



BRIEFING PAPER

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Integrated Review: International Development

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Summary

In March 2021, the UK Government published its [Global Britain in a competitive age: Integrated review of security, development and foreign policy](#) (hereafter “review”).

Whilst neither development or the [aid budget](#) were central to the review, it confirms a focus on Africa and the Indo-Pacific and the intention to use diplomacy, aid and trade to tackle climate change and other development goals. Development NGOs have expressed concern that the “tilt” to the Indo-Pacific for trade, security and diplomatic reasons may [de-prioritise Africa and the use of UK aid to reduce poverty](#).

Decisions prior to the review

Two significant changes to the UK aid landscape preceded the [review](#). These were the [merger](#) of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office with the Department for International Development (DFID) in June 2020 and the November announcement that the UK’s [Official Development Assistance](#) (ODA) would be reduced from 0.7 percent to 0.5 percent of Gross National Income in 2021.

The [creation of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office](#) (FCDO) was intended to bring “diplomacy and development together, in lockstep” and [ensure](#) that the UK’s international efforts, including its ODA spend, are made with reference to the “diplomatic, political and commercial priorities of the [UK] Government”.

Official Development Assistance (ODA) refers to bilateral or multilateral aid intended to promote the economic development and welfare of developing countries. Such assistance must be reported to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Future ODA priorities

The [review](#) identifies seven priorities for UK aid, including supporting open societies and conflict resolution, humanitarian preparedness and girls’ education. Whilst not one of the seven priorities, the review states that the Government is committed to the [sustainable development goals](#) and that poverty reduction will remain [central to the work of the FCDO](#).

Future ODA will be aligned with the Paris Agreement on climate change, which the Government [states](#) is its “number one international priority”.

How integrated was the review?

NGOs have criticised the review as focused on the UK’s security and trade interests, at the [expense of poverty reduction](#), and for not integrating poverty reduction and climate change into its [conflict prevention strategy](#). While declaring a commitment to reduce the frequency and intensity of conflict, the Government has reduced allocations to the Conflict, Stability and Security fund. In addition, NGOs criticise the emphasis placed on [security and diplomatic](#) solutions to conflict rather than civil society.

Africa and the Indo-Pacific “tilt”

The Government [intends](#) for the UK to be the “leading European power” in the Indo-Pacific by the 2030s. In [2020/21](#), Africa will receive half of the FCDO’s bilateral ODA spend, which will focus on alleviating “human suffering”, and the Indo-Pacific, a third. Indo-Pacific ODA will focus on climate change, promoting open societies and reinforcing trade links.

A new development strategy

Further detail is expected in a separate development strategy, due by 2022. The Chairs of the [House of Lords International Relations & Defence Committee](#) and [Commons International Development Committee](#) (IDC) argued a new development strategy was required in response to the reduction in the UK’s ODA, announced in [November 2020](#).

1. UK aid priorities from 2021

1.1 Seven strategic priorities

In December 2020, the Foreign Secretary announced [seven global challenges](#) for UK ODA for 2021.¹ The [review](#) confirmed these as:

- 1 Climate and biodiversity
- 2 Global health security
- 3 Open societies and conflict resolution
- 4 Girls' education
- 5 Humanitarian preparedness and response
- 6 Science and technology
- 7 Trade and economic development

The table below shows FCDO allocations to each priority for 2021/22.

FCDO's Thematic allocations 2021/22	
In £ millions	
Other spending (e.g. subscriptions, fixed costs)	2,082
Programmes with cross cutting themes	1,940
COVID & global health	1,305
Humanitarian preparedness & response	906
Climate change & biodiversity	534
Trade & economic development	491
Open societies & conflict	419
Girls' education	400
Science, Research & technology	38
Total	8,115

Note: "Other spending" also includes international subscriptions, fixed costs, financial transactions and arm's length bodies. The FCDO is responsible for 80 percent of ODA. Source: FCDO, [UK ODA allocations 2021 to 2022](#), 21 April 2021

The FCDO said allocations took account of need, including the level of poverty, ability of countries to self-finance poverty reduction and the UK's comparative advantage.²

The Seven Priorities

Climate and biodiversity

"Tackling climate change and biodiversity loss [will be] its number one international priority" from 2021.³ Future UK ODA will also be aligned to the Paris Agreement on climate change.⁴

¹ [Foreign Secretary to the Chair of the International Development Committee \(IDC\)](#), 2 December 2020

² PQ 163210 [\[Overseas aid\]](#), 9 March 2021; [Foreign Secretary to the Chair of the IDC](#), 2 December 2020

³ [Review](#), p4

⁴ [Review](#), p46

The Government expects climate change to be a “driver of future instability and poverty” and states “urgent action” is needed to limit its impact. It hopes the review’s prioritisation of climate change will [ensure other countries](#) “come forward with ambitious [...] commitments” at the Climate change conference (COP26) in November 2021.⁵

The UK has committed £11.6 billion to International Climate Finance (ICF) for 2021-25, compared to £5.8 billion for 2016-21.⁶ The ICF [supports developing countries respond to climate change](#).

Global health security

The UK will “prioritise supporting health systems and access to new health technologies” in developing countries.⁷

The review’s “priority actions” include supporting equitable access to Coronavirus tests and vaccines, reforming the World Health Organisation (WHO) and supporting a 30 percent increase in its funding, and building on the Government’s [Five Point Plan](#) to combat and prevent pandemics.⁸ The Plan includes developing manufacturing capacity for vaccines in developing countries and reducing tariffs on Covid-19 critical products such as soap.⁹

Open societies and conflict resolution

UK ODA will support international campaigns on democracy, human rights and media freedom.¹⁰ In “many instances”, this will take the form of bilateral aid. Conflict resolution will take a “political approach” that “harness[es] the full range of government capabilities” to address the divers of conflict, such as political marginalisation, atrocity prevention and fragile countries’ resilience to external influence.¹¹

Girls’ education

Both UK “aid spending and diplomacy” will be used to support getting “40 million more girls into school in low- and middle-income countries by 2025”.¹² The review also supports the global goal of getting 20 million more girls reading by the age of 10.¹³ The FCDO [remains committed](#) to DFID’s [Strategic vision for gender equality](#) (2018).¹⁴

Humanitarian preparedness and response

The UK will maintain its capacity to respond to humanitarian crises, funding both bilateral and multilateral programmes in humanitarian hotspots, and will seek to reform and strengthen the international humanitarian system. Reforms include using technology to provide

⁵ HC Deb, [26 November 2020](#), c1019

⁶ [Review](#), p46; FCDO, Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, [ICE](#), 19 August 2020

⁷ [Review](#), pp22, 93

⁸ [Review](#), p22

⁹ FCDO and Number 10, [Prime Minister: World must unite to defeat COVID and prevent future pandemics](#), 25 September 2020

¹⁰ [Secretary of State to the Chair of the IDC](#), 2 December 2020

¹¹ [Review](#), pp47, 79

¹² [Review](#), p48; PQ 152646 [[Overseas aid: Schools](#)], 23 February 2021

¹³ [Secretary of State to the Chair of the IDC](#), 2 December 2020

¹⁴ HC Deb, [9 March 2021](#), c 1464

“faster and cheaper support” to those impacted by crises. The UK will also lead a campaign to protect 20 million people from catastrophic famine.¹⁵

The FCDO will continue to maintain a minimum crisis aid reserve to respond rapidly to new crises.¹⁶

Science and technology (S&T)

The UK intends to “incorporate S&T as an integral part” of its international policy. Improved data is expected to better inform the UK’s crisis response and global health surveillance.¹⁷

The FCDO has described S&T as “the building blocks of development” requiring “long-term strategic commitment”.¹⁸ S&T is also intended to support programmes in education, resilience, low carbon technologies, agriculture, conflict, poverty and economic development.¹⁹

Trade and economic development

The Government states many of the UK’s competitors are “already acting in an integrated way”, blurring the boundaries between “trade and development, and domestic and foreign policy”.²⁰

UK aid will help developing countries become “more self-sufficient through trade and economic growth”.²¹ This will include helping them develop better investment environments, infrastructure, and improve their access to finance. Investment will be provided by the [CDC Group](#) and UK export finance.²²

The FCDO says this will “encourage countries to trade their way, with some ODA support, to middle-income status” and help the UK “build trading and investment partners of the future”.²³

The UK Government’s future approach to ODA will be detailed in a new international development strategy, expected in [2021](#) or [2022](#)

1.2 Poverty reduction

What might be the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on global poverty?

The [World Bank](#) says that the pandemic will partly reverse the reduction in the number of people living in extreme poverty since 1999, which had fallen by one billion. It estimates that the total number of pandemic-induced global poor will be between 119 and 124 million in 2020, rising to between 143 and 163 million in 2021. This includes those who would have otherwise escaped extreme poverty but will now not do so due to the pandemic (31 million in 2020).²⁴

¹⁵ [Review](#), p47

¹⁶ [Secretary of State to the Chair of the IDC](#), 2 December 2020

¹⁷ [Review](#), pp18, 46, 94

¹⁸ HC Deb, [26 November 2020](#), c1020

¹⁹ [Secretary of State to the Chair of the IDC](#), 2 December 2020

²⁰ [Review](#), p19

²¹ [Review](#), p20

²² [Secretary of State to the Chair of the IDC](#), 2 December 2020

²³ IDC, [Oral evidence: The future of UK aid](#), HC 1141, 22 April 2021, Q130; [Secretary of State to the Chair of the IDC](#), 2 December 2020

²⁴ World Bank, [Updated estimates of the impact of COVID-19 on global poverty](#), 11 January 2021

The [International Development Act 2002](#), requires that development assistance provided by DFID should have as its objective the reduction of poverty. The Act was amended in [2014](#) to ensure that such reduction should be “likely to contribute to reducing inequality between persons of different gender”. The FCDO says it will be “guided by [its] responsibilities” under the Act and poverty reduction will “remain central” to the Department.²⁵

Whilst poverty reduction was not one of the seven priorities identified in the [review](#), it states the Government remains committed to “the global fight against poverty and to achieving the SDGs [Sustainable Development Goals] by 2030”.²⁶

There are [seventeen SDGs](#), which apply to all countries, including the UK. These include eliminating poverty and hunger, equitable and inclusive education and gender equality.

The FCDO has emphasised that the new development framework “do[es] aim to alleviate and eradicate poverty” but that the causes of poverty are complex. “Development and diplomacy alongside one another”, the Department states, will “overcome [...] poverty”.²⁷

The Chair of the IDC, [Sarah Champion MP](#), said the “review is laden with contradictions”, particularly in relation to its treatment of extreme poverty and the resulting place of Africa in the review:

The Government explains that Africa will increasingly be left behind, that with a growing population Africa will be hit hardest with the impacts of climate change, poverty and conflict. Yet the UK’s international priorities are gearing towards the Indo-Pacific with presumably less development spend going to Africa. Setting a commitment to meet the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 is admirable, but excluding extreme poverty as a strategic objective for aid is bizarre.²⁸

The Government expects that “after the immediate shock of Covid-19, the momentum towards poverty reduction is likely to resume”. Laurie Lee, Chief Executive of Care International, [told the IDC](#) this was “arguably a little complacent”, and “active intervention” would instead be required.²⁹

²⁵ PQ 102078 [[Overseas aid: Poverty](#)], 20 October 2020

²⁶ [Review](#), p20

²⁷ HC Deb, [19 January 2021](#), c754

²⁸ IDC, [The review laden with contradictions—Chair makes statement on the publication of the Government’s the review](#), 16 March 2021

²⁹ IDC, [Oral evidence: Future of UK aid](#), HC 1141, 13 April 2021, Q71

2. Where will UK ODA be spent?

In 2020, the Government emphasised that ODA spend should be made with reference to the “values the UK wishes to express [and] the [UK’s] diplomatic, political and commercial priorities”, and directed to states where the UK’s “development, security and economic interests align”.³⁰

2.1 Emphasis on Africa and the Indo-Pacific

The [review](#) said ODA would focus on areas “important” to the UK and where “we can have the greatest life-changing impact in the long term”. The two regions identified were Africa and the Indo-Pacific.³¹

In April 2021, the FCDO said Africa would receive “about half” of the FCDO bilateral ODA budget and the Indo-Pacific and South Asia, a third.³²

The review identifies sub-Saharan Africa and South and East Asia as regions likely to experience a disproportionate impact of climate change, amplifying food insecurity, instability and migration.³³

Whilst the [review](#) and [FCDO](#) cite poverty reduction and “human suffering” as reasons for the UK’s ODA spend in Africa, wider factors such as trade and diplomacy have been more prominent in the UK’s reasoning for greater engagement in the Indo-Pacific.³⁴

2.2 Africa

By 2045 “around 85 percent of the poorest billion people will live in Africa”, impacting on climate change and instability.³⁵ The Government also highlights poor governance in parts of Africa as producing spaces for terrorist and extremist groups to operate.³⁶

East Africa, Nigeria and South Africa are identified as [regional priorities](#). The FCDO defines East Africa as including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda.³⁷

The [review](#) cites the “common values and commercial and development interests” Nigeria and South Africa share with the UK. The two states account for 46 percent of GDP in sub-Saharan Africa and for 60 percent of its trade with the UK.³⁸ Nigeria was previously the third largest recipient of country-specific bilateral ODA in 2018 and fifth in 2019.³⁹

³⁰ HC Deb, [16 June 2020](#), c670; [Foreign Secretary to IDC Chair](#), 2 December 2020, p2

³¹ [Review](#), p46

³² HCWS935, [FCDO update](#), 21 April 2021

³³ [Review](#), p31

³⁴ HCWS935, [FCDO update](#), 21 April 2021; [Review](#), p26

³⁵ [Review](#), p26

³⁶ [Review](#), p32

³⁷ PQ 185988 [[Overseas aid](#)], 27 April 2021

³⁸ [Review](#), p63

³⁹ FCDO, [Statistics on international development: Final UK aid spend 2019](#), updated 9 March 2021, ‘Bilateral aid spend by country’

2.3 Indo-Pacific “tilt”

By 2030, the UK intends to be “the European partner with the broadest, most integrated presence” in the Indo-Pacific.⁴⁰

The FCDO says the Indo-Pacific and South Asia region includes Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Nepal, China, Indonesia and Myanmar.⁴¹

China is unlikely to be a significant ODA recipient: in 2021, the FCDO announced a reduction in aid by 95 percent to China, to £0.9 million, with additional ODA to meet only contractual exit costs.⁴² However, the [Independent Commission for Aid Impact](#) (IACI) says the FCDO’s statement “does not provide clarity on the future levels of ODA spending” in China relating to diplomatic activity, arm’s length bodies overseen by the FCDO, and spending by other departments.⁴³

In September 2020, the Foreign Secretary said [one reason](#) for the “tilt” was the “scope for liberal free trade” in the region, which would benefit the UK economy, consumers and global living standards.⁴⁴ The region currently accounts for 17.5 percent of UK global trade and 10 percent of inward Foreign Direct Investment.⁴⁵

In 2021/22, UK aid will focus on promoting open societies, reinforcing trade links and climate change collaboration.⁴⁶ The review additionally cited security challenges over territory, terrorism and freedom of navigation as reasons for the UK’s greater engagement in that area.⁴⁷

Poverty reduction is not cited as one of [three primary reasons for seeking deeper engagement](#) in the Indo-Pacific. The review notes that by the 2030s “absolute poverty [is] estimated to be almost eliminated in Asia”, in contrast to Africa where it will remain prevalent.⁴⁸

⁴⁰ [Review](#), p6

⁴¹ PQ 185988 [[Overseas aid](#)], 27 April 2021

⁴² HCWS935, [FCDO update](#), 21 April 2021

⁴³ IACI, [The UK’s aid engagement with China](#), 28 April 2021, Box 2

⁴⁴ HC Deb, [2 September 2020](#), c193

⁴⁵ [Review](#), p66

⁴⁶ HCWS935, [FCDO update](#), 21 April 2021

⁴⁷ [Review](#), p66

⁴⁸ [Review](#), p26

2.4 Where has ODA been spent to date?

In 2018, DFID concentrated its ODA spend on 33 “[priority countries](#)”. The majority were in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Around 63 percent of country-specific aid went to [47 least developed countries](#).⁴⁹

In 2015, DFID [committed](#) to allocate 50 percent of its budget to 2020 to “fragile states and regions”. Most were in Africa and the Middle East.⁵⁰ Around 56 percent was spent on such states in 2018.⁵¹

However, in 2018, around three-quarters of non-DFID ODA went to middle-income countries, such as China, India and South Africa, centred on tackling climate change, promoting trade, and tackling insecurity.⁵²

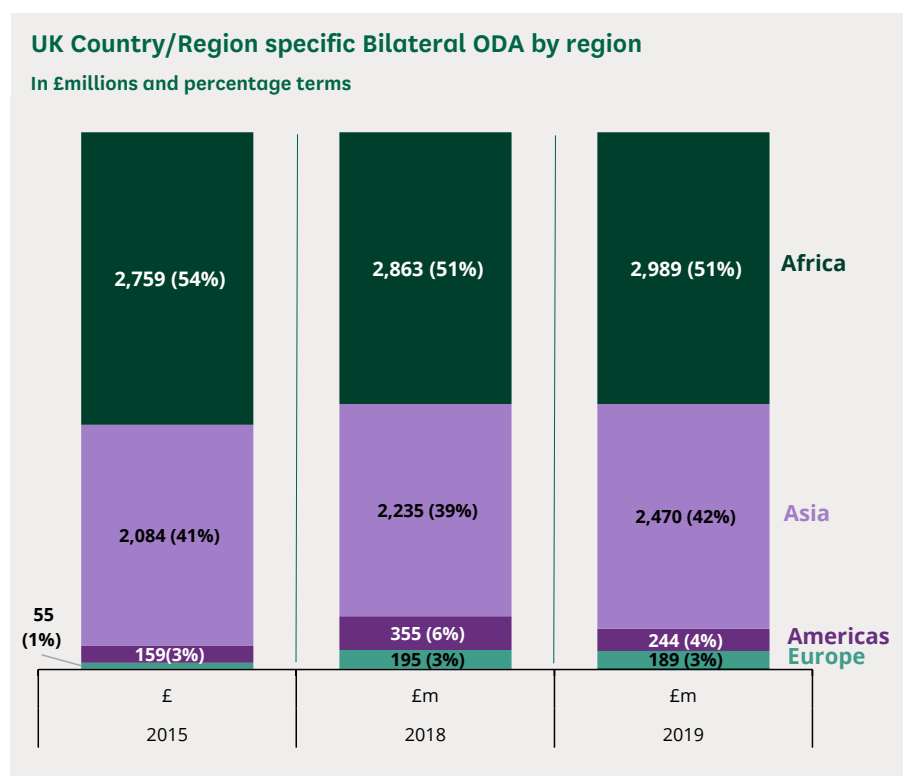
Spending by region and country

Since 2009, Africa has consistently received the largest amount and proportion of UK bilateral ODA, with the Asian region the second largest recipient. Less than one percent has gone to the Pacific region.⁵³

In 2019, Africa received 51 percent of bilateral ODA allocated to a specific region or country and Asia received 42 percent.

Bilateral aid is that spent for a specific programme or purpose that the UK selects. It may be spent by a range of UK partners, including charities, NGOs, governments, and some multilateral agencies. It includes spend to specific states or regions.

In [2019](#), UK bilateral ODA spend constituted 68 percent of UK ODA.



Source: FCDO, [Statistics on international development. Table C6](#), 24 September 2020

⁴⁹ ICAI, [Submission to the IDC on “effectiveness of UK aid”](#), 15 May 2020, pp1-2

⁵⁰ National Audit Office, [The effectiveness of ODA expenditure](#), 2019, p25

⁵¹ DFID, [DFID results estimates 2015-2020: Sector report](#), August 2020, section 8.1.

⁵² ICAI, [Submission to the IDC on “effectiveness of UK aid”](#), 15 May 2020, pp1-2

⁵³ FCDO, [Final UK aid spend 2019](#), updated 24 September 2020, Table 5

In 2015, 2018 and 2019, between 74 and 79 percent of bilateral ODA was allocated to 20 states, all of which were in Africa or Asia.

Top 20 Country Recipients of UK Bilateral ODA									
Rank	2015			2018			2019		
	Country	Region	£ m	Country	Region	£ m	Country	Region	£ m
1	Pakistan	Asia	374	Pakistan	Asia	331	Pakistan	Asia	305
2	Ethiopia	Africa	339	Ethiopia	Africa	301	Ethiopia	Africa	300
3	Afghanistan	Asia	300	Nigeria	Africa	297	Afghanistan	Asia	292
4	Nigeria	Africa	263	Afghanistan	Asia	249	Yemen	Asia	260
5	Syria	Asia	258	Syria	Asia	231	Nigeria	Africa	258
6	Sierra Leone	Africa	218	Congo, Dem. Rep.	Africa	204	Bangladesh	Asia	256
7	South Sudan	Africa	208	Somalia	Africa	194	Syria	Asia	223
8	Tanzania	Africa	205	Bangladesh	Asia	190	South Sudan	Africa	207
9	India	Asia	186	Yemen	Asia	166	Congo, Dem. Rep.	Africa	185
10	Bangladesh	Asia	164	Tanzania	Africa	152	Somalia	Africa	176
11	Kenya	Africa	156	South Sudan	Africa	151	Uganda	Africa	154
12	Congo, Dem. Rep.	Africa	143	Jordan	Asia	138	Lebanon	Asia	149
13	Uganda	Africa	123	Kenya	Africa	116	Tanzania	Africa	137
14	Somalia	Africa	122	Uganda	Africa	107	Kenya	Africa	134
15	Burma	Asia	114	Burma	Asia	100	Jordan	Asia	131
16	Rwanda	Africa	101	Lebanon	Asia	96	Burma	Asia	113
17	Lebanon	Asia	100	Nepal	Asia	96	India	Asia	108
18	Zimbabwe	Africa	93	India	Asia	95	Mozambique	Africa	104
19	Nepal	Asia	88	Zimbabwe	Africa	94	Zimbabwe	Africa	99
20	Malawi	Africa	86	Sierra Leone	Africa	94	Sudan	Asia	93

Source: FCDO, [Statistics on international development. Table 6](#), 24 September 2020

3. Future partners & programmes

The Government intends to fund both bilateral and multilateral programmes in “humanitarian hotspots” and work with partners on priorities such as girls’ education and tackling climate change.⁵⁴

In 2020, a [review by the ICAI](#) had recommended that the UK should ensure a “sufficient share” of ODA is allocated as multilateral aid. It said this was to help ensure Ministers have the flexibility to meet the 0.7 percent aid target “without compromising value for money or adversely impacting programme delivery (or supplier operations)”.⁵⁵ It also argued that bilateral programmes are not as well placed to manage variability in the timing of payments or spread risks across global portfolios.⁵⁶

In response, the FCDO said it would use a “full range of funding instruments to deliver aid”.⁵⁷ No plans were set out in the review.

Where aid is **multilateral**, the UK provides funding to a multilateral organisation, such as the World Bank, who then allocates it in accordance with its priorities. This aid is not earmarked by donor governments for specific programmes or policies.

3.1 Multilateral aid

Potential focus on multilateral organisations

The NGO ONE [estimates](#) that around 60 percent of the [£10 billion ODA spend in 2020/21](#) is tied into existing multilateral commitments. This includes increased commitments to the World Bank and GAVI.⁵⁸

[Some NGOs](#) have argued that this prioritisation of multilateral ODA was potentially “wrong in terms of need [...] and tactically and diplomatically”.

The FCDO has published [thematic ODA spend](#) for 2021/22, including some multilateral commitments. Final allocations are to be confirmed.⁵⁹

Commitments to multilateral ODA in the review

The review included [commitments to health and education schemes](#).

The Government plans to increase funding to the WHO by 30 percent over the next four years. The UK’s core contribution will be £340 million. It will also provide £1.65 billion over the next five years to GAVI, the vaccine alliance, to support the immunisation of children. £548 million will be available through the COVAX Advance Market Commitment for Coronavirus vaccines for developing countries.

The UK will also work with the EU and multilateral development banks on antimicrobial resistance, AIDS, tuberculous and malaria, and will remain “one of the largest [...] donors to global education”.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ [Review](#), pp46, 66

⁵⁵ ICAI, [Management of the 0.7% ODA spending target: A rapid review](#), 2020, p27

⁵⁶ ICAI, [Management of the 0.7% ODA spending target: A rapid review](#), 2020, p27

⁵⁷ HM Treasury and FCDO, [Response to the ICAI recommendations on: Management of the 0.7% ODA spending target](#), 22 January 2021, p2

⁵⁸ ONE, [The predicted consequences of the UK’s cuts to ODA](#), 30 March 2021;

⁵⁹ [Foreign Secretary to IDC Chair](#), 25 March 2021, p2; HCWS935, [FCDO update](#), 21 April 2021

⁶⁰ [Review](#), pp9, 93

3.2 Bilateral Aid

Moving from providing funding to expertise

As receiving states become able to finance their own development priorities, the Government [intends](#) to move towards providing “expertise in place of grants” and new funding models.⁶¹

The FCDO has argued that “aid alone cannot deliver the sustainable development goals” and that what is needed is “financing tools that will pull private finance towards sustainable development”.⁶²

Laurie Lee, Chief Executive of Care International UK, has advised that whilst there is a role for UK expertise, a “modern relationship” with other states will need to appreciate “the fact that they have their own expertise about what is going to work in their country”.⁶³

Intentions to move towards bilateral ODA

In December 2020, the Foreign Secretary said bilateral aid would be the “default”, save for “obvious exceptions”, such as global research, policy influencing and core multilateral activity. He said bilateral projects had advantages of “effectiveness, local ownership and strategic impact”.⁶⁴

3.3 CSSF

The cross-Government [Conflict, Stability and Security Fund](#) (CSSF) was launched in 2015. It seeks to address a range of challenges relating to peace and stability and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

The [review](#) said the UK Government will tighten the focus of the CSSF to “tack[le] instability, preventing conflict and supporting capacity-building. It will prioritise “resources on the foundational link between stability, resilience and security” and work to “reduce the frequency and intensity of conflict and to alleviate suffering”.⁶⁵

CSSF allocations for 2020/21 were £1,366 million. The [review](#) said CSSF funding would be £874 million in 2021/22.⁶⁶

The FCDO has [emphasised](#) that the new department’s creation will allow the UK to use its “diplomatic convening power [and] peacekeeping effort” to “add value” to conflict prevention efforts.⁶⁷

[Saferworld](#) argued that the reductions in funding threatened to “undermine” the “positive” emphasis in the review on tackling the drivers of conflict, such as grievances and political marginalisation. It argued the UK should continue to “support bottom up peacebuilding” in addition to diplomatic tools.⁶⁸ [Protection Approaches](#) has also argued that “the Government needs to go back to community building”.⁶⁹

⁶¹ [Review](#), p46

⁶² HC Deb, [20 April 2021](#), c841

⁶³ IDC, [Oral evidence: Future of UK aid, HC 1141](#), 13 April 2021, Q80

⁶⁴ [Foreign Secretary to the Chair of IDC](#), 2 December 2020, p3

⁶⁵ [Review](#), pp79, 103

⁶⁶ [Saferworld to IDC](#), 15 April 2021; [Review](#), p79

⁶⁷ IDC, [Oral evidence: Future of UK aid, HC 1141](#), 22 April 2021, Q107

⁶⁸ Saferworld, [The UK review](#), 18 March 2021; [Saferworld to IDC](#), 15 April 2021

⁶⁹ Kate Ferguson, A response to the review, [The Foreign Policy Centre](#), 18 March 2021

4. How well is development integrated into the review?

Building on the creation of the FCDO in 2020, the [review](#) says that the UK will be a “soft power superpower” and use its diplomatic network, ODA and the armed forces to work with others across the world.⁷⁰ However, the review has been seen by NGOs as sidelining the development sector and its contribution to the UK’s strategic goals.⁷¹

4.1 Defence and security

Whilst development NGOs have welcomed the review’s emphasis on some of the drivers of conflict and instability, such as climate change, they have argued security and defence spending and foreign relations may be [prioritised over development needs](#).

For example, the UK [remains committed](#) to the NATO target of 2 percent of GDP on defence. Spending currently stands at 2.2 percent.⁷² The Government will increase the defence budget by at least 0.5 above inflation every year of this Parliament.⁷³

The [Institute of Development Studies](#) criticised the “narrow focus on defence spending” and the review’s lack of a “rounded vision” that tackles “climate change, poverty and inequality, conflict and disease”.⁷⁴

The NGO network, [Bond](#), expressed disappointment in the lack of “space and thought” to ODA, given the review’s linking of climate change and poverty with instability and conflict.⁷⁵

[Saferworld](#) also argued that not all department contributions were fully integrated into the review’s conflict prevention strategy. It says the “mismatch between hard and softer approaches to security may undermine” a “truly integrated approach”.⁷⁶

4.2 Development and trade in the review

The Director of the Institute for Development Studies, Melissa Leach, argued the [emphasis on trade](#) and economic growth as an end in itself risked overlooking opportunities for “inclusive and collaborative forms of economic development” and using growth to reduce poverty, increase wellbeing and social protection.⁷⁷

In June 2020, the IDC had warned the use of ODA to support the UK’s economic interests [risked diluting the primary aim of ODA](#), to reduce

⁷⁰ [Review](#), pp9, 19, 49

⁷¹ Save the Children, [A force for good?](#), 19 March 2021

⁷² [Review](#), p4

⁷³ PQ 72880 [\[Review\]](#), 16 July 2020

⁷⁴ Institute of Development Studies, [IDS response to the UK’s review](#), 16 March 2021

⁷⁵ Bond, [What the review means for international development](#), 19 March 2021

⁷⁶ Saferworld, [The UK review](#), 18 March 2021

⁷⁷ IDC, [Oral evidence: The future of UK aid](#), HC 1141, 13 April 2021, Q68

poverty. It also said ODA may be re-directed to middle-income countries.⁷⁸

The Henry Jackson Society told the IDC that the UK “should not be afraid of using its ODA resources to reinforce its national interests”. It cited the [2015 Aid Strategy](#), which set out intentions “to eliminate poverty and [...] also advance the UK’s national interest”.⁷⁹

4.3 New development strategy

The [review](#) commits to publishing a new development strategy. The strategy will build on the seven ODA priorities for 2021/22 and “ensure close alignment” of UK aid from 2022 with the strategic framework, combining “diplomacy and aid with trade”.⁸⁰

In April 2021, the Foreign Secretary said he was unable to provide a “firm timeframe” for its publication. It is expected in 2021 or 2022.⁸¹

NGOs have argued the separate consultation and strategy on ODA risks development not being fully integrated into the UK’s foreign and defence policy.⁸² In 2015, the [UK aid strategy](#) was published alongside the [Strategic Defence and Security Strategy](#).⁸³

⁷⁸ IDC, [Effectiveness of UK aid: Interim findings](#), HC 215, 9 June 2020, paras 12 & 19

⁷⁹ Henry Jackson Society, [Effectiveness of UK aid: Evidence submitted](#), 2020, p4

⁸⁰ [Review](#), pp45, 46

⁸¹ IDC, [Oral evidence: Future of UK aid](#), HC1141, 22 April 2021, Q136; IDC, [Oral evidence: Future of UK aid, HC 1141](#), 13 April 2021, Q80; PQ 182080 [[Overseas aid](#)], 16 April 2021

⁸² Save the Children, [Response to the Government’s the review](#). u.d.; IDC, [Oral evidence: Future of UK aid](#), HC 1141, 13 April 2021, Q80

⁸³ Cabinet Office and Number 10, [PM Statement on National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015](#), 23 November 2015

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