



# Scotland's Place in Building a Just World

Shaping a coherent international development policy for Scotland

## Introduction

NIDOS is a network of over 100 Scottish international development organisations working to tackle poverty and inequality worldwide. In anticipation of the [2014 referendum](#) on the constitutional future of Scotland, NIDOS, without advocating any particular outcome, believes that Scotland's role in international development should be part of the preceding debate.

## Principles of international development

When the Scottish Parliament was reconvened in 1999, four words were inscribed on the mace: [wisdom, justice, integrity and compassion](#). Together they were held up as the key values of a new Scotland. We want to better understand what Scotland's values mean for our relations with people beyond our borders – specifically, for our international development policy. We believe Scotland's behaviour towards, and impact on, people around the world should be driven by our values as a nation, and that only by making them explicit can we be held accountable to them – by others and by ourselves. We believe the values on the mace are a good place to start.

## Let's not give with one hand and take with the other

While we welcome the commitments to international aid of both the Scottish and UK Governments, we also know that aid alone is not enough to eliminate global poverty. The money given in aid is only a small part of our international impact. How our companies operate, their procurement policies, their human and environmental policies when they operate abroad, their financing policies etc., the things we as consumers buy, and government policies on energy, transport, climate, procurement etc, all impact on international development.

That is why NIDOS is calling on any future Scottish Government, whatever the outcome of the referendum, to consider the impact on international development of all of its policies. This concept of [policy coherence](#), which has been successfully adopted in countries such as Sweden and Norway, would see all government departments and policies comply with, and contribute to, the goal of equitable and sustainable global development. Or in other words, ensure we don't give with one hand and take with the other.

## Recommendations for Scotland's international development policy

We are recommending that the current, and any future Scottish Government, adopts the concept of policy coherence, across government, and that mechanisms are put into place to ensure this. However, we are aware that action cannot be taken on all fronts at once, and are therefore recommending the following as initial areas for focus for proactive action, where we feel there is currently a particular need for greater coherence.

### The Economy & Financial Systems

**22.2% of the global population live on less than \$1.25 a day. The vast majority of these people are women.** *World Bank, 2012*

The world is economically unjust. This is not the result of geography or luck, but of global economic systems which reinforce power dynamics and keep people and nations in poverty. Regardless of constitutional settlement, by promoting ideals of economic justice and investigating innovative ways of influencing the global economy, Scotland can become a strong voice in issues of justice. To that end, we propose introducing a new debt system which tackles economic injustice and promotes responsible lending, fairer tax systems and rules nationally, the regulation of food speculation, and the promotion of a new economy which supports socio-economic benefits over narrow fiscal growth.

## Trade & Procurement

**While international trade is worth \$10 million a minute, poor countries only account for 0.4% of this trade - half the share they had in 1980.** *Christian Aid*

The impact that trade and procurement has on the economies of developing countries is much more significant than that of aid and therefore crucial for long-term sustainable development. We propose the introduction of fairer, sustainable and equitable trade rules that lead to development for the benefit of people, communities and livelihoods. We also call for Scotland to take the lead through legislation, guidance and practice, in pursuing ethical, social and environmental standards in public procurement.

## Finance for Development

**Aid has saved the lives of millions of men, women and children and has helped to educate many more.** *Save the Children*

We must aim to create a world where aid is no longer needed, but until that is achieved, we call for a commitment to, and the use of, Overseas Development Aid, in line with international agreements and best practice. However, we also recognise the need to go beyond traditional aid, by supporting new and innovative forms of development and climate finance.

## Climate Justice

**Climate change is the greatest humanitarian challenge facing mankind today. And it is a challenge that has a grave injustice at its heart.** *Kofi Annan*

Tackling climate change is fundamentally a matter of climate justice. While the predicted direct effects of global warming in Scotland include increased likelihood of flooding and more frequent storms and heavy rain, the impacts in other parts of the world will be far more profound. Recognising Scotland's responsibility for climate change and the impact that has on developing countries, we recommend enshrining the concept of climate justice, mitigating Scotland's impact on climate change and supporting climate adaptation in developing countries.

## Access to Resources

**You don't need guns to kill people. When you take food from a village by destroying farm lands and cash crops, you are starving its people.** *Alfred Brownell, Green Advocates, Liberia*

All too often, poor communities are losing access to the essential resources of water, land and food, on which they depend. To prevent this, we propose the development and implementation of a progressive contribution to international water security and tackling water poverty globally; new regulations and transparency over land deals that benefit poor communities; and making food fair, sustainable and accessible.

## Global Education

**Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.** *Nelson Mandela*

Recognising our shared responsibility for the world we live in and the role that Scotland's citizens can play, we call for greater investment in Global Citizenship Education for children, young people and adults.

## Want to find out more?

This briefing is a summary of the NIDOS report '**Scotland's Place in Building a Just World: Shaping a coherent international development policy for Scotland**'. The full report can be accessed on the NIDOS website [www.nidos.org.uk](http://www.nidos.org.uk), where you will also find out more about NIDOS, our work and our members, or by contacting us at the details below.

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