



A Resource for Higher Education Educators

Developed by Dr Gertrude Cotter, School of Education, UCC. September 2024.

TRANSCRIPTION

Programme 2: 1970s and 1980s onwards

Guests: Mary Mangan, Tony Daly and Eilish Dillon

Gertrude Cotter (GC):



You are listening to Community Radio Youghal 104 FM. My name is Gertrude Cotter, and you are listening to the Global Hub, the program that deals with social justice issues at home and abroad. You are very welcome to the program. This program is the first in a series of eight programs which documents the history of development and global citizenship education in Ireland. The Global Hub is funded by Trócaire, the International Development Agency. But it must be said that

Trócaire has not influenced the editorial position of any of these programs. Trócaire has a long-standing development education program, and they have funded the Global Hub since 2015.

Through funding different groups like Community Radio Youghal, they help us all to educate ourselves about complex global social, economic, political, and environmental issues. There is a very strong activist and academic tradition in Ireland whereby people in all walks of life, sometimes in a paid capacity, sometimes not, bring attention to and take action on global justice issues. This series of programs aims to tell the story of this tradition in Ireland through the voices of some of those who have formed and continue to work in this area. Some might have been involved in an activist capacity, some as teachers in primary, secondary, or preschool, some as academics, lecturers, and researchers at third level. Some might work in the statutory sector, for instance, in Irish Aid, the statutory agency that funds much of the work in the sector in Ireland. Some work in the youth, community, and voluntary sector.

Development education is referred to by many names, so it can be very confusing. For instance, in this series, you will hear the terms development education, global learning, global education, or global citizenship education, and other terminology as well. But no matter what terminology people use here, they all have a similar agenda: educating for a just and sustainable world. Keeping this as our central focus, we can now hear about the development of the ideas around development education or global citizenship education in Ireland through the voices of those who have contributed and continue to contribute to its development.

This series of eight programs paints a picture of a particular slice of Irish life with personal and professional stories that need to be told. It is particularly important to capture the earlier history of development education in Ireland, since we did not have the kind of communication we have today. Back then, we didn't have the internet, we didn't have recordings from Zoom and Teams and Skype, and so on. Indeed, it must be said that we did have radio, and I am happy to recognize the enduring power of radio to tell powerful stories, and particularly the power of community radio to include and reach out to hear our voices in a democratic way.

My thanks to Community Radio Youghal for facilitating this series of shows, and I acknowledge the work of Tom O'Keefe and Paul Daly in patiently editing these programs. We will look at the development of development education in Ireland through the decades, starting in the 1950s and coming up to the present day.

GC:



You're welcome back to the Global Hub. In the studio with me is Mary Mangan, known in the development education sector in Cork for her commitment to transformative education work. Over the years, Mary has been engaged in various initiatives and worked as a secondary school teacher, psychotherapist, and with the Social and Health Education Project in Ballincollig. Mary, welcome to the Global Hub

Mary Mangan (MM):

Thanks a million, Gertrude. It's lovely to be here.

GC:

We're exploring the history of development education in Ireland. Could you start by telling us about some of your early influences?

MM:

The early influences would definitely be my parents. They were lovely people, strong Christians who truly lived their values. They emphasised kindness, a sense of justice, and sharing. Although we didn't have much money growing up, they supported many missionary organisations. We always had magazines like *The Word* and *The Far East* around the house, exposing me to global issues from an early age, even if it was framed through the lens of missionary work.

Education was also a strong value in my family, so I trained as a teacher. Another influence was the work of a French organization called Emmaus, founded after World War II. They worked with homeless people, empowering them to earn a living by recycling and rebuilding. This approach of dignity and self-reliance was very inspiring.

GC:

You later volunteered as a teacher in Cameroon in the late 1970s. What was that experience like?

MM:

Yes, I taught at a secondary school called the Higher Technical College in the Southwest Province of Cameroon. The country had gone through multiple colonial phases—it was under German rule

before World War I, then divided between France and Britain. I was in the Anglophone part. The official languages were English and French, although the country had a rich array of local languages.

I was part of the Irish Missionary Union and APSO (Agency for Personal Service Overseas). They funded a lot of Irish people to work in various capacities around the world. Before going, I had no knowledge of Cameroon. It was just, "Will you go to Cameroon?" and I went.

The impact of colonialism was evident, particularly in the use of European languages over local ones. I remember an old man who used to visit us. He spoke Bakweri, the local language, and German, as he had worked for German missionaries as a boy. He didn't speak Pidgin English, which was the lingua franca of Cameroon. He came to me because he wanted to speak German. I didn't know German, but we would have tea together. It was sad; he was stranded linguistically in his own country.

I was also shocked when I was asked to teach English history to students preparing for Cambridge English Board exams. Here they were, learning about English kings and queens while their own Cameroonian history was completely neglected.

GC:

You came back to Ireland after a few years. That must have been a culture shock?

MM:

Yes, I came back around 1980, and it was a major culture shock—much harder than going to Cameroon. I felt like a fish out of water. I was delighted to come across Comhlámh in Cork. It was called the Association of Returned Development Workers at the time. They provided a space to continue learning about global issues. I realized how much I still didn't know or understand.

GC:

Tell us more about the early work with Comhlámh in Cork.

MM:

I had to get things going. Alison Stancliffe, the national coordinator of Comhlámh, was very encouraging. She gave me names of people in the Cork area. We began meeting, often at the Quad Study Centre in UCC. David Morgan from the law department in UCC was already working on global issues. Vince Tucker later came along, becoming a tremendous ally.

We started organizing public meetings and campaigns, like one on baby food exports to the Third World and their impact. We also set up the Comhlámh Action Network to focus on various issues and lobby effectively. The network allowed people from different parts of the country to participate in campaigns through postcard mailings or letter-writing.

GC:

I'm fascinated by your journey. Before we conclude, is there a piece of music you'd like us to play?

MM:

Yes, I chose What a Wonderful World by Louis Armstrong. It expresses so simply the beauty of the world, the connections between people, and the hope that lies within. This song has also been chosen by the movement of community choirs to sing at COP26 in Glasgow, to inspire serious commitments to deal with the climate crisis.

(Clip of *What a Wonderful World* by Louis Armstrong plays)

GC:



Welcome to Community Radio Youghal. I am now going to introduce you to Tony Daly. Tony spent the first half of his life in South Africa. Tony is the coordinator of the Irish development education and human rights organization called 8020: Educating and Acting for a Better World. He's also co-editor of 8020: Development in an Unequal World, which is jointly published with The New Internationalist. The reader is now widely used, particularly in Africa, the UK, and Australia. Tony, first of all, a very warm welcome to Community Radio Youghal. I'm delighted you could be here with us.

Tony Daly (TD):

Thank you, Gertrude. Delighted to be here.

GC:

You're still working with an organization called 8020, which many people may not be familiar with if they're outside the sector. Can you tell me, first of all, what 8020 is?

TD:

Thank you for inviting me to be part of the show. I'm delighted to contribute. I hope it's interesting! Reflecting on our work collectively is a privilege, so thank you for the invitation. In terms of 8020, fundamentally, it's about inequality. As a guiding principle, we focus on the practice of inequality—how it progresses, deepens, and who the winners and losers are in different kinds of inequality worldwide.

The name 8020 comes from a distribution of the global population: 80% live in what is often referred to as the "global south," the "majority world," or the "third world." The remaining 20% live in the "global north" or "developed world." We're interested in all the inequalities linked with power, wealth, justice, sustainability, and more. Essentially, it's about the relations on the planet between the haves and have-nots, and how those with power maintain their status.

GC:

When you say that, these are very big issues. How do you break them down for people? What are the ways in which you work?

TD:

When it comes to breaking it down, even from a young age, people develop a sense of fairness based on their direct experiences. We engage by asking questions that help people see how they are connected to these issues. It's not just about talking academically, or about global decisions made in places like New York. Instead, we look at how we're connected to these issues from our doorsteps, homes, or even the shoes we wear. It's about breaking these issues into smaller, tangible elements that make up the bigger picture.

GC:

You mentioned young people. I'd like to bring you back to when you were a young person in South Africa. Could you talk about some of your early influences?

TD:

Sure, it's a good question. My youth, up until secondary school, was spent in South Africa. My dad was an electrician, and work in the 1980s in Ireland was scarce. He was given the choice to work in South Africa or go on the dole. So, for him, there wasn't much of a decision to be made. We shifted there, my mom, my brother, my sister, and I. We spent about seven years in South Africa.

GC:

So, this was during the 1980s when apartheid was in full force. What was it like, and what influences were you exposed to?

TD:

Coming from a small town in Tipperary to South Africa in the 1980s, I was the pale-skinned one. Understanding the history, politics, and injustices in South Africa, it's complex. As a young person, I didn't notice much at the time. My parents weren't very political. Their activism was more about the everyday decisions they made, rather than marching in the streets. So, my understanding of politics and justice developed over time through friends and family. For instance, faith played a significant role. Going to Mass helped us meet other Irish people, some of whom had fled sectarianism in Northern Ireland.

GC:

That's interesting. Faith seems to come up a lot in these conversations in different ways. Can you talk more about your journey into activism and education?

TD:

Yes. My parents made decisions for us to mix with different communities in South Africa, which made them unpopular with some of our neighbours. They wanted us to challenge the apartheid system from within. I've often struggled with the idea of being a white person living in South Africa and how I may have benefited from that, whether by choice or not. I even have pictures from my childhood next to "whites only" signs on beaches in Durban. These experiences have moved and animated me to keep questioning and challenging things throughout my life.

GC:

Absolutely. It's an ongoing process, isn't it? You mentioned everyday activism; it seems courageous to me. Was that harder than participating in protests from afar?

TD:

It's difficult to place weight on different types of actions. Walking out the door to join a protest is brave, especially if you're poor and trying to find yourself. Everyone has their own comfort zones and boundaries to explore and grow within. This interrogation of my parents' actions is ongoing. To give another example, one family we were close to in South Africa had a son involved in trade union activism. He was arrested and held in prison due to his political activities. My parents had agreed to

smuggle banned pamphlets and books out of the country with our belongings. I found these books later on, which shaped my understanding of global issues and challenged me on my journey.

GC:

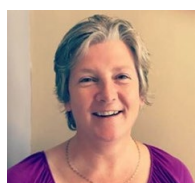
Before we end, would you like to request a piece of music?

TD:

Yes, there's a song called "Miriam Makeba" by a South African artist named Jann. It commemorates Miriam Makeba, an absolute legend in post-apartheid South Africa.

(Clip of Miriam Makeba by Jann plays)

GC:



With me now is Dr Eilish Dillon. Eilish is the head of the Department of International Development at Maynooth University. She has been active in international development and activism for over 30 years, focusing mainly on critical global education. She has designed and delivered courses on different aspects of development both in Ireland and internationally for various groups.

Currently, she is undertaking research on ethical communication among non-governmental development organisations in Ireland, an issue she has been concerned about for many years. Hilda, welcome to Community Radio Youghal, and thank you for being with us.

Eilish Dillon (ED):

Hi, Gertrude, thanks for having me. I'm delighted to chat about global education and global issues this evening.

GC:

I'd like to take you back to some of your early times, your own influences, and the kinds of things that brought you into the world of development education.

ED:

Thanks, Gertrude. I suppose I'd go back to when I was in secondary school in Kilkenny. I met some very interesting teachers and people who challenged me and others about global issues. There was a whole movement around anti-nuclear activism, social justice, and liberation theology. I became very influenced by all of that and learned about the injustices happening in Central America at the time. This was in the late 1970s and early 1980s. As a result, I developed an interest in global justice issues and questioned why the world was the way it was.

This led me to study to become a religion teacher. I went to Mater Dei in the mid-1980s, and I remember specific moments when the "penny dropped" for me about global inequality. For example, I saw the film *Cry Freedom*, which tells the story of Steve Biko in South Africa, and I learned about the anti-apartheid movement. Sister Stan also came to talk to us about Focus Point, the organization she was establishing at that time. She was looking for volunteers, and that call to action resonated with me. So, I brought those global justice issues into my teaching career.

GC:

You were a teacher in Cork for many years. What kind of work were you involved in during that time?

ED:

I worked in secondary schools in Cork for about ten years, mostly in Loretto Fermoy. It was a brilliant time, working with young women. We engaged in activities like Concern Debates and Peace Debates. I used my teaching as an opportunity to introduce students to global issues and anti-racism education, asking them to think critically about what was happening in the world.

GC:

Let's go back to the 1980s. You mentioned that you were involved in an organization called Comhlámh in Cork. Can you tell us more about that?

ED:

Yes, absolutely. In my day-to-day work, teaching was very important to me. But I also had a lot of what you might call spare-time activism. I prefer to frame it in activism terms rather than just volunteering. Comhlámh was an organization for returned development workers. I joined because they were involved in global campaigns and education around issues happening worldwide. At the time, we had campaigns around fair trade, the Common Agricultural Policy, and representation issues after the genocide in Rwanda in 1994.

For me, there were three aspects to my involvement: teaching in schools, engaging in activism, and solidarity work. During my summer holidays, I spent time traveling or working on solidarity projects. For example, I was in Nicaragua in 1992, monitoring the first free elections in South Africa in 1994, and spent time with a Zapatista community in Mexico in 1997. So, I was teaching, learning, and actively making change.

GC:

You later worked at Kimmage Development Studies Centre. Can you tell us about your work there?

ED:

Yes, Kimmage Development Studies Centre was a small, specialized higher education institution focusing on development studies. It was originally a missionary college run by the Holy Ghost Fathers. We ran undergraduate and Master's programmes in International Development, with partnership relationships with other education providers and Irish Aid. I coordinated the Master's in Development Studies and later, the Master's in International Development.

My role included teaching development theory and developing modules on global movements, post-colonial theory, and more. We even transitioned the Master's programme to a flexible, distance-learning format in 2012 because many of our students were working in development practice around the world. The online platform allowed them to participate remotely.

GC:

Thank you, Hilda. Before we finish, could you introduce the piece of music you selected and tell us why you chose it?

ED:

Sure, I chose Nina Simone's Mississippi Goddam. It's a powerful call for democracy and justice. She wrote it in the 1960s in response to the killing of four girls in a church bombing. Every time I hear it, it gives me goosebumps. It's a reminder of the ongoing fight for equality and the courage needed to stand up against injustice.

(Clip of *Mississippi Goddam* by Nina Simone plays)