

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Department of Foreign Affairs are seeking expressions of interest from suitably qualified individuals to serve as Chairperson of the Ireland- Africa Rural Development Committee.

The Ireland-Africa Rural Development Committee (IARDC) is responsible for the alignment of the recommended actions from the National Task Team on Rural Africa within Ireland's existing policy framework (Global Island, A Better, World, The Africa Strategy, Food Vision 2030). It is mandated to ensure the implementation, accountability and resourcing of these recommendations.

Detailed information on the Committee such as background; function and objectives; structure and operation, including membership; role of the Chairperson; requirements for the role; tenure; and remuneration can be found below.

If you are interested in this position, please submit a short cover letter (max 400 words), including brief CV (max 800 words), demonstrating how you meet the requirements of this position to the IARDC Secretariat iardc@agriculture.gov.ie

The closing date and time for receipt of expressions of interest is **17:00 on 8th November 2023.**

Expressions of Interest for the position of Chairperson of the Ireland- Africa rural Development Committee

The Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine are seeking expressions of interest from suitably qualified individuals to serve as Chairperson of the Ireland- Africa Rural Development Committee.

Background

In March 2019, the European Commission's Task Force on Rural Africa (TFRA) published its report, setting out a bold yet robust Africa-Europe agenda for rural transformation. This task force was co-established by former Commissioner Hogan (AGRI) and former Commissioner Mimica (DEVCO). The report seeks to intensify cooperation within, and between, EU Member States and African countries. The report, and corresponding Action Agenda, was subsequently endorsed at the AU-EU ministerial conference in Rome in June later that year.

In response to the outcomes of the EU Task Force on Rural Africa, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) agreed to establish a National Task Team on Rural Africa (NTTRA). This was the subject of a Memorandum for Information to Government in June 2019. This group was tasked with preparing a report on Ireland's potential contribution to the work of the EU's TFRA. The Task Team included representatives from academia, civil society, business, semi-state bodies and the African diaspora as well as senior officials from both Departments.

The report of the National Task Team on Rural Africa, finalised in October 2020, recommended the establishment of a framework for an **Ireland Africa Rural Development Ecosystem**. This included a central co-ordination function, namely the formation of the **Ireland Africa Rural Development Committee (IARDC)**.

Function and objectives of the Committee

The IARDC is responsible for the alignment of the NTTRA-recommended actions within Ireland's existing policy framework (Global Island, A Better, World, The Africa Strategy, Food Vision 2030). It is mandated to ensure the implementation, accountability and resourcing of these recommendations.

Objectives of the Committee

As articulated in the NTTRA report, the Committee's objectives are as follows:

- I. Promote effective Rural Development initiatives delivered by actors within the Ireland Africa Rural Development Ecosystem which ensure:
 - sustainability and economic viability of women and men smallholder farmers, agrifood MSMEs and other enterprises within the rural economy
 - More equitable and sustainable rural employment opportunities
- II. Increased investment in African rural economies
 - Leaving as much value in African rural communities as possible
 - Inclusive economic growth with an emphasis on women's economic empowerment and recognition of their critical role in the food system
- III. Increased two-way trade between Africa and Ireland/EU that benefits the furthest behind and is in line with the SDGs

Annual Report

On behalf of the Committee, the chairperson will prepare and present to the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine and to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, an annual report on the strategic development of the **Ireland Africa Rural Development Ecosystem**. This document will report against the three objectives of the Committee and will provide recommendations for improvement based on the report's findings.

Structure and operation of the Committee

Membership

The membership of the IARDC will be gender balanced and will include at a minimum representatives from the follow institutions/networks:

- Department Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Department of Foreign Affairs
- Sustainable Food Systems Ireland (representing the relevant State Agencies)
- A representative of Irish agribusinesses with interest in Africa
- A representative from the Irish Forum for International Agricultural Development (IFIAD), for the knowledge and learning functions
- A representative of Irish Agri-Business
- Representatives from Africa and/or the Africa Diaspora in Ireland

The Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine will ask IFIAD to appoint its own representative. The Departments will appoint the representative from Africa and/or the African Diaspora in Ireland, and also the representative of Irish agribusinesses. For each representative, an alternate representative will need to be appointed.

The maximum number of Committee members will be twelve, with a minimum quorum of seven members including the Chair for any meeting. Where the Chair is unable to attend the meeting for any reason, the meeting is declared quorate only if the Chair has deputised someone in his/her stead.

Other relevant stakeholders, including representatives from the European Commission, can be invited to participate in Committee meetings from time to time.

Committee members work collaboratively to:

- Deliver on the strategic objectives
- Agree priorities, annual work plans, and monitoring of progress
- Provide input to the Committee's annual report
- Advocate for the Committee's recommendations within their stakeholder group/institution
- Promote the Committee's recommendations within their own organisations and wider stakeholder networks.
- Establish time-bound sub-committees to deliver particular workstreams as required.

Committee Secretariat

A Secretariat for the Committee provides administrative and technical support. This is resourced from within existing resources in the Departments of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) and Foreign Affairs (DFA). This secretariat also performs the role of knowledge broker for the wider Ireland Africa Rural Development Ecosystem.

The Committee meets every six months or more frequently if agreed.

Role of the Chairperson

The Chairperson, will provide leadership for the Committee and ensure its efficient functioning, lead on preparation and delivery of the annual report, and represent the Committee at relevant events.

The Committee Chairperson will ensure that discussions take place in an open and respectful manner, with decisions be taken by consensus where possible. In exceptional circumstances, decision may be taken by a majority vote of Committee members present.

Requirements for the Role

Expressions of interest in serving as the Chairperson of the IARDC are being sought from persons with an appreciation of the work of the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and relevant experience to effectively discharge the role as set out above.

Essential Requirements

Candidates should have proven knowledge, skills and experience of agriculture, food systems and nutrition in both the Irish domestic and international development (preferably African), context in a leadership role in public, private, academic or non-governmental organisations. Candidates should be conversant with Irish Food and Agriculture policy and Irish international development policy.

Personal Qualities

Candidates should have:

- High levels of integrity, ethical standards and professionalism.
- Excellent communications skills (oral and listening).
- Possess a wide Irish and international professional network relevant to the role.
- Strong interpersonal skills.
- Sound judgement

Tenure

The Chairperson will be appointed by the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and will serve for a term of three years. Should the Chair become incapacitated, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and Agriculture, Food and the Marine, will appoint a replacement.

Remuneration

Remuneration for the role is in accordance with agreed Civil Service rates at Assistant Secretary General level or equivalent. Fees paid are non-pensionable and chargeable to taxation under "Schedule E" and subject to deductions (i.e. PAYE, PRSI and USC as appropriate) at source under the

PAYE system. Note remuneration does not apply to serving public servants. Reimbursement for travelling expenses incurred in the performance of Committee duties will be provided in accordance with the Civil and Public Service travel and subsistence rates and regulations.

Submitting an Expression of Interest

If you are interested in this position, please submit a short cover letter (max 400 words), including brief CV (max 800 words), demonstrating how you meet the requirements of this position to the IARDC Secretariat iardc@agriculture.gov.ie Please also confirm that you do not have any conflicts of interest or legal impediment which would be likely to interfere with your ability to play a full part of the Committee and that you can make yourself available to attend meetings.

The closing date and time for receipt of expressions of interest is – **17:00 on 8th November 2023**

Assessment Process

A selection panel made up of officials from both Departments will:

- review and discuss the expressions of interest received against the identified requirements for the role:
- assess potential appointees further, once they meet the specified appointment criteria, by undertaking any or all of the following steps:
 - Consideration of the written applications; and/or
 - Interview/Meeting/conference call; and/or
 - Carry out any other selection method deemed appropriate.
- recommend the strongest candidate, based on the criteria and assessment process, to the Secretary Generals and to the Ministers of both Departments for approval.

Appointment Process

The successful candidate will be notified in writing and contacted by the Committee Secretariat to arrange induction.

Privacy Statement

Information provided on applications submitted to the Departments of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and of Foreign Affairs will be processed in line with their Data Protection and Privacy Statements.