INTRODUCTION

In 2006, the First Minister, Rhodri Morgan, launched the Wales for Africa programme. Wales for Africa is a framework for Wales to make a unique contribution towards sustainable international development including the Millennium Development Goals. This briefing explains the purpose of Wales for Africa, who is involved in its implementation and some of the key successes and challenges to date.

WALES FOR AFRICA: A FRAMEWORK FOR INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

What is Wales for Africa?

The overall UK responsibility for international development lies with the central Department for International Development (DFID). However, as a devolved nation, there was demand for Wales to make its own unique contribution. The Wales for Africa framework explains the principles upon which the Welsh Government aims to contribute to the Millennium Development Goals and international development. It recognises that it is a complex and evolving field and so has created a flexible plan that can respond to events; it represents a long term commitment from the Welsh Government. The focus is on Sub Saharan Africa where Wales has long-established links.

The framework consists of some key principles that underlie all work done under the programme. These include:

• Making sure actions are based on links between Wales and Africa that are mutually beneficial and sustainable.
• Complementing DFID and other international development agencies to deliver the Millennium Development Goals.
• Drawing on the concerns and connections of communities in Wales and the areas in which Wales has an expertise, such as education, health, gender and language.
• Learning from previous experience.
• Using public procurement to support businesses to alleviate poverty.

Four areas are identified in the plan: The Welsh response to international disasters, the Welsh contribution to international sustainable development, the Millennium Development Goals and emergencies (www.wales.gov.uk/walesforafrica).
WALES FOR AFRICA

Implementation: Who and how?

WCVA
WALES - AFRICA COMMUNITY LINKS
They run an inclusive network for communities in Wales that link with Sub Saharan Africa Communities, offering training and support. They administer grants of £60,000 per year.

Emerging World
INTERNATIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES (ILO) PROGRAMME
All public sector employees can apply to spend 8 weeks sharing skills in Sub Saharan Africa. Their skills are matched to a suitable placement.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT HUB
Run by the Hub Coordinator, this aims to support international development networks in Wales by providing training, events, information and opportunities for joint working.

WELSH GOVERNMENT: EUROPEAN AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT
A team of 3 to oversee and monitor Wales for Africa:

FAIR TRADE WALES
The Wales for Africa Programme funds Fair Trade Wales. The Fair Trade Campaign led to Wales being the first Fair Trade Nation and now works to build on that success, through building knowledge of fair trade in schools, businesses and across Wales.

A MILLION TREES PROJECT
This is funded by Size of Wales who have committed to plant trees to cover land the size of Wales. 1 million of these trees are managed by the Wales for Africa programme. Trees planted in the same region as TACC.

Size of Wales

WALES FOR AFRICA HEALTH LINKS
This is a network with a broad make up of professional health experts. They support health projects that link Wales and Africa. They administer grants of £100,000 per year. The coordinator for the network is funded by Public Health Wales.

University of Glamorgan
TERRITORIAL APPROACH TO CLIMATE CHANGE PROJECT (TACC), UGANDA
A partnership of individuals, civil society groups, private sector and government to increase resilience to climate change, including reforestation in Mbale.
What are the successes and challenges?

Melissa Willmot, who works in the European and External Affairs Department, explained some of the key successes of the project:

“The programme has gone from strength to strength – from five community links to over a hundred, becoming the world’s first Fair Trade Nation, developing a world-leading partnership with Mbale in Uganda – the movement behind the programme has been relentless since day one. Our ambition is to continue the development of the programme, working together with the thousands of engaged and motivated people across Wales to carry on the journey.”

Proportionally, Wales is also doing very well in establishing links between UK hospitals and Sub Saharan Africa, with 1/5 of all UK links based in Wales. The TACC partnership is paving the way in terms of innovation in sustainable development. These successes benefit both Wales and Sub Saharan Africa. For example, the ILO programme has assisted with professional development in a way unlike any other leadership programme:

Participant in the programme, Julie Lineham, said: “I think more globally now, I see the wider picture of the council within which I work whereas before I had perhaps been blinkered and seen only a part. I see the International Learning Opportunities as the start of my journey to developing my potential as I go along the management path.”

Of course, there are challenges. According to Melissa, there is so much amazing work going on the community, but limited budget and resources: “It’s about spending the Welsh pound as effectively as possible and creating a movement of interested and motivated people across Wales.”

What Next?

The Wales for Africa programme will continue to build on its successes, while developing its monitoring and evaluation processes to capture progress and measure impact. Hopefully other countries will follow the Welsh lead and become fair trade nations in the near future: “The Wales for Africa programme is continually working to support more people and communities across Wales to make a greater and more effective contribution to international development,” said Melissa.
FURTHER READING AND REFERENCES

The full details of the Wales for Africa key principles, plan and objectives as well as case studies: wales.gov.uk/topics/sustainabledevelopment/intdevelopment/walesforafrica/frameworkafrica/?lang=en.

Wales – Africa Community Links website with information about their projects and the funding application process: www.goldstarcommunities.org.uk/

Wales for Africa Health Links website which gives information about upcoming events, a database of health links and annual reports: www.wales.nhs.uk/sites3/home.cfm?orgid=834

This is the web page for the International Learning Opportunities programme explaining how to apply and case studies: wales.gov.uk/psmwsubsite/psmw/personaldev/international/?lang=en

Size of Wales is funding the One Million Trees project in Uganda – the project updates can be found on this page: more.sizeofwales.org.uk/index.php/portfolio/one-million-trees-uganda/

Find out about their work in Wales and the latest news about Wales as a Fair Trade Nation: www.fairtradewales.com

Information about the TACC project and the latest newsletter: http://wales.gov.uk/topics/sustainabledevelopment/walesforafrica/tacc/?lang=en

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