

"The Ireland Funds make a significant contribution to the Concern Debates, our largest development education program, and allow us to open up the program to a wider range of schools. The program gives teenagers across the country the opportunity to get to grips with some of the critical issues facing the world today. We count among our alumni a current member of the Irish Senate, several prominent journalists and broadcasters and one of Ireland's ambassadors in Africa—and anecdotal evidence tells us that taking part in the debates has contributed to large numbers of participants future career paths. Concern Debates create a constituency of active citizens who are lifelong supporters of Concern's mission to achieve real change and development for the poorest of the poor around the globe. We are delighted that The Ireland Funds' contribution allows us to open up these opportunities to a new generation of Irish youth."

—Michael Doorly
Head of Active Citizenship with Concern Worldwide



READY SET DEBATE



BASED IN IRELAND, CONCERN IS AN INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO TACKLING POVERTY AND SUFFERING IN THE WORLD'S POOREST COUNTRIES. CONCERN DEBATES IS CONCERN WORLDWIDE'S FLAGSHIP SCHOOLS ACTIVITY. IT GIVES STUDENTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO RESEARCH AND DEBATE ISSUES THAT AFFECT THOSE LIVING IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD.

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CONCERN DEBATES IN 10 FACTS

- 1 After months of preparation, teams compete before judges and their peers. Points are given and teams progress to a 'knockout round' before winners are declared (though many would say all who participate, win!)
- 2 **The Ireland Funds have enabled 16 schools to participate in Concern Debates that otherwise would not have been able to participate.**
- 3 **More than 45,000 students have engaged in the debates. About 120 schools participate each year.**
- 4 **Each school team is made up of four speakers, researchers, a public relations representative and a time keeper. "Groupies" are encouraged!**
- 5 Why do it? Students not only learn about how the world works, but they develop skills in research and public speaking. Learning to anticipate rebuttal and how an opponent will respond is also a great skill.
- 6 Debates have included topics such as "The world can cope with its growing population" and "Ireland must deliver on its 0.7% overseas aid promise."
- 7 **Concern Debates have been running for over 30 years!**
- 8 **"I have found the Concern Debates absolutely brilliant! I have only been in two so far but it has been such a learning experience. I have not only educated myself in subjects like the UN, but I have really gained so much confidence, although the ole' legs shake still when I get up to speak! Thanks once again for this opportunity."—Sarah Murphy**
- 9 The debates are open to all students between 4th and 6th year attending secondary schools in Ireland. And now there's a pilot competition happening in Northern Ireland as well.
- 10 **Debate winners travel to countries where Concern is active. Last year's winners went to Ethiopia and visited a school and met students in rural Gugufu.**



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