



# UBUNTU AN EVALUATION REPORT



Kevin McCarthy

# **Ubuntu – An Evaluation Report**

A review of the Impact of the Ubuntu Network, chiefly focused on the implementation and outcomes from its *Strategic Plan 2016-20*, with due reference to the *Ubuntu Network Project Results Framework*

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## Contents

<b>Chapter 1. Introducing the Report.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Chapter 2. Matters of Definition and Alignment.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Chapter 3: Delivery of Development Education.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<i>Introduction to Development Education.....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Subject-Specific Development Education.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Alignment with Core ITE Components.....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>School Placement.....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Research and Reflection.....</i>	<i>25</i>
<b>Chapter 4: Capacity Building of Teacher Educators.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Chapter 5: Research (including Monitoring and Evaluation).....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Chapter 6: Policy Reform for Development Education.....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Chapter 7: Curriculum Change for Development Education.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Chapter 8: Solidarity: Governance, Operations and Partnership.....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Chapter 9: Reviewing Key Recommendations.....</b>	<b>53</b>

## **Chapter 1. Introducing the Report**

### ***Ubuntu as it describes itself***

The Ubuntu Network was established in 2006 to support the integration of Development Education into post primary Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Ireland. It is funded by Irish Aid through its Development Education Annual Grant fund. It is located in the School of Education at the University of Limerick, with partners in 13 Higher Education institutions across Ireland.

The Network provides a collaborative space for teacher educators, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) and other stakeholders to share and discuss experiences and reflections relating to embedding Development Education in ITE. It provides support to members in the form of onward funding and capacity building in order to enhance Development Education provision in teacher education programmes. Monitoring and evaluation of interventions is an aspect of its work, so too is documenting and disseminating good practice. Advocacy for Development Education in emerging political, curriculum and policy contexts is also core.

### ***Background to the Evaluation***

The original tender for the evaluation proposed that the purpose of the evaluation was to assess the effectiveness of the Ubuntu Network in achieving its goals:

- To support the integration of Development Education into post-primary initial teacher education,
- To build the capacity of teacher educators to engage in Development Education,
- To maintain an active, collaborative and supportive network of teacher educators for Development Education, with advocacy and commitment at its core.

The Ubuntu Network sought an external evaluator to assess the effectiveness of the Network in achieving its goals in the period from 2016-2019.

### ***Remit of the Evaluation***

In terms of Tasks and Deliverables, the original tender document expected that the evaluator would:

- Engage with the Project Coordinator, Academic Coordinator, members of the Ubuntu Assembly, members of the Management Committee and other relevant

stakeholders in order to gain an understanding of the work of the Network and its effectiveness

- Review project documents including funding applications, strategic documents, handbooks, project outlines, end of year reports and impact reports
- Evaluate the structure and operation of the Network
- In consultation with relevant stakeholders, evaluate the Network's Monitoring and Evaluation approach framed by the Ubuntu Network Project Results Framework and the Irish Aid Performance Measurement Framework.

The tender document also 'envisaged that the evaluation will be framed using a mixed methods approach involving relevant stakeholders - Assembly members, the Management Committee, the Academic Coordinator, the Project Coordinator and pre-service teachers.'

### ***Evaluation Activities Undertaken***

Taking the last-mentioned group first, the unavoidable delay in the commencement of the evaluation resulted in an agreement that it would be less than realistic to get significant numbers of meetings with student teachers as they approached examinations and project submission deadlines. Nevertheless, opportunities to meet with student teachers or students were scheduled as follows, with sincere thanks to the student teachers themselves and to their relevant institutions:

- National College of Art and Design (NCAD) – the evaluator viewed exhibitions at Change Lab, heard oral presentations of all participating student teachers and interviewed a nominee at length
- University College Dublin (UCD) - the evaluator attended Young Economist of the Year awards and met many second level students engaged in Development Education-related projects
- Maynooth University – the evaluator attended presentations by student teachers in a Social Justice course and received written feedback from them on their course
- An arrangement to meet some student teachers who were making a radio programme at University College Cork (UCC) had to be cancelled due to the evaluator's unavailability on the designated evening.

In addition to these opportunities to engage with students and student teachers, and mindful of the scope of the evaluation as envisaged by the tender document, the following evidence gathering means were employed:

- Meetings/observations with project leaders or former leaders from National College of Art and Design (NCAD), University of Limerick (UL), University College Dublin (UCD), University College Cork (UCC), Mary Immaculate College of Education (MIC Limerick) and Mary Immaculate College (Thurles);
- Meetings and regular communications with the Ubuntu project coordinator and academic coordinator;
- Individual meetings with the outgoing and incoming chairpersons of Ubuntu;
- Observation of a management committee meeting, with an opportunity for questions;
- Follow-up questions to all management committee members by email;
- Focused telephone conversations, emails or conversations with other project leaders/Assembly members e.g. from Maynooth University, Limerick Institute of Technology, ECO-UNESCO and independent members;
- Attendance at Ubuntu's Dialogue Day on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2019, and engagement there with other Assembly members and student teachers;
- An online survey of all Assembly members, including two follow-up reminders, to which approximately half of the membership responded, including representatives from UL, NUIG, NUIG St. Angela's, UCD, NCAD, WWGS, MIC (Limerick), MIC (Thurles), DCU, UCC, Maynooth University, Trinity College Dublin and independent members.
- Review of a suite of documentation relating to Ubuntu's work, supplied by the project coordinator;
- Meeting with Irish Aid personnel with responsibility for Development Education and links with Ubuntu.
- Pressures of time meant the evaluator was unable to revert to two other Assembly members who had intimated a willingness to be interviewed.

### ***Structuring the Evaluation Report***

The evaluation was conducted taking considerable account of the following:

- the Ubuntu Network Strategic Plan 2016-2020
- the Ubuntu Network Project Results Framework (PRF)
- the Irish Aid Performance Measurement Framework (PMF)
- the Irish Aid Development Education Strategy 2017-2023

Because this evaluation’s focus was on the work of Ubuntu, and on the period from 2016 onwards, the core formative influence on the report structure has been the Ubuntu Network Strategic Plan 2016-20, and in large measure the report’s structure follows the key sections of that Strategy. Naturally, as the annual round of Ubuntu-supported projects form a significant part of the Network’s efforts to support the integration of Development Education, the Ubuntu Network Project Results Framework was also a key guiding document in reviewing these projects.

While the Irish Aid Development Education Strategy 2017-2023 and the Irish Aid Performance Measurement Framework (PMF) both slightly post-dated the publication of the Ubuntu Network Strategy 2016-20, the PMF in particular has emerged as a significant evaluative influence on Ubuntu’s own Project Result Framework (PRF), and therefore due cognisance has been taken of it where relevant. The PMF, for example, identifies five key stages of integration of Development Education, and these mirror the core elements of the ‘Delivery/Integration’ action area in the Ubuntu Strategy. As a guiding principle, the levels aligned to Section 3.3. of the Irish Aid PMF are shown:

Level of Integration into Post-Primary Initial Teacher Education (Ubuntu)				
Foundational Integration	Functional Integration		Fully Integrated	
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Introduction to development education	Subject-specific development education	Development education aligned with core ITE components ( <i>as stipulated by the Teaching Council</i> )	Development education incorporated into school placement	Student teacher research & reflection incorporates development education perspectives

The original tender envisaged that the evaluation would include a presentation of interim findings at the Annual Ubuntu Network Dialogue Day on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2019, to be followed by an evaluation report with clear recommendations for future development of the network in June. Again, because of the unavoidable delay in the awarding of the contract, it was agreed on 21<sup>st</sup> March that such an interim report would not be feasible as early as 24<sup>th</sup> May, and that instead the evaluator’s attendance at Dialogue Day would be used to facilitate final evidence gathering work e.g. from people who had not had the opportunity to be interviewed or to respond to questionnaires previously.

The final report – a draft of which was sent to the management committee for consideration beforehand – was submitted on 14 June, as agreed at the 21<sup>st</sup> March meeting.

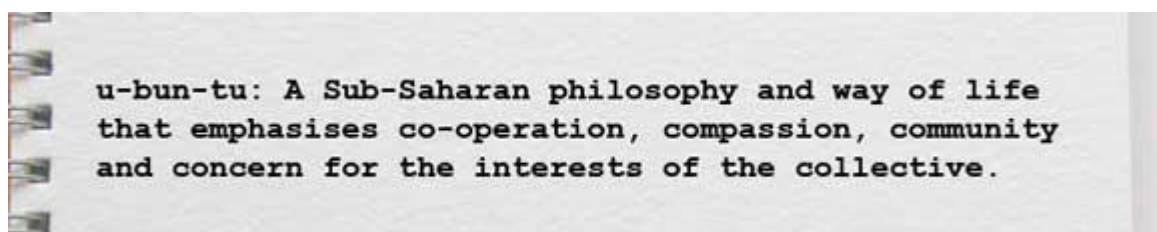
The original tender document’s intention proposed that: ‘Outputs from the evaluation will inform the Management Committee on aspects of the Network that are working well and those where change may be considered, thereby contributing to the strategic planning from 2020.’ Emerging recommendations, chapter by chapter, are highlighted **in bold** for easier recognition.

## Chapter 2. Matters of Definition and Alignment

### *Identifying and branding of 'Ubuntu'*

The Ubuntu Network has done a lot of important work since its foundation in 2006 to promote Development Education, specifically in post-primary initial teacher education (ITE) contexts. It has been funded and effectively charged by Irish Aid with this responsibility in the post-primary sector, with another organisation (DICE – Development and Intercultural Education in ITE) having a similar but not identical role in primary ITE institutions.

For those outside of the Ubuntu Network, the organisation's website provides a concise definition of the meaning of 'Ubuntu':



While this definition in itself does not make reference to the specific remit of the Ubuntu Network, it is helpful in clarifying the term for the uninitiated at least. There is little to be gained from obscurity in any educational context.

Where there is a greater potential difficulty is that the term 'Ubuntu' on its own, even in educational contexts, may still not be widely understood by many of those whom it seeks to interest. Where the word or the Network's logo appear on promotional material in participating colleges, on multimedia presentations and in other fora, it does not give an overt clue to the purpose of the Network, in the way that acronym-based names like 'World Wise Global Schools' (WWGS) or 'Young Social Innovators' (YSI), to name two of many, can do. In some literature, Ubuntu uses a sub-heading, such as 'A Partnership Approach to Development Education in ITE' used in the Strategic Plan 2016-20, or 'Teacher Education for Sustainable Development' used in various postcards and fliers in information packs for Dialogue Day. These can be helpful clarifications.

Although Ubuntu is essentially funded by Irish Aid, under the auspices of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, its core work is in the education sector. **In order to ensure that the people whom Ubuntu tries to reach are as clear as possible about its aims, it is recommended that a sub-heading or other form of 'by-line' such as 'Teacher Education for Sustainable Development' be consistently used in all Ubuntu literature, communications, on its website and in the next Strategic Plan.**



Ubuntu is not in a commercial or competitive market, so to speak, but clearer branding in this way ought to help ensure its message and its work are more widely known.

### ***Challenges of Definition***

In many respects, Ubuntu itself has provided some of the clearest definitions of Development Education that exist in the Irish education system. It is commendable too that its current Strategic Plan identifies this issue of definitions (Page 8) and seeks to avoid unnecessary confusion or fragmentation:

‘The Ubuntu Network considers Development Education and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) to be intrinsically linked and complementary, both considering issues through a variety of lenses including social, economic and environmental. Notwithstanding the difference in the origin of the movements, it considers their content, pedagogy and ideologies to be consistent...’

In its Strategic Plan, Ubuntu has provided an excellent list of the acronyms which populate the world of Development Education. The plan also acknowledges that other ‘forms of education’ complement Ubuntu’s approach to education, and lists Human Rights Education, Intercultural Education, Citizenship Education and Global Education. While it is recognised that some Ubuntu members feel there are important distinctions to be made between such definitions, **it is recommended that the next iteration of the Strategic Plan should contain a section which takes some of the confusion out of the plethora of broadly-equivalent terms which are there, by identifying and explaining them briefly.** This ought to take cognisance of more recent terms and initiatives too, such as Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations) and Competences for Democratic Culture (Council of Europe). It is important to bear in mind that many key decision makers in educational and other contexts, who can impact on Ubuntu’s work, will not necessarily be as familiar with such terminology as Ubuntu members themselves are.

The above recommendation is no simple matter, but it is important to bring as much clarity as possible to an area where there is unlikely to be full consistency. Ubuntu itself interchanges terminology e.g. ‘The Ubuntu Network and Development Education’ (Strategic Plan, Page 8) becomes ‘Teacher Education for Sustainable Development’ elsewhere, as we have seen. The difficulty is that many people, including some working in the education system, can have partially-informed understanding of such terms e.g. when ‘Sustainable’ is used, some people think of ‘environment’ mainly, while others equate ‘Citizenship’ with politics and law, not necessarily ‘environment’.

This difficulty around definitions is not in any way merely an Ubuntu problem, but definitions can impact on priorities too. It is noted that while ‘Development Education’ is promoted by Irish Aid, for example, the term ‘Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)’ is preferred by the Department of Education and Skills. Even internationally, while there have been moves towards accepting the use of ‘Global Citizenship’ or ‘Global Education’, recent moves among UN bodies suggest a retention of ‘ESD’ by many of them.

As a visual means of representing the challenge of definition, the word cloud below was developed using the responses of Ubuntu Assembly Members to an opening question in an online survey: *What areas of Development Education (DE) are you most interested in?*

To a degree, the word cloud itself is an unfair representation of responses, because people were asked to give orders of preference, which are not specifically taken into account in the visual. However, what can be seen here is that Ubuntu membership is a very ‘broad church’ indeed, where there are potentially as many views on what could be prioritised by Ubuntu, as there are active Assembly members. This in itself suggests that **any future Strategic Planning will need to consider what is manageable for Ubuntu given its current funding, capacity and remit, and what might be possible if increased and more long-term funding were available and if capacity could potentially be augmented.** This type of consideration reflects some of the key points raised in the Global Education Network Europe, or GENE, report of 2015 for Irish Aid, but we will see how a similar recommendation will emerge organically from aspects of this report too.



Figure 2.1: The ‘broad church’ of Ubuntu Assembly members’ Development Education interests.

## **Alignment**

Given the highly fluid and fast moving pace of change in both Development Education and education more generally, it was inevitable that a Strategic Plan drawn up for implementation between 2016 and 2020 would become somewhat 'dated' long before 2020. In 2016, by which time the Strategic Plan had been prepared, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) had not been finalised, for example, and undoubtedly **any revised strategic plan – as well as funding applications - from 2020 ought to identify the relevance of the SDGs to the work of Ubuntu in one or more of its strategic priority areas.** The Network's Project Results Framework will be discussed in due course, but it seems logical that **overt and consistent linkage to the SDGs ought to be included as a requirement from 2020 in any revisions to that Framework.**

More fundamentally in an Irish context, the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan pre-dates both the latest Irish Aid Development Education Strategy 2017-2023, and the related Irish Aid Performance Measurement Framework.

Ubuntu is not directly referenced in the Irish Aid Development Education Strategy 2017-2023. This is presumably because it is not currently a strategic partner. This important issue will be discussed later in the report, as will the possible merits of seeking some form of multi-annual funding and planning, which may not necessarily mean a formal strategic partnership. For now, it bears iteration that the Irish Aid Strategy contains a number of aims which already fit well with Ubuntu, not least Action 11 on Page 30:

*To Support Primary and Post-Primary Student Teachers: We will support the provision of Development Education in primary and post-primary initial teacher education. We will pursue opportunities with the Teaching Council to further the integration of Development Education into relevant criteria and guidelines for initial teacher education (ITE).*

*Results: Our success in this activity will be measured by the number and percentage of primary and post-primary student teachers engaging in Development Education through ITE. We will also measure the level of integration of Development Education in ITE, at both primary and post-primary level.*

Even though Ubuntu is not a strategic partner in the Irish Aid Strategy, it is expected to provide evidence of its success or otherwise in integrating Development Education in ITE, guided by Section 3.3 of the Irish Aid Performance Measurement Framework. This will also be discussed at different points in this report, but for now the focus is on

matters of alignment alone. Even though an Ubuntu-specific version of this PMF has been devised, the Ubuntu Project Results Framework, as it stands this Framework does not align with the sections, headings and strategic priority areas of the Ubuntu Strategic Plan. For example:

- The Ubuntu Strategic Plan does not always number its strategic areas whereas the Project Results Framework does this consistently with its ‘objectives’
- The order, numbering and nomenclature of Ubuntu’s strategic areas differs from the Framework’s objectives quite significantly. This is demonstrated in the diagram below:

Ubuntu Strategic Plan Areas (2016-2020)	PRF Objectives (30 April 2018)
1. Delivery of Development Education	1.A Integration; 1.B Monitor and Evaluate
2. Capacity Building of Teacher Educators	2. Capacity Building
3. Research (including Monitoring and Evaluation) <i>not funded by Irish Aid</i>	
4. Policy Reform for Development Education <i>i.e. policy advocacy</i>	3. Advocacy
5. Curriculum Change for Development Education <i>i.e. curricular advocacy</i>	
6. Solidarity: Governance, Operations and Partnership <i>i.e. the incidental outcomes of the above actions</i>	

**Figure 2.2: Aligning Ubuntu’s Strategic Areas with Irish Aid’s PRF Objectives**

It is understood that there may still need to be differences between the two documents e.g. if Ubuntu involves itself in areas not directly of interest to Irish Aid, or if Ubuntu were to seek and get funding from bodies beyond Irish Aid. It is important to stress that **Ubuntu’s financial dependence on Irish Aid must never deter it from engaging in aspects of Development Education which may not necessarily be priorities for Irish Aid.** Nor is there any sense of that from speaking with Irish Aid. The Irish Aid Strategy, for instance, is not overt in identifying issues like democracy, political activism, the student voice or LGBT rights, whereas Ubuntu should feel reassured that such issues are totally relevant to Development Education.

This said, **when Ubuntu considers the structure, as opposed to the detailed content, of its Strategic Plan for 2020 and beyond, it is timely to also consider how the plan**

**can better align to the PRF framework or, pending possible discussions with Irish Aid, how the Ubuntu PRF can better align to the next Ubuntu Strategic Plan.** This is not just a matter of optics - there is no obvious benefit in the current disparity in their respective headings, and closer alignment would certainly assist in annual reporting and future evaluations.

As we now turn to the main body of the report, the six strategic priority areas upon which the 2016-20 Strategic Plan is based will provide its structural skeleton (in Chapters 3-8). Where appropriate, we will endeavour to employ the Ubuntu PRF as a reference point, as this is likely to have a significant impact on how Ubuntu plans for the future too. This said, the current evaluation concentrates on the impact of Ubuntu's Strategic Plan 2016-20, so the primary focus of any findings and recommendations, and the core structure of the report, follow this plan's framework.

Before doing this, it is important to reiterate that the work of Ubuntu has been very important in furthering Development Education in post-primary ITE contexts, for student teachers and teacher educators. This is the core finding of this report. Where recommendations are made, they are framed constructively and arise organically from findings. Some recommendations are possibly more 'suggestions' than firm recommendations, and most of the more important recommendations are dependent on major organisational and funding decisions that Ubuntu may have to consider by 2020.

### Chapter 3: Delivery of Development Education

Ubuntu coordinators have intimated that the majority of the Network's time and resources are spent on 'Delivery' of Development Education. At this point in time, Ubuntu has supported over 100 Development Education projects in Irish ITEs. One management committee member has suggested, succinctly, that 'the integration of Dev Ed within ITE is the defining feature of the Ubuntu initiative.' The 2016-20 Strategic Plan has as a central focus the *Ubuntu Network Framework for the Integration of Development Education into Post-Primary Initial Teacher Education* (Page 18). This specifically refers to delivering a coherent and sustainable approach to integrating Development Education in initial teacher education under five component headings:

- Introduction to Development Education
- Subject-Specific Development Education
- Development Education aligned with core ITE components (as stipulated by the Teaching Council)
- Development Education and School Placement
- Student teacher research and reflection incorporates Development Education perspectives

The relevant Ubuntu PRF again emphasises 'Integration' in this area of 'Delivery' i.e. integration of Development Education into post primary ITE programmes in line with the Ubuntu Network Framework for Integration. This includes issuing a call for DE Projects, reviewing project proposals, allocating onward funding and delivery of DE projects in ITEs, and an understanding that Ubuntu would work in collaboration with World Wise Global Schools (WWGS) to enhance student-teacher engagement with Development Education while on school placement.

There is no obvious contradiction between what the current Strategic Plan calls 'Delivery' and the Ubuntu PRF has termed 'Integration' but naturally in any revised Strategic Plan, an opportunity should be taken to more closely align the terminology and what is understood by this core heading. The suggestion of one Ubuntu member, that 'Engagement' may be a better term to describe this core aim than either 'Integration' or 'Delivery', is worth considering too.

The fact that there is now a very statistics-oriented PRF for Ubuntu to consider in its annual reporting to Irish Aid means that targets and levels of impact in the integration of Development Education in introductory, subject-specific and school placement

contexts must be monitored. However, presenting this in statistical and tabular form, as the PRF tends to anticipate, is less than straightforward and it would be unwise for those outside of Ubuntu to measure Ubuntu’s successes or challenges too rigidly with this PRF. For example, the total number of post-primary ITE providers in Ireland is finite, and may well come down due to rationalisations and other factors. Accordingly, expectations that the number of institutions involved in Ubuntu-led projects or initiatives will rise incrementally would be unrealistic in the longer term.

Within this number, smaller institutions can be heavily dependent on one Development Education ‘champion’ and a change in such personnel can impact negatively on overall figures, absolutely through no fault of Ubuntu’s. Such fluctuations can be identified in the completed report data submitted to Irish Aid in the past three years, and a means of clarifying when changes that may appear negative ones statistically are not so in reality will be discussed shortly. That said, the sort of statistics attested to in Ubuntu’s 2018 grant application to Irish Aid are indicative of the significant leaps that have been made.

	No. Hrs Dev Ed delivered	No. Student Teachers reached	No. teacher educators involved in delivery	No. ITE institutions delivering	No programmes impacted
2014/15	111	602	58*	8	14
2015/16	155	1,570	41	8	15
2016/17	215	1,956	45	11	18
2017/18 (projected)**	221	2,030	57	12	21

Figure 3.1. *Increasing engagement with Development Education in ITE arising from Ubuntu Supported Projects* (From Ubuntu’s Irish Aid Grant Application 2018, Page 17). Note the \* in 2014/15 included high numbers involved in implementation of Dev Ed Days in Institutions (not included in subsequent years).

Ubuntu has made significant progress in most of its Strategic Plan’s university-based actions under ‘Delivery’. These include allocating funds, including top-up funding focused on artefacts of learning (AoL) in 2018-19, making resources from a range of partners available through the Network and promoting WWGS initiatives. **One area that still needs constant focus is the effort to promote a culture of engagement generally with Development Education across ITE departments.** Interviews and online feedback have suggested that there can be considerable differences in understanding of Development Education and its integration, especially in larger departments, or there can be high dependence on one or two ‘champions’, with the potential for regression if such champions move on for any reason. Much also depends on the support or otherwise of heads of school. When asked: *Do you feel*

there is a culture of engaging with and integrating Development Education (DE) in your department / college? [From 1 (low) to 5 (fully integrated)], Ubuntu Assembly members responded as shown below:

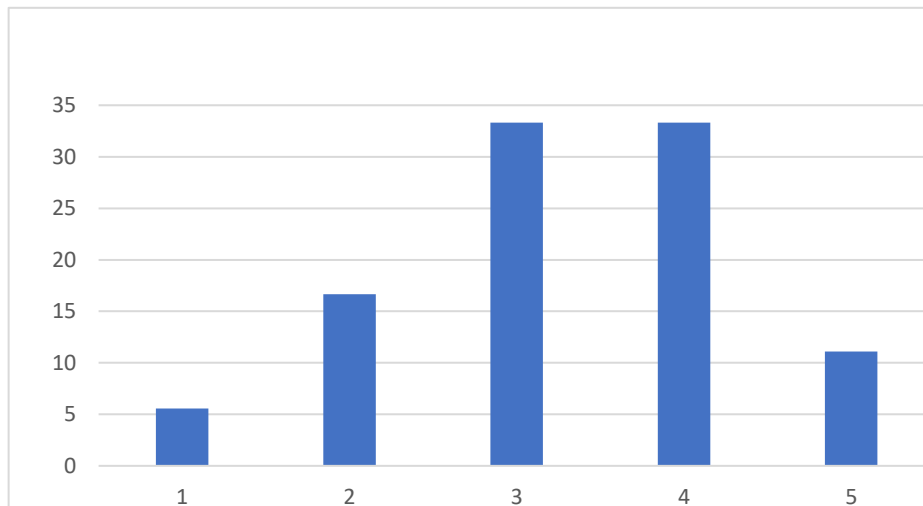


Figure 3.2: Assembly members' views on level of DE integration in their departments/colleges.

This graph shows a weighted average level of integration, as identified by the respondents, of 3.28 out of 5. This may be deemed quite good, given the circumstances which can militate against such integration, as discussed above. There is also little doubt that the efforts of Ubuntu from 2012, when all initial teacher education programmes were extended by a year, has had considerable success. Approximately seven ITE providers reported to Ubuntu that they had included Development Education or an equivalent in their pro forma documents to the Teaching Council, outlining the plans for their programmes seeking accreditation.

**It is recommended that an equivalent question to the one which helped generate the graph above, be asked by Ubuntu annually of its members, as an additional means of gauging ongoing integration of Development Education at ITE/university level.**

On occasion, there are minor discrepancies in Ubuntu's own literature e.g. about how many member institutions there are, or how many institutions are represented on the Ubuntu Assembly. The target number of institutions that might be reached according to the 2018 Project Results Framework Report (2018) is 14, while the number of institutional logos on the Ubuntu website currently is 13, and there are fewer institutions still listed with membership of the Ubuntu Assembly. **Such differences need to be clarified, naturally, and where challenges presented by**



**factors outside of Ubuntu’s control are the cause of statistical changes from year to year, these should be clearly explained in footnotes or endnotes to the PRF report.**

The various reports from Ubuntu which have been examined point to both the extent of the impact of Ubuntu-supported initiatives but also to the scale of the challenge it faces year on year. For instance, in the 2015-16 Ubuntu Network Impact Report noted that:

‘The eight projects by the funded Ubuntu Network provided the opportunity for 1,570 student teachers to engage in 155 hours of Development Education delivery. These projects introduced the concept of Development Education to student teachers and engendered enthusiasm and interest for the inclusion of global topics in their teaching. This awareness moved from low levels of recognition of the term to providing definitions and insight into the concept.’

While there is no doubting the impact of these Ubuntu projects, in any given year, the challenge is evident when we note that, in this same report, out of 1570 student teachers receiving some form of Development Education training, only 296 (18.85%) got more than 10 hours of relevant tuition per annum, and 635 (just over 40%) got 5 hours per annum or less. As a rule of thumb, some of the smaller ITE providers actually account for a significant amount of the Development Education hours delivered. Therefore, it is self-evident that achieving significant levels of integration in larger institutions continues to be a challenge and must remain an Ubuntu priority.

### ***Introduction to Development Education***

The figures for student teachers receiving introductions to Development Education went to over 1700 in 2017-18 and it is anticipated in the Project Results Framework submission by Ubuntu to Irish Aid, 2018, that over 2,000 student teachers will be given introductions to Development Education at least in 2018-19. While this quantitative data may meet Irish Aid requirements, there is an absence of qualitative information in the PRF which Ubuntu needs to consider. Without in any way wanting to impinge on the independence of any ITE in terms of its curriculum, **there ought to be a clearer indication in the Strategic Plan regarding what constitutes an introduction to Development Education.** This is something that Ubuntu collectively ought to consider, or carry out some systemic research on, given that for many student teachers, this introduction is both formational and could be inspirational if delivered well. Area 2 of the Strategic Plan (Page 25) refers to the possibility of Ubuntu providing customised workshops, for example an introduction to

Development Education, but it is unclear how many new or returning members are reached by such workshops.

The broad guidance on the integration of Development Education among student teachers, from the 2015-16 Ubuntu Impact Report, is a good starting point to consider an agreed definition of what constitutes an introduction to Development Education. However, a meeting with Ubuntu management committee members has also intimated that a stronger focus on what constitutes appropriate teaching methodologies and, in terms of content, emphasis on the Sustainable Development Goals, are also needed in all introductions to Development Education.

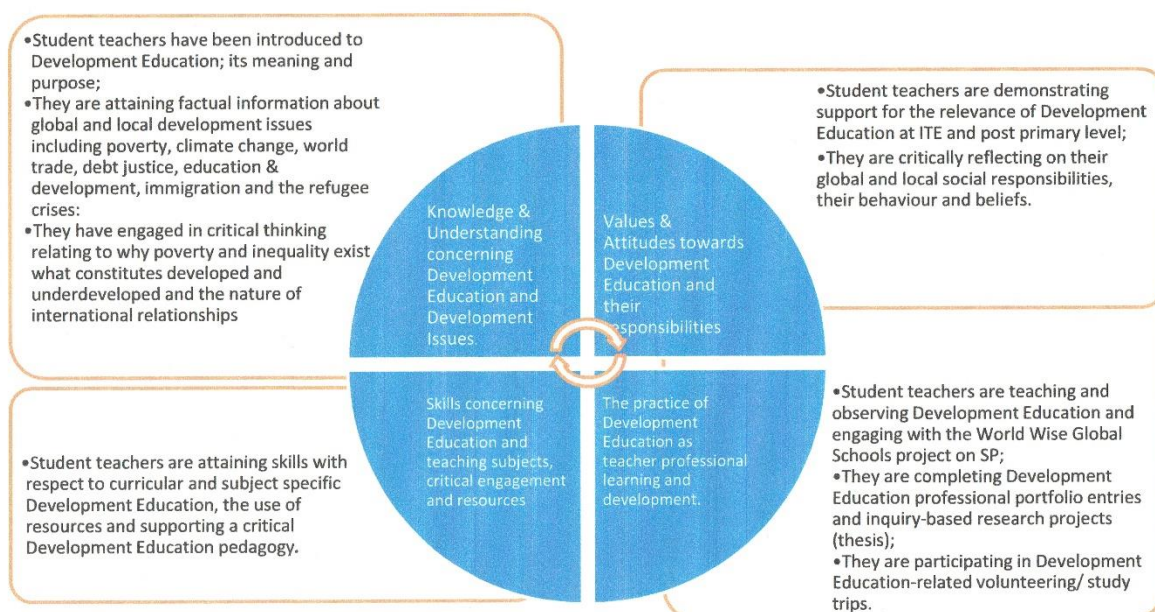


Figure 3.3. *Ubuntu’s tabular identification of the key elements of Development Education in ITE contexts* (From its 2015-16 Impact Report)

While the number of institutions expected to provide introductions to Development Education is expected to increase from 2016 to 2019 (from 8 out of 14 to 12 out of 14), the number of institutions expected to go beyond that, with either Development Education as part of subject-specific training, within the core curriculum, school placement or research work, is not anticipated to rise above 6 out of 14, according to the 2018 PRF, not a significant statistical improvement on the current position where these four areas are integrated in an average of 5.5 institutions already.

These figures reinforce the earlier suggestion that **Ubuntu needs to examine any feasible means there may be to expand its important work.** These may include consideration of more long-term planning cycles, seeking access to additional funding

streams, expansion of the Network's active membership and the roles of members, and reaching out to more external partners where this can help further Ubuntu's agenda. It bears iteration too that many of the recommendations made in the Global Education Network Europe (GENE) report of 2015 tend towards this conclusion i.e. a need to see Ubuntu expand its efforts in fostering delivery/integration. The GENE report anticipated that, 'In programmes focused on integration into existing education systems (formal, non-formal), where Development Education integration and sustainability has been achieved, phasing out of funding support should be considered, to free up support for other innovative initiatives.' However, Ubuntu is proactively aware that it still has much work to do before it makes itself redundant as GENE might anticipate. The GENE report sought:

- a renewed focus on capacity building for existing stakeholder organisations and for potential new stakeholders,
- [for Irish Aid] to plan for a staged series of increases in funding for Development Education (when budgetary circumstances permit), and
- consideration of expanding the number, scope and reach of Irish Aid strategic partnerships.

**The merits of three-year funding over one-year funding ought to be discussed by Ubuntu with Irish Aid**, but clearly include the possibility of both deepening and broadening the impact of Ubuntu's work, while potentially lessening the overall administration and reporting burdens. Assuming it is feasible for current or future personnel levels to allow for it, **Ubuntu also ought to consider additional potential partners in civil society or in government departments which have a direct interest in promoting Development Education, its equivalent or aspects of it.**

### ***Subject-Specific Development Education***

It is very evident that the Ubuntu Network promotes Development Education across all subjects where relevant, at all levels in post-primary education. It calls on teachers of all subject areas to teach with a view to promoting equality, justice and sustainability at both local and global levels. While the integration of Development Education should not and need not be subject-specific alone, the nature of current post-primary timetables suggests that the subject-specific model of training student teachers can still have most impact on the ground in schools.

As part of the evaluation work, it was very useful to be able to observe first hand some of the projects of a subject-specific nature that have been supported by Ubuntu

in 2018-19. Circumstances allowed for opportunities to visit the launch of the 'Change Lab' exhibition at the National College of Art and Design, and the Young Economist of the Year (YEOTY) Awards Day at UCD. These were very encouraging examples of the sort of subject-specific support that Ubuntu has been able to foster – Change Lab taps into how many aspects of Art education – the materials used, traditional skills, messages about recycling and fair trade, vision and even everyday objects – can enhance the Development Education agenda in ITEs and consequently in schools too. The YEOTY awards were fascinating in that the emphasis of keynote speakers was strongly on the use of Economics to better society, and approximately 30% of the 100-plus projects on display had Development Education themes or were linked directly to Sustainable Development Goals.

It was also very positive to witness presentations at Dialogue Day which outlined the potential of radio and podcasts to promote Development Education and student-teacher engagement with it (UCC) and the fore-fronting of creativity and partnerships with NGOs and community workers in the Social Justice course supported by Ubuntu at Maynooth University.

In 2018-19, Ubuntu has placed a stronger emphasis on funded projects producing what it has termed Artefacts of Learning (AoL). These may be described as the outputs of student-teacher engagement with specific Development Education projects. They may include, but are not be limited to, events, posters, installations, recounts/stories, teaching aids, project work, blogs, lesson plans, reflections, assignments or units of learning. The University of Limerick project, for example, aimed to create a video-scribe, focused on evidence from what project participants do with their student teachers.

The result of the AoL initiative is that there is now a far greater bank of potential resources, and pedagogical ideas, thanks to Ubuntu's efforts, and it is simply **recommended that this focus be retained and, if possible, ways of extending such ideas so that they can benefit graduate teacher CPD and Development Education beyond ITE contexts should be explored.** If time and resources permitted, this might be done in collaboration with partners such as teacher professional networks, WWGS, JCT and possibly Scoilnet. **Over time, the growing bank of AoLs could be organised in subject-specific categories, which will make accessing them potentially easier for student teachers and others interested in Development Education.**

There are still important challenges for Ubuntu to overcome in terms of enhancing subject-specific Development Education in ITEs. One management committee member pointed out the difficulty within the ITE world is that the methodologies for teaching individual subjects are sub-contracted out to school-based or retired teachers, rather than given to internal ITE staff. It is felt that these practitioners can be harder to reach via staff CPD, and can be appointed for their experience in delivering a long-standing curriculum or examination work, rather than for openness to Development Education, *per se*.

A further challenge is evidenced when we examine the following table, generated as a result of one of the questions asked of Ubuntu Assembly members via an online survey, namely: *What post-primary subject areas do you see DE fitting most easily in? List three, with #1 as most important.* In hindsight, the question might have been phrased more specifically, seeking ideas for both Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle. The responses are still interesting:

<b>Ranked 1</b>	<b>Ranked 2</b>	<b>Ranked 3</b>
CSPE/ Politics & Society 5.5	Geography 8	Religious Education 3
Geography 3	CSPE/Politics & Society 3	Business 2
Home Economics 2	SPHE 2	SPHE 2
Religious Education 1.5	Religious Education 1	History 1
Science 1	Business 1	English 1
Drama 1	Transition Year 1	Home Economics 1
Economics 1		Science 1
Across all 1		CSPE 1

Figure 3.4: *The post-primary subject areas which Ubuntu members feel are best fits for Development Education.* The number after the subject name indicates how many responses out of 17 ranked the subjects thus. Geography, for instance, was ranked most important by 3 and second by 8 other respondents.

Clearly, the majority of respondents feel that the subjects CSPE, Politics and Society and Geography are the most relevant to Development Education. The Ubuntu Strategic Plan promotes close collaboration with WWGS when it comes to using Development Education resources in schools. Currently, there are no WWGS resources specifically dealing with CSPE, Politics & Society or Geography, although it is believed that work is in hand on a WWGS Junior Cycle Geography guidelines. This gap between Ubuntu members' thinking and specific WWGS resource provision suggests a need for closer collaboration and planning between the two bodies, and strengthen the case for closer link-up to Scoilnet too.

The Ubuntu website, [www.ubuntu.ie](http://www.ubuntu.ie), contains a huge amount of teaching resources which can be accessed thematically, under subject-specific headings or by reference to the Sustainable Development Goals. Some of these resources are tailored specifically to the Irish post-primary curriculum, including WWGS material, while most have a broader scope and include resources from UNICEF and other authoritative bodies. The Ubuntu website is a treasure trove as a portal for Development Education for teachers. Usage remains relatively consistent, with the figure of 377 hits in March 2019 being in line with annual usage figures of between 3,000 and 3,400 hits. The home page is the main source of access for users, and subject-specific resources are searched for three times more often than general resources, which reinforces Ubuntu's emphasis on subject-specific delivery in the Strategic Plan.

It is fully understood and accepted that Ubuntu's core remit is in initial teacher education. However, student teachers eventually become newly qualified and practising teachers. Thus, there is definite merit in looking at how Ubuntu's bank of resources might be promoted to teachers post-graduation, and indeed in also ensuring that student teachers and their educators are supported to engage with other portals too. WWGS resources are used in approximately 200 schools, according to available statistics. Outside of those schools, e.g. in over 500 other post-primary establishments, there is a high likelihood that teachers, including cooperating teachers, may direct student teachers to Scoilnet or other resources. Indeed there is much on Scoilnet which can be of value to Development Education, or ESD. Therefore, **it is recommended that Ubuntu look into how it can foster active links to and from the Scoilnet portal, which since 2016 has operated a specific portal dedicated to supporting the Sustainable Development Goals and ESD.**

The recommendations above, towards expanding upon Ubuntu's partnerships, are reinforced by the February 2019 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the 'home' department of Irish Aid) policy document on international development, entitled 'A Better World':

*'We will dedicate more resources for achieving the objectives set out in our Development Education strategy. Development Education is action-focused engagement that empowers people to understand the root causes of poverty and global inequalities... We will intensify collaboration with the Department of Education and Skills and build on the transformation of curricula, including the new Leaving Certificate Politics and Society subject. We will also reach out to promote*

*Development Education partnerships beyond the formal education sector to young people and the wider community.'*

Among its school-based actions under the area of Delivery, the Ubuntu Strategic Plan seeks to ensure that student teachers teach Development Education in their subject areas and/or in Transition Year as part of their School Placement. Ubuntu requires project leaders to complete a very comprehensive End-of-Year Report template. **It is recommended that a short additional section be added to this template, to seek some data from project leaders which may help to determine the level of opportunities that actually arise to teach Development Education in Senior Cycle contexts.** Programmes like the Leaving Certificate Applied and Transition Year can provide ideal opportunities for Development Education work without the timetable restrictions of Junior Cycle. **It would be very useful for Ubuntu to know to what extent student teachers on placement are getting opportunities to teach Transition Year particularly,** as this has been the single biggest growth area in post-primary education, in terms of student uptake, over the lifetime of Ubuntu.

### ***Alignment with Core ITE Components***

The Ubuntu End-of-Year report template concentrates significantly on how Development Education has been integrated through students' engagement with Ubuntu-supported projects, but also to know how the projects have linked to mandatory elements of ITE programmes, as directed by the Teaching Council. The relevant headings here include: Adolescent Learning; Inclusive Education (Special Education, Multiculturalism, Disadvantage, etc.); Numeracy / Literacy; The Teacher as Professional/Reflective Practitioner/Researcher; The School as a Learning Community; Teaching, Learning and Assessment; Differentiation; ICT in Teaching & Learning; Legislation Relevant to School & Classroom; The Teacher & External Agencies.

The Teaching Council's guidelines are not at odds with good Development Education e.g. the Code of Professional Practice defines RESPECT with a very 'Development Education' lens: 'Teachers uphold human dignity and promote equality and emotional and cognitive development. In their professional practice, teachers demonstrate respect for spiritual and cultural values, diversity, social justice, freedom, democracy and the environment.' However, it is quite disappointing that the Teaching Council has not, to date, considered Development Education (or an

equivalent term) in its own right as a mandatory field, and Ubuntu is applauded for its submissions to Teaching Council review processes, seeking to have this rectified.

This Ubuntu requirement of its project leaders via its End-of-Year report template is a positive one. **Any insight, statistical or otherwise, into changes in the levels of integration across ITE curricula overall would be highly valuable to any future strategic planning, and this is something which Ubuntu ought to track annually, if personnel resources allow.**

### ***School Placement***

Ubuntu has recently published an excellent document, Guidelines for Development Education on School Placement, which aims to support student teachers on placement. Key features of the guide include an overview of Development Education, and advice on engaging in Development Education during School Placement via teaching specific subjects, Transition Year, in extracurricular activities and so on. It also promotes World Wise Global Schools projects and the WWGS Global Passport, and fosters student-teacher reflection and school-based research.

Until this publication, the traditional approach taken in Teaching Council literature was not pro-active when it came to Development Education. **Tracking statistical feedback on placements, as mentioned above, will be helpful in gauging how successful Ubuntu's new guidelines are, over a period of years.** At present, there appears to be no mechanism to track student-teacher engagement with Development Education once they finish their ITE involvement. This makes it very difficult to ensure that Development Education actions, Ubuntu-supported or otherwise, are having a long-term impact in the 'realpolitik' of school life.

As a result of the above concerns, and without any prejudice to the WWGS or any other body's remit, **Ubuntu ought to consider involving a specified number of recently graduated teachers, trained in Development Education and formerly benefitting from Ubuntu supports, on its Assembly and, if feasible, perhaps one such nominee on its management committee.**

A logical parallel to this recommendation is that Ubuntu, resources permitting, ought to encourage research on the impact of its efforts with student teachers on their longer term values, actions and pedagogical engagement with Development Education as newly qualified teachers. O'Flaherty and O'Toole have effected a



comparative study of social awareness among pre-service and in-service teachers in Ireland and New Zealand and in a similar vein, it could be that a longitudinal study of attitudes among Irish pre-service and in-service teachers using similar questions will yield rich data on the deeper impact of learning from Ubuntu-funded projects in ITEs.

The concern which motivates the previous recommendations comes partly from the lack of specific reference to Development Education in Teaching Council guidelines on school placement, and the relative newness and untested nature of the equivalent Ubuntu guidelines. It is, however, reinforced by the responses of Ubuntu Assembly members to the online question: *Does school placement provide realistic opportunities for student teachers to implement and expand on their learning in DE?* [From 1 (low) to 5 (very high)].

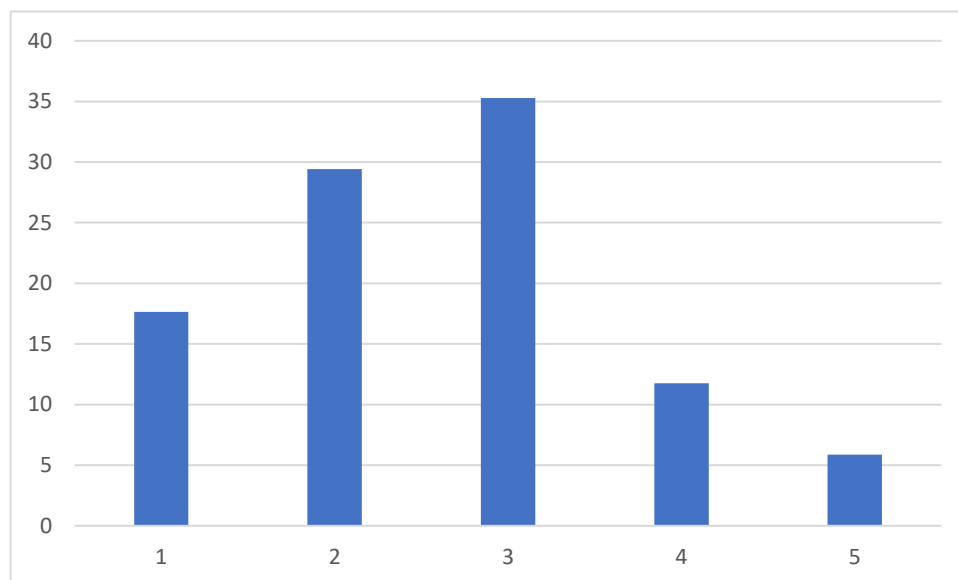


Figure 3.5: *Does school placement provide realistic opportunities for student teachers to implement and expand on their learning in DE?*

The relatively low weighted average of 2.59 out of a possible maximum of 5 is clearly shown by the preponderance of responses between levels 1 and 3. This suggests that many Assembly members, and among them many project leaders, feel that school placement does not provide adequate opportunities for student teachers to implement and expand on their engagement with Development Education. Evidence from one student teacher suggests that the opportunities may be better where the placement takes place in the former school of the student teacher, presumably because there is more immediate trust from management and staff and student teachers can feel more at home in familiar surroundings.

In terms of system level actions to promote integration of Development Education, Ubuntu has established good collaborative working relationships with a number of non-governmental organisations and bodies dedicated to social improvement. NGOs are represented on the Ubuntu Assembly and management committee. There is better evidence of collaboration with some NGOs such as IDEA and ECO-UNESCO, though it is less clear to what extent Ubuntu has impacted on some of its anticipated collaborators e.g. Young Social Innovators and the Young Scientist (Development) competitions. There is merit in gathering statistical data, perhaps in a focused research project, on the level of impact of Ubuntu and Development Education in these latter two named key educational 'players'.

It is acknowledged the Ubuntu Network works well with NGOs, and acknowledges the important role that they play in bringing a unique and rich understanding of development issues to the educational experiences of student teachers. This is evident from the involvement of NGOs in delivery of Development Education in projects across institutions, as well as their involvement in the Assembly and Management Committee. The website [www.developmenteducation.ie](http://www.developmenteducation.ie) continues to be an important NGO-focused support to teaching Development Education. All opportunities to enhance and deepen relationships with NGOs might be explored.

The aforementioned artefacts of learning (AoL) initiative will also ensure that the commitment to 'provide concrete and transferable examples of good practice in Development Education' can be enhanced through the Ubuntu website and, hopefully, via links to others.

### ***Research and Reflection***

In terms of other ways that Development Education and the work of Ubuntu have impacted on the programmes of student teachers, the 2017-18 Ubuntu report to Irish Aid contained an interesting summary, gleaned from questionnaires administered to student teachers post PME 1. The responses show that the numbers of student teachers who feel they have opportunities to use their Development Education on placement and in various teaching activities is hovering between half and two thirds, but the numbers who otherwise have been able to bring it into research papers, projects, portfolios or assignments is considerably lower.

It is difficult to evaluate these figures, as the response rate from student questionnaires is not particularly high. Some good anecdotal evidence has been

gleaned, showing the way the Development Education has been the fulcrum for group projects in some ITE contexts. If time and resources permit, **Ubuntu is urged to seek more specific data from member institutions on the number and content of relevant projects or papers, theses or meaningful portfolio entries.**

Q4. Please tick all that apply...	
I incorporated Development Education in a lesson plan or scheme of work	69%
I incorporated Development Education into my teaching while on School Placement	56%
I conducted observations on Development Education related topics while on School Placement (e.g. equality, fundraising initiatives)	35%
I taught about a development issue in Microteaching	58%
I made a presentation with a Development Education theme or component	47%
I created a final piece related to Development Education (e.g. a blog, webinar, poster, installation, resource)	20%
I included Development Education in a research project or paper	20%
I included Development Education in a post lesson reflection or a portfolio entry	38%
I included Development Education in a project or assignment	35%
I completed the Global Teacher Award	7%

Figure 3.6. A table from the 2015-16 Ubuntu Impact Report, showing the level of delivery achieved among the responding student teachers.

The timing of the evaluation which led to this report meant that realistic opportunities to meet with focus groups of student teachers, or administer questionnaires to them, were very limited indeed. This is an important though unavoidable gap in the research behind the report. On the positive side, Ubuntu’s own focus on impact has gleaned much valuable information, and the statistics quoted from a 2017 questionnaire survey are very encouraging. Although asking relatively ‘passive’ questions and focused on attitudes rather than actions, they demonstrate the impact that Ubuntu-supported projects can have:

	Pre PME1 Questionnaire (Sept’ 2016)	Post PME1 Questionnaire (May 2017)
I am interested in development issues.	92%	97%
I am happy that Development Education is part of my PME.	84%	92%
I would like to raise awareness of development issues in my teaching.	87%	97%
Development Education should be taught in my subject area.	71%	81%

Figure 3.7. Student teacher attitudes to Development Education (From Ubuntu’s Irish Aid Grant Application 2018, Page 17).

Regardless of the various challenges and recommendations that have arisen in examining the strategic area of Delivery in this chapter, and of the dangers of over emphasising quantitative data, it is useful to end this chapter with some relevant

qualitative feedback. When Ubuntu Assembly members and project leaders were asked via online survey *What has been most beneficial for your student teachers about your most recent Ubuntu-supported project?* Their responses were both varied and insightful. In no particular order of importance, they spoke of:

- Developing understanding of Dev Ed issues and pedagogical know-how
- Giving the students an opportunity to immerse themselves in their practice as artist and educators to explore Development Education issues - the opportunity to present their work publicly to a wide audience.
- Exposing our student teachers to a wide variety of perspectives and examples of what can be and has been done in different educational contexts
- More lively engagement with key sociological concepts
- Most beneficial for student teachers: Engagement with DE project work and the extra-curricular Symposium was high. They saw the value of DE in their future practice.
- Exposure to fellow teachers who are strongly committed to social justice
- Guidelines for School Placement, resource support, access to a better module on DE due to facility for guest speakers
- Makes students aware of the concept of DE and how best to integrate it into their teaching
- Challenging their perspectives of the role of the teacher
- Demonstrates an important relevance and rationale for them as student-teachers
- It validates student teachers' broader epistemological, philosophical and moral purpose and enables them to grow personally/professionally
- Individual supports we can offer students in small groups to help integrate DE into different parts of their learning.
- Being exposed to key issues about what it is to be a teacher and learner in a world of disadvantage and simplistic binaries
- Learning from others how things are done elsewhere
- Drawing on the experience of other educators and being supported in tackling challenging questions about human rights, climate justice and contested and controversial areas relating to religions and beliefs in the classroom.

Despite the impossibility of engaging with student teachers across a broad range of ITE contexts, it was wonderful to get feedback from students involved in one important Development Education project, the Applied Social Studies course at Maynooth University. Like others, this course achieves much in a relatively short time, is an exemplar of cooperation between an ITE and an NGO (Self-Help Africa in this

instance), between two different university departments (Education and Social Studies) and has a high degree of emphasis on creativity through its further collaboration with the Arts Council's Artist in Residence programme. Just listen to five student-teacher voices, speaking of deep impact, picked completely at random from a pool of written reflections by students involved in the Maynooth Applied Social Studies course:

**Student A:** *This programme was also very valuable in terms of learning how to talk about and discuss social issues with students. These matters can be very sensitive and difficult to talk about at times however 'Acting Up!' displayed how we can delve into these topics through the medium of drama. A simple tableau can tell so much about a story and by asking students to add even one line to the scene, thoughts and feelings regarding these issues can be expressed in a manner which students may be more comfortable with. Drama gives students an outlet to deal with these issues through the eyes of a character and I found that in the 'Acting Up!' classes it was much easier to talk about social justice matters in this fashion. I'm excited to try these techniques in my classes, especially in music as it can be used when we are dealing with songs regarding topics such as homelessness, climate change and poverty.*

**Student B:** *Being explicitly aware of the intercultural competences, I have realised how important they are, that they are not acquired once for all, they are challenging and how essential it is to always question ourselves. Therefore, on a personal level, I would like to continue to develop those skills. As a formal educator, I would like to pass those competences on to my students through my classes because I believe the sooner they integrate them, the better equipped they will be to be empathic adults.*

**Student C:** *This was a really interesting & enjoyable approach to teaching and learning that I incorporated almost immediately into my teaching practice. Jackson (in Boal, 2005, p. xxii) believes that 'everyone can act'. I agree. The different forms of theatre, developed by Boal, for example, can help to uncover truths about societies and cultures in the past, in the present, and may even help students to reflect on how they can proactively change their worlds for the better in the future.*

**Student D:** *It was great to meet people from different parts of the world and different backgrounds and hear their stories and listen to their views. I believe that if I had of done this cycle with just PME students the outcome would have been completely different. Learnt a lot about social injustice and discrimination and my intercultural competence has definitely increased. I feel thanks to this programme I am more*

*prepared for teaching in an intercultural environment and I have picked up numerous ideas to help ensure my classroom is an inclusive space.*

**Student E:** *As a teacher I am constantly exchanging and interacting with young people. The Acting Up sessions have formed the basis for my TY Drama sessions and will inform some of the work they have created and will perform in May. There is a wealth of empathy created when we are confronted with versions of ourselves or with people who look like us. The students I teach seemed to enjoy creating tableaux, to see their experiences reflected in their peers – learning from each other and experiencing learning through doing. Performing really does encourage vulnerability and I feel far better equipped to facilitate sessions, to help young people feel safe in experiencing and confronting the injustices they face and will continue to face as they progress into society. Plus it's fun.*

There were other opportunities during this evaluation to get student feedback, including attending the Change Lab launch and a presentation on student-teacher involvement in the UCC Radio and Podcast project in collaboration with Trócaire and Community Radio Youghal (CRY). They too bore out the potential that fostering creativity has in teacher education, whether as a means of engaging students, delivering lessons overcoming the challenges of dealing with potentially controversial and challenging issues which are so fundamental to Development Education.

## Chapter 4: Capacity Building of Teacher Educators

Ubuntu Assembly Members were asked via online survey: *How successful has Ubuntu been in supporting its members in initial teacher education (ITE) settings?* [Rating 1 (low) to 5 (very successful)]. The responses were by far the most consistently positive to any question asked in this format. The weighting average of satisfaction was 4.38 out of 5, to a question which in essence was asking about how well Ubuntu supports its members and helps to build their capacity to deliver Development Education.

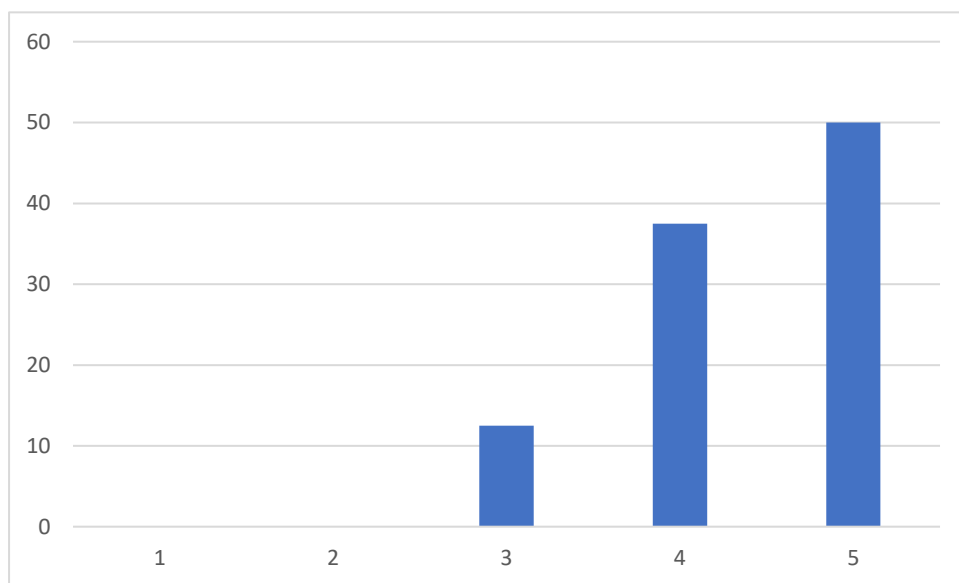


Figure 4.1: *How successful has Ubuntu been in supporting its members in initial teacher education (ITE) settings?*

In the current Strategic Plan (P 19), teacher educators are defined as ‘including lecturers, tutors and school placement supervisors that operate on full time, part time or occasional basis in ITE.’ Capacity building is to be achieved through ‘Dialogue Days’, Assembly meetings, customised workshops within ITE, working groups and research activities. The requirements for the PRF to be submitted to Irish Aid are not at odds with these aims in Capacity Building. This seeks to ‘build capacity of teacher educators to teach and integrate Development Education in an effective manner’ and asks that Ubuntu provide capacity-building events for teacher educators:

- 1 Assembly Meeting
- 1 Dialogue Day
- 1 Customised CPD event
- 1 Specialist Group
- 6 events hosted by members

This is broadly what happens in any given year, allowing for some variation as circumstances dictate. For example, in 2017-18, the capacity-building events organised by Ubuntu involved two Assembly meetings, one Dialogue Day, two working groups, two customised CPD sessions and in-house CPD events in member institutions. There is no obvious difficulty with these slight variations from the Strategic Plan, not least because more events or activities were actually delivered than had been anticipated in the given year.

Dialogue Day is undoubtedly the key university-based action in the capacity building and networking calendar for Ubuntu members. This day is held at different locations around the country, and generally focuses on a theme e.g. in 2018 at UCC, it dealt with 'Pushing Boundaries, Taking Risks' and in 2017 in Dublin the emphasis was on 'Curriculum, Policy and Advocacy: The Increasing Need for Development Education.' In May 2019, the day was focused on 'Development Education - Pedagogy in Action!' A range of guest speakers, panel discussions, exhibitions, reports on Ubuntu-supported project and inputs from student teachers provided a significant opportunity to Ubuntu members to 'network' and deepen their engagement.

One area of some concern is the degree to which attendance at Dialogue Day events has tended to vary - it is not overtly because of significant changes of date, and the themes have certainly been very relevant. In a similar vein, the level of attendance at Assembly Meetings has also been liable to some fluctuation. There may well be logical reasons for such numbers, and it is understandable that institutions may wish to have just one or two representatives attending Assembly Meetings, whereas Dialogue Day is viewed as more a day for everyone involved in Ubuntu and comes at a time of year which is intended to be conducive to teacher-educator attendance. The ironic danger here is that the high levels of reported satisfaction with Ubuntu's support, which essentially relates to the support provided at co-ordinator level, may partly explain why members feel less need to attend such meetings. Ubuntu is urged to identify the rationale for sometimes-lower attendance levels in this regard.

At Ubuntu's request, the online survey used in this evaluation also asked for any irregular or lapsed members to give suggestions about how Ubuntu might attract them back again, and there were very few respondents who fell into this 'lapsed member' category, suggesting that they may no longer consider themselves as members. **Again, Ubuntu – described by one respondent as 'so welcoming, so enabling...' - wants to and needs to look at re-engaging such members.** Among the suggestions received, on the matter of attracting back lapsed members, were a need



to involve them more in decision making, on-site support visits, more support for research, more 'showcase' events and speakers. These ideas have capacity challenges for Ubuntu and lead us again to the likely merits of seeking multi-annual funding for such expansive measures.

In light of the concern expressed by a management group member, that part-time school placement supervisors can be particularly hard to reach, **it merits Ubuntu examining its active membership to gauge how many, if any, of its members fall into this part-time category.** If, as expected, the numbers are very low, then it is logical that **the next Strategic Plan ought to identify specific measures, CPD events or on-line supports which can better support people in this part-time category.**

In terms of what Ubuntu achieves for its active members, there is no doubt that membership of Ubuntu is perceived as an important support. Several members spoke of the importance of the umbrella grant application by Ubuntu, which saves huge time for individual institutions and also fosters collective thinking and cohesion among members. The range of responses to the online question: *What has been most beneficial for you as a teacher educator about your most recent Ubuntu-supported project?* demonstrates the value of Ubuntu's support very clearly. In no particular order, people wrote of:

- opportunities to learn - workshops, Assembly meetings, Dialogue days
- developing understanding of Dev Ed issues and pedagogical know-how
- creates a supportive community of practice
- learning from each other
- sharing ideas about the possibilities of exploring DE through the lens of our different subject disciplines
- collaborating and sharing ideas
- taught myself how to make a powtoon/animation clip!
- significant impact on the development of student teachers' understanding and broadening of awareness of DE.
- the formal curriculum aspect served to broaden understanding very effectively
- being part of a supportive network
- Dialogue days, community of practice
- opportunity to promote the concept of DE on and through the PME programme
- being supported by colleagues that share a passion for an area that has been overlooked in education.
- making us think about our assumptions and practices

- engaging in inter-institutional and interdisciplinary work
- engagement with the Network through Assembly, Dialogue Day
- access to funding
- encouraged and heightened enthusiasm for education.
- project makes visible Dev Ed work in the School
- encourages me, as a teacher-educator, to reconnect with the wider social and transformative qualities of teaching
- most useful to have a staff champion of DE.

In terms of its university-based actions in building capacity of teacher educators, Ubuntu has been very successful. It has fostered a community of practice, and provided significant opportunities for members to learn from each other and share experiences of working on projects. It is less clear to what extent Ubuntu links with subject associations in particular. **If resources permit, the notion of engaging more with subject associations merits a renewed effort. Many subject associations are grappling with curricular changes and, in the case of the Politics and Society Teachers Association, with an entirely new subject which can have very significant links to Development Education.**

In some instances, projects have involved collaboration between Ubuntu members from more than one institution, and if a multi-annual approach to funding, and possibly three-year plans can be put in place, such inter-institutional collaboration ought to be expanded upon. On occasion, such collaboration as has happened to date has linked thematically to primary ITE with no obvious difficulty, suggesting that within agreed remits, this form of cross-sectoral collaboration might be productively explored further under the next Strategic Plan, resources permitting.

Other university-based aims in the 2016-20 Strategic Plan have not been successfully achieved. There is little evidence, for example of regional networks or of a realistic body of 'Associate members'. The proposed involvement of NGOs in the work of Ubuntu has been somewhat more successful, and it is good to note that NGOs have a nominee on the management committee. It was noticeable, however, that few NGOs named in the Strategic Plan appeared able to respond to the evaluation questions or survey, though anecdotal evidence of NGO involvement in guest speaker contexts, in helping to deliver introductions to Development Education, via the website [www.developmenteducation.ie](http://www.developmenteducation.ie) or during focused Dev Ed weeks has been very positive.

The above difficulties suggest that the original thinking behind the 2016-20 Strategic Plan was too ambitious, and too aspirational. This suggests that **Ubuntu needs to revisit these proposed actions, and either decide that they are no longer feasible or identify new ways to expand associate membership and NGO involvement.** If a more expanded role is still desirable, then Ubuntu is again encouraged to look at additional funding streams and longer-term planning, as it would be unreasonable and probably impossible to expect that current co-ordinator capacity could do more than it is.

**If the expanded direction is the one chosen by Ubuntu, it is certainly recommended that there are potential Associate members, if not full Assembly Members, to be sought out** e.g. among ITE student-teachers' representatives, teacher unions, co-operating teachers with an interest in Development Education, and among state bodies like the State Examinations Commission and Department of Education and Skills. It has been wonderful to see the level of student-teacher engagement when opportunities arose to attend 2019 events like the launch of Change Lab at NCAD and the Social Justice presentation at Maynooth University. Such events occur in many institutions, and could be a very useful means of both profiling what Ubuntu has done and of enrolling associate members with a keen and immediate interest in Development Education.

Ubuntu's school-based actions include the aspiration to provide continuing professional development opportunities to practising teachers, increase cooperation with teacher education bodies like the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) and Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT). These have largely failed to get off the ground, although the role of the PDST in at least one Ubuntu-funded project in 2019 has been noted, in the Young Economist of the Year project at UCD.

This is a philosophical as well as practical challenge, as many Ubuntu members see the organisation's remit as solely in Initial Teacher Education. If this is the view of Ubuntu overall, then Ubuntu may well need to decide to jettison other aspirations from its next Strategic Plan. If, on the other hand, Ubuntu feels it can build such links under the next Strategic Plan, then increased funding again is likely to be required. On the positive side, there is definitely a need across the teacher education spectrum for more coherence when it comes to promoting Development Education, and Ubuntu seems as well placed as any organization to act as the link body, if its resources and philosophy make this feasible. The need for such a body, focused on ITE, NQTs (including 'Droichead') and the continuum of teacher professional

development has been flagged by others previously, including in the National Teacher Educator and Teacher Education Forum submission to the Teaching Council.

A further aspect of school-based capacity building which Ubuntu had hoped to undertake in 2016-20 was the generation of a database of co-operating teachers with an interest in Development Education. Again, Ubuntu's own capacity and resources came against it and this database was not generated. It is highly likely that interested co-operating teachers are known to individual ITEs which deal with their schools, but **an overall database of supportive co-operating teachers, GDPR regulations permitting, would assist towards possible higher levels of engagement and also broadening associate membership, a challenge discussed elsewhere in the report.**

In terms of system-level capacity building, a number of ITEs have reported good partnerships with NGOs in delivering specific initiatives, ranging from introductions to Development Education, to Dev Ed week or equivalents, and providing guest speakers on a range of Development Education themes. One member of the Ubuntu management committee, the academic coordinator, is also a member of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, and the project coordinator maintains excellent lines of communication on Ubuntu activities with all members, including persevering with relatively inactive members. As intimated in other areas of the report, **the desire to have Ubuntu develop meaningful links with both the JCT and PDST remains more aspirational than not, for now, but if its own capacity allows and philosophy allows, Ubuntu should certainly pursue these goals.** It is also worth bearing in mind that some Ubuntu-funded projects anticipate the target audience to whom findings might be disseminated as: 'teacher educators; pre-service teachers; in-service teachers; policy makers and NGOs'.

The proposed system-level action, seeking to enhance the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and multimedia for communication and capacity building has had a number of successes. There has been some good use of web-based applications for documents and spreadsheets in collaborative projects, and some good examples of videos from previous years' projects are available, including the Change Lab project at NCAD. As previously mentioned, the 2018-19 Artefacts of Learning initiative, funded by some top up grant money, is a very good way of encouraging student teachers and educators to develop educational resources and pedagogical ideas, and disseminate them across the Network. Again, depending on

'bigger picture' decisions made by Ubuntu in its planning from 2020, these resources could reach a much wider audience if linked to a portal like Scoilnet ultimately too.

One final point arises when looking at the system-level actions that Ubuntu has identified for itself, in terms of capacity building. The Strategic Plan notes the need for capacity building of Ubuntu staff to enhance the operation of the Network? At its core, this implies continuing professional development opportunities for the project coordinator. While it could be argued that representative roles fulfilled by the coordinator, such as attending IDEA or ESD national fora, are helpful to CPD, it is obvious that **the workload of the position overall has provided very limited opportunities for 'ringfenced' CPD, and this needs to be considered at management committee level.**

## Chapter 5: Research (including Monitoring and Evaluation)

This is an area where the alignment between the Ubuntu Strategic Plan and the Project Results Framework is less than precise, not least because Irish Aid does not involve itself in supporting research. In particular, the PRF seems to focus its interest on monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of interventions under Delivery/Integration, while the relevant section of the Strategic Plan has a much broader focus.

In terms of the PRF, Ubuntu has endeavoured to develop baseline data with which to measure performance indicators, as follows:

- No. or % student teachers indicating improved 'global citizenship literacy
- No. or % student teachers indicating an intent to teach DE as a result of learning from their ITE programme
- No. or % student teachers that taught DE in microteaching or School Placement
- Exemplars of Lesson Plans, Assignments or other students' work
- No. or % student teachers reflecting DE in their research projects (PME only)
- No. or % student teachers identifying personal changes in behaviour arising from DE engagement (with examples)

Where such data has been available, a very good level of success (80% and sometimes much closer to 100%) has been reported, and Ubuntu is confident of retaining very high levels of interest and real engagement among student teachers. It is very likely that Ubuntu's new School Placement Guidelines will help increase percentages in that area even further. However, as stated elsewhere, it is important not to place too much emphasis on statistical returns, particularly in figures for research projects or exemplars of lesson plans, where relatively small numbers and supervisor capacity issues can impact on upward or downward trends outside of Ubuntu's control.

Moving beyond the PRF, Ubuntu aims to support research on Development Education 'as it pertains to ITE and formal education more broadly' and seeks to ensure that research methodologies are valid, reliable and relevant to practice. Its introductory section on Research in the Strategic Plan (Page 19) suggests that 'Interdisciplinary, cross institutional and cross programmatic research is of particular relevance given the nature of Development Education and the emergence of ITE Centres of Excellence.'

As mentioned earlier, the Plan places substantial emphasis on the need to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions in the area of Delivery, and has used various means to do this, including student questionnaires and collecting samples of students' work, some of which have featured in Dialogue Day presentations. Such research has also contributed to a number of valuable published articles on the impact of Development Education in ITEs.

There are several examples from across the Ubuntu network of good practice in monitoring and evaluation. The end-of-year reports which Ubuntu furnishes to Irish Aid are very thorough. Similarly, the booklets produced for Dialogue Day annually contain some excellent insights into the learning to be gleaned from various projects undertaken. Indeed, some issues have emerged from such reports which should, in turn, be given consideration by Ubuntu as it considers its strategic planning from 2020.

One finding which has come through concerns the merits of a possible award or certification from Ubuntu to student teachers. Some project findings have suggested that awards or provision of certification can be a major attraction for student teachers in ensuring good engagement with projects. In some instances, a number of credits can be obtained by students participating in optional modules linked to Development Education. Ubuntu members have expressed some concerns about the notion of awards i.e. being at odds with good Development Education principles, but **it is recommended that Ubuntu consider some form of award or certification, as a means of enhancing awareness of Ubuntu as well as promoting good practice among student teachers.** Ubuntu already endorses a number of individual ITE certificates, such as the Maynooth University Social Justice course, for which participants received their certificates at the 2019 Ubuntu Dialogue Day in a lovely, engaging and inter-active ceremony. **There is merit in considering a form of Ubuntu co-branding of such awards if that is feasible and agreeable with ITEs and NGO sponsors.** That would help both in awareness raising about Ubuntu and in supporting, if not quality assuring, programmes which go well beyond introductions to Development Education.

Ubuntu acknowledges a difficulty which has arisen somewhat too often, in getting final project reports and data from project coordinators who are, of course, working on many other things at the same time. Although it may sound negative, **it needs to be broached to project leaders that successful draw down of project allocation funding will in future be linked to completion of this report and any relevant data**

**tables**, in order to ensure that Ubuntu has timely access to information it needs for Irish Aid and possibly other bodies. Even if a move to multi-annual funding streams were effected from 2020, it is likely that there would still be a need to provide annual updates and data for Irish Aid via the Ubuntu PRF.

The current Strategic Plan intended that case studies of former student teachers (now practicing teachers, conducting Development Education as graduates) will be compiled to demonstrate the applicability of Development Education to teaching. In the online survey, Ubuntu Assembly Members were asked: *Do you have any evidence of long-term/Newly Qualified Teacher engagement with DE, linked to participation in your past Ubuntu-supported initiatives?* The responses were very mixed, bearing out the concern expressed earlier, that **Ubuntu needs to encourage research on impact among NQTs who have previously benefited from Ubuntu-sponsored initiatives.** The American SIAS quantitative survey, a test of social advocacy which has been validated for an Irish teacher context, is currently being used for such a purpose in a University of Limerick project and its findings may provide interesting learning for both UL and Ubuntu more broadly.

Looking at the responses to the question above, of a net figure of thirteen respondents, two said they had no real evidence of former student teachers' later engagement with Development Education, two more cited anecdotal evidence only, two referred to knowing of one student, and two more knew of some former student teachers who had engaged with World Wise Global Schools. Thus, the number of respondents who were able to speak confidently of significant follow-up knowledge of impact was below 50%. While the number of respondents was small, this figure cannot stand alone as reliable evidence of long-term impact, and more systematic evidence gathering and monitoring of the longer term impact of Ubuntu's work is needed. It is also likely that such evidence gathering would be of considerable value to Ubuntu and of interest to ITEs and the Department of Education and Skills, among others. A small number of former student teachers have been spoken with during the course of the evaluation leading to this report, and the responses have been very positive, but **there is a need for more systematic research among former student teachers, especially if feedback on major Ubuntu work, such as the new School Placement Guidelines or the impact of curricular reform in the classroom is to be gleaned and used for future planning.**

The possible research areas above have been broached, but contain an important caveat. The 2016-20 Strategic Plan contained an intention that a list of key research



areas would be developed, in consultation with Irish Aid. This has not happened systematically, apart from some Monitoring and Evaluation related research interests, and **it is important that the period covered by next Strategic Plan be guided by a set of focused research questions to better inform Ubuntu and Irish Aid.** This is a recommendation, but not a criticism, and it is made in the full knowledge that some very important work has been done in this general area. The current plan anticipated publication of Ubuntu-supported research pieces. There have been approximately ten of such published since 2016, and more than twice that in the decade before 2016, according to the Strategic Plan (Page 12). A cross-institutional evaluation of the impact of Development Education projects on student teachers was carried out in 2015-16 and is available on the Ubuntu website. **It would also be worthwhile, time permitting, for Ubuntu to collate research publications and research activities of members that reference Development Education or an equivalent, as there may well be more ‘out there’ than is generally realised.**

**Among action areas which need some review and a renewed ‘push’ for the 2020-onwards strategic planning are the stated aim to have Ubuntu support student supervisors undertaking specific research projects, and the notion of establishing a post-graduate scholarship scheme.** It is worth noting that the current Strategic Plan has already intimated the desirability of compiling some case studies of former student teachers (now practicing teachers) conducting Development Education as graduate teachers, to demonstrate the applicability of Development Education to teaching.

It is reasonable to suggest that the potential appetite for research in Development Education has been improving incrementally since 2016. Noting the reinvigoration of ‘Green’ issues in local and European elections during May 2019, within the likely timescale of the next Strategic Plan it is likely that there will be:

- more opportunities for (global) citizenship education in Junior Cycle (via Wellbeing rising to 400 hours, and noting that Development Education is already referenced in the Wellbeing Guidelines)
- ongoing proactive post-primary student lobbying for Development Education’s aims
- an increase in the number of post-primary students taking Leaving Certificate Politics and Society, and
- quite possibly a rise in the number of Political Science and Sociology graduates entering PME courses.

Assuming resources permit, with or without a change in funding and planning structures, **current unfulfilled aspirations to support student supervisors, practising teachers interested in undertaking or being involved in research on Development Education (in association with WWGS), and the establishment of a post-graduate scholarship scheme need to be revisited from 2020 and used to expand and deepen research on the impact of and possibilities for Development Education in schools.**

## Chapter 6: Policy Reform for Development Education

This area of the 2016-20 Strategic Plan is subsumed into what is termed ‘Advocacy’ in the PRF. In its key university-based action seeking policy reform, Ubuntu is commended for its efforts to ensure that the Teaching Council’s review of its requirements for course recognition adequately reflect Development Education in post-primary institutions. Its submission in late 2018, for example, cited the following rationale:

To include DE, ESD or GCE as a mandatory element of ITE, or to name it as a Learning Outcome in subsequent editions of the Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers (Teaching Council, 2017) document, will consolidate the efforts of the DES to integrate DE/ESD/GCE into formal education. It will be an important step in insuring that our teachers are equipped to collectively address, through their teaching and professional practice, key issues of our time. It will also support the many institutions already engaging in DE/ESD/GCE to enhance their work, while also raising awareness and appreciation for the importance of education for equality and sustainability in the Irish context. Finally, it will be a key step in DE/ESD/GCE becoming normalised in educational discourse, thereby supporting our nation to fulfil its international obligations toward Goal 4.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Making this case to the Teaching Council has also seen Council personnel invited to a Dialogue Day and various communications between Ubuntu, its individual members and the Teaching Council. It seems fair to say that the response to date has been no better than mixed from the Council, and as deliberations are ongoing under the review, **Ubuntu is urged to continue its efforts to ensure that optimal levels of Teaching Council recognition of Development Education – content, principles and values – more strongly than is the case at present.** This does not mean that Teaching Council guidelines and documentation are at odds with Development Education, but rather that there is a need for more overt, specific linkage to Development Education than is currently the case. One Ubuntu member has suggested correctly that even a shift from the Teaching Council in using the term ‘global citizenship’ wherever it currently refers to ‘citizenship’ would provide an important opportunity and encouragement to Ubuntu’s advocacy.

Ubuntu has also sought to advocate for systemic change in the education system, specifically via submissions to the review of the Department of Education and Skills Statement of Strategy (June 2016) and also to the review of the National Strategy on

Education for Sustainable Development (published in November 2018). In the former submission, Ubuntu has challenged the DES to promote key themes of Development Education, including:

- active learning
- critical literacy
- links local and global issues
- developing critical consciousness
- challenging stereotypes
- creating an environment in which controversial issues can be raised
- encouraging informed action

In different formats, and thanks to the work of many in and beyond bodies like Ubuntu, it is now possible to see these themes in key aspects of post-primary education policy – the principles of Junior Cycle, *Looking at Our School* (2016) and so on. As we now move towards Senior Cycle Reform, which will embrace much more than curricular reform, undoubtedly, Ubuntu is urged to seek out further opportunities to influence change. As with the Teaching Council, **ensuring that the actual nomenclature of Development Education or an equivalent term is to the fore in key educational policy documents should continue to be a priority too.** Ubuntu is also urged to take note of the tracking done by one management committee member, showing that **an emphasis on creativity, as per the UNESCO Key Competencies, should be factored into all advocacy for policy reform and could be very supportive of integration of Development Education overall.**

Another key success for Ubuntu in terms of its advocacy for policy reform has been in its membership of the steering committee guiding the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development. The project coordinator is a valued member of this steering committee, along with a number of other non-governmental organisations working towards similar goals, and also attends, proactively, the annual national forum on ESD. Ubuntu has pushed in its submission to the 2017-8 review of the ESD strategy for what we might call more ‘joined up thinking’ linking ITE to the National Induction Programme for Teachers and for teacher CPD, for ESD to be prominently reflected in State assessment of the curriculum, and for more emphasis on ESD in higher education institutes more broadly.

It is to be expected that the remainder of the ESD Strategy’s period of implementation will be better informed by Ubuntu’s recommendations, but it is also worth bearing in

mind that within the coming twelve to eighteen months, work on the next ESD Strategy is likely to commence, and Ubuntu should feel in a strong position to influence that work too. There are times when the Irish Aid Performance Measurement Framework format can actually inhibit 'joined up thinking' by its compartmentalisation of actions. It has been very refreshing to note Ubuntu's desire to influence broader Higher Education actions like the 'Green Campus' and 'University of Sanctuary'. This area of advocacy is not identified in its current Strategic Plan, and is covered by different areas of the Irish Aid PMF to the one which informs Ubuntu's work (that being Section 3.3). However, **it is completely logical, and could be highly valuable, if Ubuntu has the capacity to be a lead agent for change across higher education institutions more broadly, and such an action merits inclusion in the next strategic planning cycle if resources permit.**

On a final point in this chapter, the 2016-20 Strategic Plan anticipated that Ubuntu would communicate to schools how Dev Ed can contribute to meeting school policy? This is another aspiration which has fallen foul of time and personnel resources in Ubuntu. However, there is considerable merit in trying to revisit this, and **provide guidance for schools on how policies can be reviewed through a Development Education lens, as a priority in Ubuntu's next planning cycle.** Since 2016, other guiding documents for schools have emerged from the Department of Education and Skills, including both the Inspectorate's *Looking at Our School* (2016) and the revised National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (2018). There are aspects of the former, and more substantial areas in the latter, which Ubuntu could profitably look at in order to inform its own contribution.

There is absolutely no doubt that many school policies, in areas such as admissions, equity, inclusion and indeed teaching and learning can be better informed by a Development Education perspective. An approach to JCT and/or PDST with a proposal to assist with such whole-school capacity building could be the optimal initial step for Ubuntu in progressing this aim, but like other recommendations, this may only be feasible if a means of expanding funding and personnel capacity can be sought out with Irish Aid and/or other possible partnerships.

## Chapter 7: Curriculum Change for Development Education

Working with the Irish Development Education Association (IDEA), Ubuntu has lobbied strongly for Development Education with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). In 2017, the NCCA was invited to give a very heartening presentation at Dialogue Day, focused on its work to integrate Development Education/ESD into its curricular reforms. That work has since been completed in Junior Cycle, including across several statements of learning, in the rationale, aims and often individual learning outcomes in specifications. By now, many subjects in the suite of Junior Cycle contain quite specific Development Education perspectives and Ubuntu members deserve significant credit for their efforts, committee by committee, to encourage this.

One of the questions asked of Ubuntu members in the online survey for this evaluation was: *Have you been directly involved in any form of advocacy for DE in policy or curricular reform work as a teacher educator?* The range of answers is quite informative. Looking at the efforts to engage in NCCA consultations on curricular reform, for example, coordinators submitted numerous representations on behalf of Ubuntu. It was also reported that individual members had been involved in the RSE review, policy submissions on Education about Religion and Beliefs, development group work on Junior Cycle History, Geography and CSPE, several had sent in submissions on Politics and Society for Leaving Certificate, and there was further Ubuntu member involvement on the subject development group for the new Leaving Certificate Visual Art specification.

It should also be pointed out that several subject specifications in Junior Cycle were also drafted without Ubuntu-member involvement, naturally. Nevertheless this should be interpreted positively, given that many subjects like Home Economics, Science and Business Studies have now got Dev Ed-friendly specifications too. These, in turn, potentially reflect the level of advocacy for Development Education across the system, can and will help WWGS to develop subject-specific guidelines, and **it is quite conceivable that new Ubuntu members or Associate members could be found among the membership of such development groups should Ubuntu be open to that.**

As curriculum reform continues, there are new opportunities which should be very relevant to Ubuntu's aims, including the expansion of Junior Cycle Wellbeing and the discussions around Senior Cycle reform. **In Wellbeing, there is a potential vacuum or**

**at least an uncertainty within the system regarding what to do in the additional time allocation, and Ubuntu’s advice and advocacy here could be timely,** given that Development Education is mooted in the current Wellbeing Guidelines (Page 64) as a possible school curriculum element. Ubuntu management committee members have expressed concern that Wellbeing may be ‘marketed’ as being more about personal and less about societal wellbeing, but it is open to Ubuntu and possible partners to try to turn a potential challenge into an opportunity too.

In Senior Cycle, in addition to the likely submissions from Ubuntu as a body, **there is merit in Ubuntu developing an advice pack or set of key principles that inform a cohesive, ‘Ubuntu-branded’ approach to promoting Development Education.** This could then be fostered among members who are on development groups, or any Board or Council members at NCCA who may be interested in the Ubuntu perspective. As previously, this suggestion is dependent on time and personnel capacity, but a clear, consistent set of messages can be much more impactful than a lot of varied ones, however well-informed their deliverers may be.

An interesting partnership between Ubuntu and the NGO Concern was initiated in 2017, focused on ‘Science for Development’. While some early momentum dissipated, in 2019, a group (containing some of the original partners) was established with a fixed task in mind – to develop a Science and Dev Ed poster, reflecting the multiple links between Science and the SDGS/Development Education. This is currently in development and due to be complete by August 2019. The benefit to this approach is the collective buy in of the working group to a defined output, which will then be printed and disseminated to all ITE Science teacher educators and made available online to all student teachers. There is likely to be learning from its successes or otherwise which might help Ubuntu identify other potential partnerships among NGOs, subject associations and civil society generally in promoting Development Education in this time of considerable curricular review in post-primary education.

A number of respondents to the question mentioned on the previous page explained that while they might not have been involved in curriculum advocacy at NCCA level, they had nevertheless advocated for Development Education within the curricula of their own ITEs. This is certainly very much in line with the action areas in the current Strategic Plan. The following table shows edited examples of what members did:

➤ introducing Dev Ed into Year 3 of a concurrent programme, where ‘owing to the compulsory nature of formal assessment, engagement was excellent’
➤ ITE programme reviews, advocating for a fully integrated approach to DE
➤ introduced and taught and assessed compulsory Dev Ed module, organised many information events, currently embed it in Sociology and Pedagogy modules, introduced the concept and Ubuntu to new staff members.
➤ JCT, Teacher Educator National Forum
➤ within the university I am developing a cross university module in DE
➤ via university networks (working with the Centre for Global Development body and engaged in cross-faculty curriculum development in DE)
➤ introduced and taught and assessed compulsory Dev Ed module, organised many information events, currently embed it in Sociology and Pedagogy modules, introduced the concept and Ubuntu to new staff members.
➤ I have been able to include DE into the student experience where I work, as the institution developed a new programme.

Figure 7.1. *Advocacy by individual Ubuntu members for curricular and policy change.*

Some important points come through from even this relatively small sample of the advocacy of Ubuntu members within their ITEs. One is abundantly clear: no PRF structure could adequately capture the extent of individual passion, effort and expertise which goes into bringing about even small changes to an individual ITE programme, in the manner which has been shown above. This is why the sort of statistics required to track deeper delivery/integration are potentially misleading and do no justice to the individual battles for Development Education which are so much part of the Ubuntu fabric. Ubuntu’s feedback from project leaders has provided further evidence of the level of advocacy work within institutions, and **there would be merit in compiling a database of such work in order to ensure that there is ample qualitative data on advocacy, not least because the expected quantitative structure can be less than informative.**

It is a little less clear how overarching Ubuntu support works for individual advocates. The current Strategic Plan aspires to facilitate teacher educators in engaging in NCCA consultations on curricular reform, and proposes Network consultations involving teacher educators on curriculum developments such as the roll out of Politics and Society and Senior Cycle reforms. Such support has undoubtedly happened to date,



**but if Ubuntu is in a position to expand its membership and Associate membership, then it is recommended that a more structured and systematic scaffold of support for such individual advocacy will be needed.** It is unlikely that individual advocacy will be significantly at odds with the advocacy of Ubuntu itself. However, if membership grows to include some student teachers, practising teachers and others as previously recommended, then the tiers of a structured Ubuntu-branded support mechanism, perhaps to include member CPD, focused advocacy meetings, on-line fora, etc. will need to be clarified.

Some concerns have been expressed earlier in this report, about the dangers of depending on one or two ‘champions’ for Development Education in an institution, as such champions may move on, retire or become seen as the person to ‘leave’ Development Education to, by other colleagues. **Perhaps a philosophical shift is required, from seeing such people less as champions and more as potential ‘evangelists’ in different institutions, encouraged by Ubuntu not to stand alone as project leaders or advocates, but to see themselves as active agents enrolling ITE colleagues and widening the base of Ubuntu associations and contacts in those institutions.** This is easier said than done, naturally, but will be helped by national and global ‘push’ factors and by an increasingly aware student-teacher and student body, sometimes nowadays called ‘Generation Z’.

The current Strategic Plan references Ubuntu engagement with the DES on the importance of including Development Education and ESD in all aspects of curriculum (syllabi, pedagogy and assessment). As mentioned, the involvement of the Ubuntu project coordinator on the steering committee for ESD has been very important. The desire to ensure that ESD/Development Education impacts of areas like pedagogy and assessment reinforces previous recommendations in earlier sections of this report, including a need to bring the SEC, PDST and JCT more to the fore as Ubuntu associates or partners.

It bears emphasising that a key potential partner in advocacy for Development Education within the DES could be the Inspectorate. This body has received in-house CPD on ESD, and its seminal document, *Looking at our School* (2016), is certainly not at odds with the content, skills, attitudes and values promoted under Development Education. However, **a more specific and overt approach by Ubuntu to the Inspectorate, offering to provide a CPD session on how Development Education fits with *Looking at our School*, ongoing curricular change or just with good pedagogical practice, could have a really significant impact on inspection in schools.** For better

or worse, the Irish education system, especially at post-primary level, has been dominated by the asking of questions, and it is a simple matter of fact that if inspectors and State examiners are asking questions inspired by a Development Education focus, the results can be impactful and most advantageous to Ubuntu's advocacy efforts.

## Chapter 8: Solidarity: Governance, Operations and Partnership

This chapter focuses on Area 6 of the Ubuntu Strategic Plan 2016-20, an area not specifically covered in the Irish Aid PMF or Ubuntu's PRF review requirements but still very relevant to Ubuntu members and partner bodies, with governance being specifically relevant to the University of Limerick and Irish Aid.

Governance is not strictly speaking a concern of this evaluation, but it bears stating that a considerable portion of the Management Committee meeting attended as part of the evaluation was devoted to updating and quality assuring Ubuntu's own governance procedures. Ubuntu is systematically working its way through its procedures, item by item, to meet its governance requirements. The committee feels confident that the Ubuntu procedures are good but acknowledge that the rules and procedures must be clear and documented sufficiently to withstand any change e.g. change of personnel.

Ubuntu operates under the umbrella of the University of Limerick's governance codes, thus helping to ensure that project-assessment procedures, funding awards, contracts and other relevant operations are in line with those of the custodial institute. In fact, the review which has given rise to this report has been, in itself, a form of quality assurance of the ongoing relevance of Ubuntu's work.

Terms of reference for the Ubuntu Assembly already exist and it is intended that a review of the management committee's terms of reference will be put on a meeting agenda in the near future. For example, a management committee meeting also identified the lack of a policy on volunteering as something for Ubuntu to address. A key area that requires some further consideration is the position of the project coordinator, not least because it dates from the formation of Ubuntu itself, in 2006, and is potentially limited in terms of advancement opportunities. The workload has increased considerably and incrementally since then, and it has been intimated in several places earlier in this report that some key recommendations can only be considered by Ubuntu if an augmentation in personnel resourcing is feasible. The academic coordinator's position is a non-remunerated one but it involves significant oversight, strategic planning, advocacy and promotion work, as well as ongoing support to the project coordinator in all matters to do with implementation.

The relatively loose nature of the project coordinator's contract, and the voluntary though significant role of the academic coordinator, together suggest that Ubuntu needs to achieve more clarity around job descriptions and, in consultation with partners, around other status issues. The high levels of positivity felt by Ubuntu respondents towards the work of the coordinators is self-evident. However, **it is also**

**vital that Ubuntu has systems in place which, in a worst case scenario, will ensure that these positions have clearly defined parameters and status and would be 'fillable' in the event that one of the positions became vacant.**

Overall governance procedures are as standard. Members are elected from the Assembly following nominations and secret voting at an Assembly meeting. Members of the management committee agree to sit for 2-3 years. Changes of personnel here happen in a staggered manner, ensuring continuity. With a new chairperson in place now, the previous incumbent is now an honorary member of the Assembly.

While the various challenges of promoting Associate membership and ensuring Assembly membership across all relevant institutions are important considerations, there is a bigger picture message about solidarity to be gleaned from one online question. Members were asked: *Apart from possible grant aid, please identify up to three other ways in which Ubuntu supports you.* The question was deliberately phrased in this way, in order to move beyond the most obvious role of Ubuntu in supporting and funding projects. That role is and will continue to be seen as the pivotal role of Ubuntu, and without the funding streams, application and reporting supports, many important Development Education projects in ITEs would be under threat. However, when we look at the responses to the question above, the much wider contribution of Ubuntu to Development Education, to solidarity and partnership, is very evident. The top ten additional supports cited, in no particular order, have been collated as follows:

- The support of the director/project coordinator – 'the voice on the end of phone, that answers questions and offers encouragement'
- A network of teacher educators sharing conversations and ideas (Dialogue Day and more widely) particularly centred on education as a public good
- Ubuntu generates connected discourses, nurturing 'horizontal' and 'scholarship' partnerships
- 'Ubuntu particularly presents new critical, creative and self-transformative ideas and actions'
- It provides professional development through its programme of activities during the year
- Ubuntu's advocacy work creates 'a broader enabling environment'
- Sharing experience of promoting DE, guest speakers, workshops
- Information, resources, online support and links to NGOs
- 'Through Ubuntu I have forged strong professional alliances with some fellow teacher-educators'

- Ubuntu ‘promotes deep thinking about key Development Education issues’

### ***The Future?***

In a lot of ways, the above feedback from Ubuntu members is very telling. While on one level the Network’s main function is to coordinate and disburse Irish Aid funding to a range of Development Education projects in ITEs, it has a value far beyond that, and is achieving a lot of ‘bang for the buck’ on the Irish Aid investment. That said, the main finding of this report is that several of Ubuntu’s own stated aims, across a number of the strategic areas in its own Plan for 2016-20, have not been achievable. This is because the Network’s focus has been almost exclusively on post-primary ITE delivery, and hopes of broadening out membership, engagement with post-graduation teachers and teacher CPD providers have been very difficult to fulfil.

There are choices facing Ubuntu at this stage. One is to review its current plan and essentially jettison the actions which its membership does not proactively support or which there are neither sufficient time nor resources to progress. This may be seen as consolidating what Ubuntu has achieved, but it may also limit its capacity and, indeed, its vision. Another option is to consider real expansion, in the knowledge that good progress has been made and that circumstances are increasingly supporting the Development Education agenda, in society, in schools, in the curriculum and in ITEs themselves. Such an expansion will require some or all of the following:

- A multi-annual funding model agreed with Irish Aid, to promote deeper collaborative projects, expanded research opportunities and save valuable time on application and reporting processes
- Approaches to other potential partners, among government departments and civil society, to seek extra funding and potential links to post-ITE actions
- Expansion of the membership of both the Assembly and of the pool of Associate members, seeking out potential Ubuntu volunteers, not necessarily to lead ITE-based projects but also to enhance overall capacity
- A philosophical shift, towards viewing Ubuntu as a potential ‘joiner of dots’ in post-primary Development Education, an influencer across all post-primary CPD and other developments

The choices are with Ubuntu but, in case there is any doubt about the views of this evaluator, everything about its ethos, its commitment and its personnel suggests they can rise to such a challenge if properly resourced and given sufficient backing from members.

## Chapter 9: Reviewing Key Recommendations

While this report has endeavoured to provide recommendations that arise organically from the related research and findings, this chapter seeks to clarify the key recommendations that have thus arisen. Three overarching points need to be stressed at the outset:

- Ubuntu and its coordinators are doing a very important service to both Development Education and initial teacher education more broadly, and provide very good value for Irish Aid's investment
- Many of the recommendations made in this report are intrinsically linked to matters of capacity and priorities, hence linked to key decisions that Ubuntu needs to make about retraction, consolidation or expansion of its horizons and resources
- Even with extra resources and capacity, it is not envisaged that every recommendation made in this report is achievable over the term of the next Strategic Plan, but they are offered for professional dialogue and consideration

## Chapter 2

Key recommendations in this chapter are relatively minor and technical. They include:

- that Ubuntu ensure that its name and its aims are clear to those who may not know its work but are interested in Development Education
- that Ubuntu try to provide greater clarity and definition in its next Strategic Plan around the various iterations of Development Education that there are
- that the next Strategic Plan be updated to align with the Sustainable Development Goals in particular
- to ensure more overt alignment to the PRF framework or, pending possible discussions with Irish Aid, to explore how the Ubuntu PRF can better align to the next Ubuntu Strategic Plan
- Ubuntu's links to Irish Aid should not deter it from engaging in aspects of Development Education which may not necessarily be priorities for Irish Aid.

Even the relatively few recommendations in this chapter suggest that Ubuntu, whose key members are already working to capacity and beyond, will need to consider in any future Strategic Planning what is manageable given current funding, capacity and remit, and what might be possible if increased and more long-term funding were available and if capacity could potentially be augmented. This question will recur.

### Chapter 3

The effort to promote a culture of engagement generally with Development Education across ITE departments remains a major challenge facing Ubuntu. It is recommended that:

- any insight, statistical or otherwise, into changes in the levels of integration across ITE curricula overall would be highly valuable to any future strategic planning, and this is something which Ubuntu ought to track annually
- there needs to be a clearer and consistent indication in the next Strategic Plan of what constitutes an introduction to Development Education
- the merits of three-year funding over one-year funding ought to be discussed by Ubuntu with Irish Aid
- if expansion is desired, Ubuntu should also ought to consider additional potential partners in civil society or in government departments which have a direct interest in promoting Development Education, its equivalent or aspects of it
- if it is feasible to expand Ubuntu's capacity, then some elements of the current Strategic Plan which are relatively dormant should be acted upon. These include extending Ubuntu's support to graduate teacher CPD and Development Education beyond ITE contexts, and developing a subject-specific bank of Artefacts of Learning, linking to Scoilnet
- Ubuntu could also learn much from finding out what opportunities there may be for student teachers in promoting Development Education in Senior Cycle
- It would be very useful for Ubuntu to know to what extent student teachers on placement are getting opportunities to teach Transition Year particularly. This could inform Ubuntu's planning and advocacy within Senior Cycle reform
- Resources permitting, Ubuntu could learn much about its impact from tracking a selection of graduate teachers in the years after college
- Ubuntu ought to consider involving a specified number of recently graduated teachers, trained in Development Education and formerly benefitting from Ubuntu supports, on its Assembly and, if feasible, perhaps one such nominee on its management committee
- Ubuntu is urged to seek more specific data from member institutions on the number and content of relevant projects or papers, theses or meaningful portfolio entries that are linked to Development Education and directly to Ubuntu supported initiatives.

## Chapter 4

Ubuntu's members are fulsome in their praise for the support they receive. However, the Network is urged to identify solutions to some important organisational challenges:

- Ubuntu needs to look at the next Strategic Plan ought to identify specific measures, CPD events or on-line supports which will re-engage relatively inactive members and to seek more engagement from part-time supervisors
- there are potential Associate members, if not full Assembly Members, to be sought out e.g. among ITE student-teachers' representatives, teacher unions, co-operating teachers with an interest in Development Education, subject associations, and among state bodies like the State Examinations Commission and Department of Education and Skills
- the desire to have Ubuntu develop meaningful links with both the JCT and PDST remains unfulfilled, though stated in the current Strategic Plan, but if its own capacity and philosophy allows, Ubuntu should certainly pursue these goals
- the workload of the project coordinator position overall has provided very limited opportunities for 'ringfenced' CPD, and this needs to be considered at management committee level.

## Chapter 5

It is recommended that:

- Ubuntu consider some form of award or certification, as a means of enhancing awareness of Ubuntu as well as promoting good practice among student teachers. This could be done in partnership with ITEs and NGOs if preferred
- successful draw down of project allocation funding should in future be linked to completion of the relevant report and data tables
- there is a need for more systematic research among former student teachers to glean feedback on major Ubuntu work, such as the new School Placement Guidelines or the impact of curricular reform in the classroom, to be used for future planning
- Ubuntu should collate research publications and research activities of members that reference Development Education or an equivalent
- Current unfulfilled aspirations to support student supervisors, practising teachers interested in undertaking or being involved in research on Development Education (in association with WWGS), and the establishment of a post-graduate scholarship scheme need to be revisited from 2020.



## Chapter 6

- Ubuntu is urged to continue its efforts to ensure that Development Education or an equivalent term is to the fore in key educational policy documents
- Ubuntu is also urged to strongly emphasise creativity, as per the UNESCO Key Competencies, in all advocacy for policy reform supporting Development Education
- Ubuntu is urged to sustain its efforts to achieve maximum recognition of Development Education in Teaching Council reviews and guidelines
- Although covered by another point in the Irish Aid PMF, it is completely logical, and could be highly valuable, for Ubuntu to be a lead agent for change across higher education institutions more broadly
- As indicated in its current Strategic Plan, Ubuntu should provide guidance for schools on how policies can be reviewed through a Development Education lens, as a priority in Ubuntu's next planning cycle.

## Chapter 7

It is recommended that:

- new Ubuntu members or Associate members should be sought among the membership of subject development groups
- Ubuntu's advice and advocacy for Development Education in Junior Cycle Wellbeing could be very useful to schools.
- Ubuntu should develop an advice pack or set of key principles that inform a cohesive, 'Ubuntu-branded' approach to promoting Development Education
- a database of the curricular advocacy roles of Ubuntu members would be a valuable support to the Network for future planning
- Ubuntu should view its members less as champions and more as potential 'evangelists' in different institutions, encouraged not to stand alone as project leaders or advocates, but as active agents enrolling colleagues and widening the base of Ubuntu associations and contacts in those institutions
- an approach by Ubuntu to the Inspectorate, offering CPD on how Development Education fits with *Looking at our School*, ongoing curricular change and good pedagogical practice, could support the promotion of Development Education.

## Chapter 8

Ubuntu needs to have systems in place which, in a worst case scenario, will ensure that co-ordinator positions have clearly defined parameters and status and would be 'fillable' in the event that one of the positions became vacant.