

# **Official Development Assistance**

Vote 27 – International Cooperation by the Development Cooperation and Africa Division  
(DCAD) of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA).

## **Executive Summary Budget 2024**

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## Introduction

Ireland's Official Development Assistance (ODA) is an integral part of our foreign policy. Our ODA funding, combined with our global presence and influence on the world stage, allows Ireland to contribute to reducing poverty, alleviating suffering, and improving the lives of some of the world's poorest communities.

Through our international development cooperation programme, Ireland supports developing countries across the world to make real and sustainable changes for the better in the lives of their most vulnerable citizens. Our development cooperation programme provides Ireland with a significant international presence and footprint – including in fragile countries, small island developing states (SIDS), and conflict-affected contexts. Our ODA is also a key contributor to our ability to influence on issues that matter most to us – at the EU, the UN, the OECD and beyond.

*A Better World* – Ireland's whole-of-government policy for international development – sets out the breadth and scope of Ireland's international development cooperation as comprising:

- Support provided by Ireland towards national and international development priorities and humanitarian assistance;
- Our policy influence, institutional linkages and exchanges to share expertise and foster social and economic development with developing countries and governments around the world;
- Support for building peace and global security including conflict prevention, statebuilding and humanitarian response;
- Strengthening multilateralism, enabling cooperation and international action;
- Collective responses to emerging and protracted crises, underpinned by a strong commitment to international law; and
- The promotion of disarmament and de-mining initiatives, sustaining peace, and enhancing the operational effectiveness of peace operations.

In 2024, an allocation of €775.3 million will be managed under Vote 27 – International Cooperation by the Development Cooperation and Africa Division (DCAD) of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA). This allocation to Vote 27 is an overall increase of €58.8 million (8.2%) on the 2023 revised allocation, and is the highest ever allocation to the Vote.

A further estimated €487.3 million is accounted for by the estimated ODA expenditure of other Government Departments and Ireland's share of the allocation to the EU Development Cooperation Budget, which is expected to amount to some €350 million. Eligible supports for International Protection Applicants are also included as part of ODA, measured retrospectively.

## 2024 Developments

Of the €58.8 million in additional financial resources allocated to Vote 27 to be managed by the Department of Foreign Affairs, €30 million is specified for international climate finance. Together with the €11.5 million additional funding available from Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC), these new allocations represent a significant step towards meeting our commitment to provide annual funding of at least €225 million by 2025. This will help to address the worsening impacts of climate change and environmental degradation on the world's most vulnerable communities living in least developed countries (LDCs) and SIDS.

The remaining increase will be allocated to an ambitious and targeted response to humanitarian crises, prolonged acute food and nutrition insecurity and the impact of the war in Ukraine. Support will be provided to those countries worldwide that are experiencing the destructive global knock-on effects of the conflict and other shocks. There will be an additional €9 million for humanitarian support to sudden onset crises, €1 million for the rapid response initiative, an additional €4 million in core funding to OCHA and the Red Cross, and €1 million to UNHCR, while €1 million in additional funding will be given to Gender and Protection.

Building on the existing programme of support for the war in Ukraine, an additional €5 million has been allocated for activities in Ukraine and Moldova. Within this, €3 million will be allocated to the World Bank's new SPUR facility for Ukraine and Moldova.

A new allocation of €3 million to the World Bank's enhanced Crisis Support Window will provide early financing for the poorest countries affected by natural and climate-related disasters, food crises and other shocks.

Complementing the early response finance, additional funding of €6 million will be provided to initiatives to support work on food systems transformation and inclusive agricultural growth in Africa at regional and country levels, with specific initiatives to be undertaken in Senegal and the Horn of Africa. This will build on Ireland's ongoing implementation of the three-year pledge of €50 million to support the Global Action Plan on childhood malnutrition and wasting.

### **Ireland's Policy for International Development**

ODA is an integral component of Ireland's overall foreign policy and national presence overseas, enabling Ireland to respond to complex human needs and humanitarian crises around the world. Ireland has built a distinguished track-record of responding to global development challenges and delivering a high quality, untied and coherent approach to development cooperation.

*A Better World*, Ireland's policy for international development, continues to provide the framework for our development cooperation programme. A whole-of-government policy, *A Better World* affirms Ireland's commitment to realising the central pledge of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to reach 'the furthest behind first'. To do this, Ireland focuses our efforts on four policy priorities: gender equality, reducing humanitarian need, climate action and strengthening governance. The policy also outlines a commitment to intensively work in three clusters of interventions where Ireland has proven expertise - protection, food and people. In line with this, in 2024 Ireland will continue to deliver programmes directly for peace and stability, across the development-humanitarian-peace 'nexus's; address hunger and promote food systems transformation; and in the provision of health, education and social protection.

2023 was a fourth successive year of major global disruption, and greater challenges for our humanitarian and development work. Overlapping crises include Russia's ongoing invasion of Ukraine, and the knock on impact this has had on other countries; climate and conflict driven crises in the Horn of Africa; increased political instability across a number of regions; and, the on-going crisis in the Middle East, which has recently escalated to a humanitarian disaster in the Gaza Strip. For those furthest behind, these crises lead to sustained high prices and continued increases in the price of food, agriculture and energy commodities. Combined with a potential global economic slowdown, the numbers of people who are food insecure and living in extreme poverty continue to rise, and an estimated 365 million people are in need of

humanitarian assistance, an all-time high. Meanwhile the longer term adverse effects of climate change continue to intensify, and global inequality continues to rise.

In the face of these overlapping crises, Ireland will continue to play our part in responding to the urgent humanitarian needs of those most affected in 2024, including in the Gaza Strip, Ukraine, the Horn of Africa, and elsewhere. We will also prioritise resilience-building in the medium- to long-term, through continuing to invest in food security and nutrition programming, and to prioritise global public health initiatives and education for girls. The vision outlined in *A Better World* of an equal, peaceful and sustainable global community is in Ireland's fundamental interest. As a small country with an open economy in an ever more interconnected and uncertain world, our prosperity and safety is intertwined with global events, and the fate of the global community.

### Delivery of ODA

ODA comprises bilateral assistance which is development cooperation provided directly by Ireland to developing countries, and multilateral assistance which comprises unearmarked funding channelled through multilateral and international organisations engaged in development cooperation.

The funding administered by the Department of Foreign Affairs under Vote 27 is delivered through a wide range of partners including non-governmental organisations, UN agencies, international organisations and humanitarian agencies. Funding is also delivered via local, regional and national government systems aimed at, inter alia, building health, education and local government systems.

In addition to the multilateral ODA managed through Vote 27 within the Department of Foreign Affairs, a significant proportion of Ireland's multilateral ODA relates to assessed and voluntary contributions to international organisations managed through other Government Departments (among others, the Departments of Finance, Health and the Department Agriculture, Food and the Marine) and Ireland's share of the EU Development Cooperation budget.

It is estimated that over 105,000 people have arrived in Ireland from Ukraine as Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection since February 2022. The Department of Foreign Affairs has worked with the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, the lead department for Ireland's national refugee response efforts, and others to calculate the ODA eligible supports for refugees. It is important to note that none of the costs associated with Ukrainian refugees in Ireland have been sourced from the original ODA allocations in 2022 or 2023, and this will remain the case in 2024.

### ODA Quality

In 2020, the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) undertook a peer review of Ireland's development cooperation policy, programme and systems. The Peer Review found that Ireland is a strong development partner, with many areas of excellence. The quality and impact of Ireland's development cooperation programme was found to be high, with Ireland allocating ODA to Least Developed Countries and fragile states, priority partners and sectors.

A mid-term review was undertaken in July 2023 focused on Ireland's progress towards the nine recommendations identified. The reviewers found that Ireland has made progress on all recommendations, and has continued its leadership as an advocate for sustainable development,

a staunch multilateralist, a good partner for civil society and a promoter of development education.

### **Summary of Vote 27 International Cooperation managed by DCAD**

***Table 1: Breakdown of Vote 27 International Cooperation managed by DFA DCAD (€'000s)***

<b>Vote 27 International Cooperation</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>Total Change</b>	<b>% Change on PY</b>
Administration - Pay	26,647	26,064	583	2.24%
Administration - Non pay	18,550	18,800	-250	-1.33%
Africa Unit	169,251	156,760	12,491	7.97%
Global Programmes and Global Citizenship Education	50,919	48,020	2,899	6.04%
Humanitarian Unit	161,200	132,200	29,000	21.94%
Civil Society Unit	125,350	125,350	0	0.00%
Policy Unit Initiatives	101,677	97,577	4,100	4.20%
Climate Unit	31,571	25,760	5,811	22.56%
Business Support Unit	2,174	1,960	214	10.92%
Communication Unit	750	600	150	25.00%
Multilateral EU	18,053	26,108	-8,055	-30.8%
Multilateral UN & IFIs	58,187	57,317	870	1.52%
Peace and Security Unit*	11,020		11,020	100%
<b>Total Vote 27 International Cooperation managed by DCAD</b>	<b>775,349</b>	<b>716,516</b>	<b>58,833</b>	<b>8.2%</b>

*\*The Peace and Stability Unit was formed in 2023.*

Ireland's development cooperation continues to have a primary focus on sub-Saharan Africa and Least Developed Countries., Approximately €169 million is allocated to bilateral countries in sub-Saharan Africa which is managed by Africa Unit and Ireland's Embassy Network across the continent.

The Global Programmes Unit has responsibility for programmes in Palestine, Regional South-East Asia, Colombia and Central America and Ireland's Strategy for Partnership with SIDS. The Global Programmes Unit also manages the Fellowship Training Programme and Global Citizenship education projects.

Providing essential and lifesaving humanitarian assistance to those in greatest need remains a key component of Ireland's development cooperation. To respond effectively and in a timely manner to significant global need, the Humanitarian Unit's budget for 2024 is €161.2, a substantial increase on 2023's allocation.

The Civil Society Unit provides direct funding to a range of NGOs for programmes and projects focused on reducing poverty in developing countries and / or promoting the understanding of global poverty in Ireland. For 2024, €100 million is allocated through Ireland's Civil Society Partnership scheme to predominantly Irish NGOs in support of their long-term development programmes. In addition, approximately €18.2 million will also be allocated for strategic partnerships and €7 million for small to medium sized development NGOs.

The Policy Unit of DCAD provides policy leadership across most thematic development policy issues and Ireland's core sectors of operation, including generating policy analysis, evidence and recommendations through a range of research and policy-focused partnerships. For 2024, €38.3 million had been allocated to Health, HIV and AIDS and disability, €18.2 million to Education and €7.8 million to Social Protection. A further €28.6 million is allocated across the food intervention cluster area in recognition of the global food security crisis and Ireland's commitments to combat child malnutrition and wasting. €1.5 million is allocated to the area of Governance and Protection while €2.7 million is allocated to the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment budget line.

Climate Unit leads DCAD's support to partners targeting climate action in the poorest and most vulnerable countries, and has been allocated a budget of €31.6 million for 2024, an increase of 22.6% from 2023.

The Communications Unit focuses on maintaining and expanding Irish Aid's media reach. In 2024 the unit will capitalize on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Irish Aid to strengthen public knowledge, belief and pride in the work of Irish Aid around the world.

Leading on DCAD's engagement with the OECD'S Development Assistance Committee (DAC) the Business Support Unit (BSU) influences international development cooperation policy and practice, and provided €1.71 million of core funding to DAC. In addition, in 2024 the BSU will oversee the expansion of the number of Development Interims engagement by DCAD.

Leading on Ireland's efforts to influence the direction of the EU's international cooperation, in 2024, the Multilateral EU Unit will contribute €14.05 million to the European Development Fund, €11.23 million to the European Commission and €2.82 million for the European Investment Bank. In addition, the Multilateral EU Unit will provide €1.25 million of core funding to the International Organization for Migration and approximately €2 million to support Aid for Trade partnerships and trade related capacity development.

In 2024, the Multilateral UN and IFI Unit, will support the World Bank Group, IMF and Regional Development banks with an allocation of €21 million. The Multilateral UN and IFI Unit will provide €32.4 million of funding to a select group of UN agencies, principally UNDP, UNICEF, OHCHR, UNFPA and UN Women. In addition, the Unit will allocate €4.6 million to UN Trust Funds and Projects.

In 2024, €11 million has been allocated to the newly established Peace and Stability Unit (PSU). PSU, based in DCAD and Political Division to support initiatives related to conflict resolution, sustaining peace and strategic research on peace and stability.