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CHARITIES CUT BACK ON PROJECTS, STAFF AND ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

Irish charities are cutting back on staff pay, benefits and administrative costs in an attempt to cope with funding cuts and a drop in public donations, according to a new survey.

The survey conducted by The Wheel, a body representing 860 Irish charities, found that three quarters (74.9%) of organisations have experienced a drop in their incomes over the past six months. Of the 246 charities surveyed, 62% have had their government funding cut in the past year, and 35% have experienced a drop in public donations.

One in ten have made staff redundant in the past six months, and 58% have cut either pay or benefits. Over 80% said that salaries and personnel costs are their single biggest expense.

The majority of organisations (52.9%) have also either delayed or suspended projects during the past six months, due to financial concerns.

Statutory funding remains the primary source of income for community and voluntary organisations, and surprisingly, 35.7% reported that they do not fundraise from the public at all. A quarter of the organisations surveyed received more than €500,000 from the State in the past 12 months.

“Community and voluntary organisations operate on very tight margins, with few reserves, making them particularly vulnerable to funding cuts. Most charities have already had their funding reduced this year, and any further cuts will have a direct impact on the level of services they provide in areas such as health, disabilities, housing and education,” said Deirdre Garvey, Chief Executive of The Wheel.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

The Wheel conducted the survey between 2 and 11 November 2009. Deirdre Garvey, Chief Executive of The Wheel is available for interview. Contact Gert Ackermann on mobile: 086 176 9287, or email: gert@wheel.ie

ABOUT THE WHEEL:

The Wheel is a national support and representative body for community, voluntary and charitable organisations. We provide a wide range of information and support services, advice and training to individuals and organisations involved in community and voluntary activity. We are also a representative organisation promoting both our members' and the wider sector's interests. www.wheel.ie

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