

Ireland's Response to the PCD Agenda

Alan Matthews

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“Strengthening Institutions for Development and
Poverty Reduction”

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Introduction

- ABIA research projects on policy coherence in the IIS
- Key messages
 - Ireland has travelled far in putting institutional **mechanisms** for PCD in place, but more can be done to improve the PCD **process**
 - Institutions without political commitment will be hollow and formalistic



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Political commitments

- 2006 White Paper on Irish Aid
- ‘Development cooperation policy is a policy of the Government as a whole and **we are committed to improving coherence across the Government system in support of this policy.** Development cooperation does not operate in isolation from other policies. Policies across the range of Government business impact upon developing countries. There is a need for coherence between development and other policies to maximise their positive impact on developing countries and to minimise possible negative impacts.’



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Political commitments

- 2006 White Paper on Irish Aid
- ‘Coherence is about more than vetting decisions for potential negative impact on development. It is also about harnessing the potential across Government for ideas and actions which can contribute to sustainable global development and to the objectives of Irish Aid’.
- Proposed creation of an **Inter-Departmental Committee on Development**



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Political commitments

- 2007 Programme for Government
- Parties committed to **‘adopting an integrated approach to development across all Government Departments’**.



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Inter-Departmental Committee on Development

- Structure
 - Chaired by Minister of State for Overseas Development
 - Membership at Assistant Secretary level from all government departments
 - Secretariat provided by Irish Aid
- Objectives
 - to strengthen coherence in the government's approach to development
 - to make best use of the expertise and skills available across the public service



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Inter-Departmental Committee on Development

- Terms of reference
 - sharing of information between Departments where there is potential to assist developing countries
 - monitoring and evaluation of policy areas with implications for developing countries in the context of overall Government policy
 - to seek independent advice a necessary
 - to recommend actions to promote greater policy coherence for development across relevant government departments
 - to monitor and take account of work done in the field of policy coherence, including by ABIA and like-minded countries
 - to draft an annual work programme and to report annually to the Minister for Foreign Affairs



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Inter-Departmental Committee on Development

- Initiatives
 - Sub Group on Multilateral Organisations
 - Sub Group on Skill Sets
 - Overseas Development Awareness Seminars
 - First annual report
- Questions for discussion
 - Internal policy coherence vs PCD
 - Where is oversight and evaluation role?



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PCD complexities

- Inherently political
 - Involves trade-offs between competing interests
- Coherence with whom?
 - Developing world no longer a homogeneous grouping



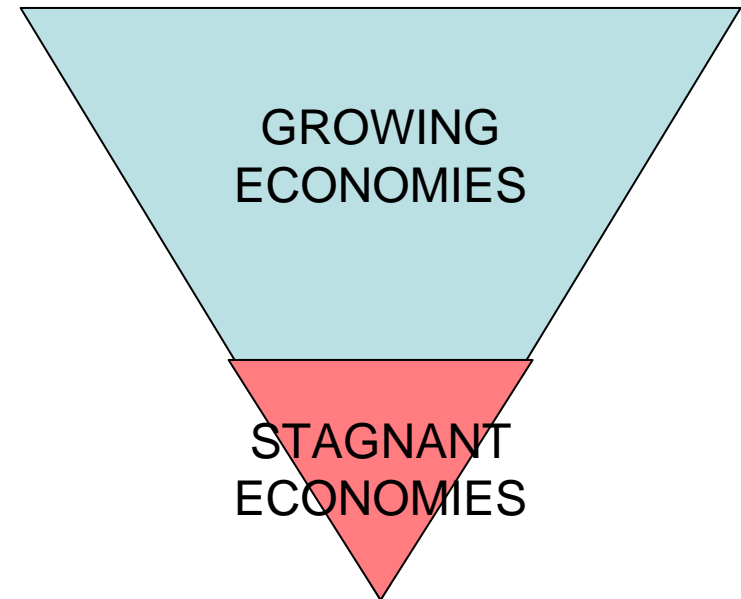
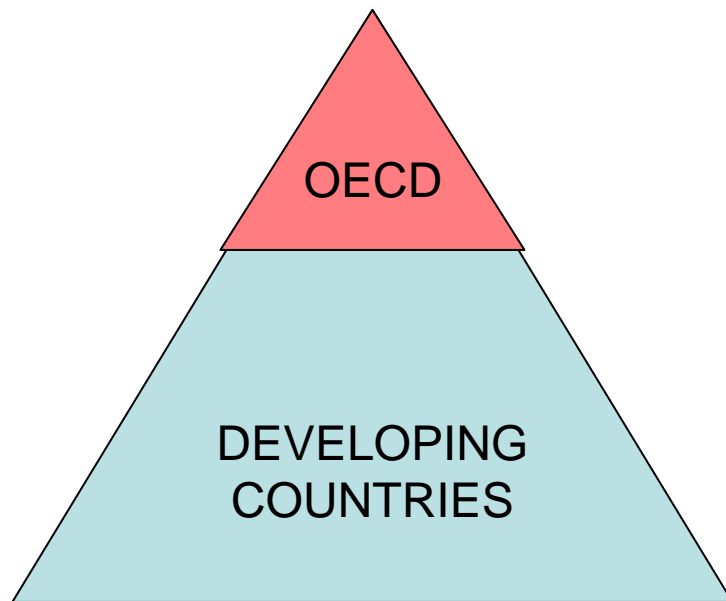
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'The bottom billion'



Paul Collier, 2007



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PCD complexities

- Inherently political
 - Involves trade-offs between competing interests
- Coherence with whom?
 - Developing world no longer a homogeneous grouping
 - Important because policies and interests may differ



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PCD complexities

- Frequently technical
 - Examples: definition of chocolate
 - maximum levels of aflatoxin
 - pigmeat export subsidies
- Policy impacts and solutions often uncertain
 - Recruitment of health staff



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What is needed to promote development-friendly policies?

- C A P A



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What is needed to promote development-friendly policies?

- Commitment
- Analysis
- Procedures
- Alliances



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Commitment

- Minister of State with PCD as a priority
- Need for government-wide policy documents and sectoral policy frameworks on PCD
 - National Trade Policy Statement
 - National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2013



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Analysis

- Identifying policy impacts may be complex and controversial
- Peer-reviewed analysis hugely important
- Possibility of linking into EU networks



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Procedures

- Strengthen institutions
 - Formal designation of focal points within Departments with brief to monitor policies and decisions affecting developing countries
 - Emphasise oversight and evaluation role
 - Develop and use policy coherence indicators
 - Improve PCD process



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Improving the PCD process

- Reshape the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) process to include PCD
- What is RIA?
 - Developed in US since 1980s, Ireland a relative newcomer
 - OECD report *Regulatory Reform in Ireland* 2001
 - Key commitment of White Paper *Regulating Better* 2004
 - Roll out of RIA across Departments following pilot process *Report on the Introduction of Regulatory Impact Analysis* 2005
 - Commitment to review in Social Partnership *Towards 2016*
 - *Review of the Operation of Regulatory Impact Analysis* published last week



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Regulatory impact assessment

- (i) Identification of likely costs, an estimation of their magnitude and on whom they fall.
 - (ii) A description of expected benefits and where these will fall.
 - (iii) Investigation whether negative impacts on:
 - (a) national competitiveness;
 - (b) the socially excluded or vulnerable groups;
 - (c) the environment
- and whether regulations :
- (d) involve a significant policy change in an economic market;
 - (e) impinge disproportionately on the rights of citizens;
 - (f) impose a disproportionate compliance burden on third parties



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Regulatory impact assessment

- Applies to
 - all proposals for primary legislation involving changes to the regulatory framework (subject to some limited exceptions)
 - significant Statutory Instruments
 - proposals for EU Directives and significant EU Regulations when they are published by the EU Commission, so that the information they generate can inform Ireland's negotiating position.



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Regulatory impact assessment

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 - (c) the environment
 - (d) developing countries



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RIA – contribution to PCD process

- RIAs published and available on Department websites at same time as legislation is announced
- RIAs require systematic public consultation
- RIAs reviewed by relevant Departments
 - Business and consumer impacts reviewed by Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
 - Poverty impacts reviewed by Department of Social and Family Affairs
 - **Development impacts reviewed by Irish Aid**
- RIAs still a relatively new process – now under review
 - **Opportunity for development community to shape**



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Alliances

- Political leaders respond to perceived public opinion
- Vital role for grassroots movements and civil society campaigns
- PCD requires open dialogue with different stakeholders
 - Identification of win-win strategies
- Importance of building networks and coalitions



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Key messages again

- Significant progress on setting up formal institutions for PCD
- Opportunity now to improve PCD process through insertion into RIA instrument
- Substantive PCD requires research, analysis, information, dialogue and civil society activism to ensure political commitment



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