics
- Cultural, religious and ideological belief systems and value systems, and indigenous knowledge as well as traditions of behaviour and beliefs.
- I find the recent emphasis on emotions, climate anxiety and self-care take away from the more political aspects to DevEd work
- Failed promise of modernity
- Understanding imperialism
- Conflict
- Economics should be at the heart of what development educators do we are not doing our job without it being mentioned.
- Economics, politics, power, gender, inequality etc etc are all elements/variables of complex systems In this light Q 12 and 13 needed space for much more nuanced responses. The binaries presented can't capture the rich tapestry of efforts in this area.
- For DE - alternative and more just economic concepts and theories ; and practical alternative examples - e.g. cooperative movement etc.
- Reference to frameworks related to global development and how these are used, eg, SDGs
- Recently I highlighted an issue that goes right to the heart of development education. I received many replies agreeing with my concern. But the recipients only replied it their "private" capacity not as the organisation they represented/work for. This, I believe is creating double-standards within the development education sector.

- Recognising the real challenges in Ireland itself regarding the issues of global citizenship is hampered by mixed messaging from Govt; and implementation of recommendations are absolutely hampered by sluggish (at best) or non-responsiveness by Govt Departmental staff: such issues generate 'responses' that are poorly coordinated, at best, 'kneejerk' cosmetic actions that do little to really facilitate long term change. Depts seek to 'outdo' each other in 'front facing' public contexts without truly embracing the principles of Global Citizenship and the Global Development challenge.
- Producing evidences regarding achievements
- Science debates regarding methods
- The corporatisation of the INGO sector.
- Critical reflection on neo-colonial power-relations, also generally critical reflection on framing of information/ how political systems in the 'developing world' are presented (it is theoretically included in the very concept of global education, but I feel there is very little critical reflection on the actual framing of political/economic systems of a country - Ukraine being a very current example)
- Tax justice both locally and globally
- Contexts that are recognized and easily related to by target audiences. Have people stories to aid clarity of concepts.
- This isn't exactly an answer to the question above, but I want to share that I have a sense that organisations like Oxfam are not as focussed on the economic factors contributing to poverty as they used to be - and this affects the focus of development education programmes and resources too. For example, the tax campaign has been deprioritised in recent years in favour of a much stronger focus on the climate crisis, feminist leadership, gender equality and decolonisation. The focus is more strongly on a range of inequalities such as around gender and race rather than a more specific focus on poverty reduction or particular economic philosophies and systems that lead to extreme poverty.
- Nurturing alternatives which already exist, particularly from global south. So moving from conceptual and issues based to a solution focused model. sometimes DE can stay in the head and actions born out of issues thinking; design thinking and what communities are doing in spite of injustice inequality unjust economics, etc. i don't think enough attention paid to these innovations as part of the DE/ Int Dev work. Too much thinking from north
- Corporates infiltrating schools for "Entrepreneur"/Junior Achievement schemes



The Centre for Global Education (CG E) is a development non-governmental organisation that provides education services to increase awareness of international development issues. Its central remit is to promote education that challenges the underlying causes of poverty and inequality in the developing world and effect action toward social and economic justice.

The Centre equips individuals and organisations to understand the cultural, economic, social and political influences on our lives that result from our growing interdependence with other countries and societies. It also provides learners with the skills, values, knowledge and understanding necessary to facilitate action that will contribute to poverty eradication both locally and globally.

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