

BELGIUM

1. Measures to accelerate progress towards the MDGs by 2015

Belgium's commitment to attaining development results in partner countries is reflected in its efforts to increase the effectiveness of its aid. It has established a strategic policy framework for this purpose and is implementing it gradually. It has taken steps to increase the amounts spent per partner country and to enhance its sectoral concentration with particular attention to health, education, agriculture, climate and gender. Despite the economic and financial crisis, it has allocated significant new budgetary resources to the federal development cooperation budget during the past three years. This should allow Belgium to reach the ratio of 0.7% of ODA to GNI in 2010.

2. Changes in development policy, and what drives them

Belgium has chosen to put new emphasis on productive sectors (mainly agriculture) to respond to emerging crises. It has done so recognising that agriculture provides the livelihoods to the vast majority of the poor in its partner countries, and offers an important opportunity to work towards increased gender equality. Further, demands from partner countries and the changing global dynamics led Belgium to recognise the need to develop distinct differentiated approaches for middle-income countries, least developed countries, and fragile states.

3. Measures to increase the predictability of aid

To improve the predictability of its aid to partner countries, Belgium has extended the duration of its Indicative Cooperation Programmes (ICPs) from three to four years. In addition to this, Belgium has since 2008 pursued a strategy to increase overall predictability by moving towards a long-term engagement of ICPs to a minimum of 12 years. This has been applied so far to 13 out of 18 Indicative Cooperation Programmes. Within the framework of the ICPs, Belgium communicates to its partner countries the indicative planned disbursement figures for two to four years ahead, within committed projects and programmes.