



**OECD Development Co-operation
Peer Reviews**

Ireland 2014



OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Ireland

2014

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Please cite this publication as:

OECD (2014), *OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Ireland 2014*, OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews, OECD Publishing.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264225114-en>

ISBN 978-92-64-22504-6 (print)

ISBN 978-92-64-22511-4 (PDF)

Series: OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews

ISSN 2309-7124 (print)

ISSN 2309-7132 (online)

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Conducting the peer review

The OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) conducts periodic reviews of the individual development co-operation efforts of DAC members. The policies and programmes of each member are critically examined approximately once every four or five years. Five members are examined annually. The OECD's Development Co-operation Directorate provides analytical support, and develops and maintains, in close consultation with the Committee, the methodology and analytical framework – known as the Reference Guide – within which the peer reviews are undertaken.

The objectives of DAC peer reviews are to improve the quality and effectiveness of development co-operation policies and systems, and to promote good development partnerships for better impact on poverty reduction and sustainable development in developing countries. DAC peer reviews assess the performance of a given member, not just that of its development co-operation agency, and examine both policy and implementation. They take an integrated, system-wide perspective on the development co-operation and humanitarian assistance activities of the member under review.

The peer review is prepared by a team, consisting of representatives of the Secretariat working with officials from two DAC members who are designated as “examiners”. The country under review provides a memorandum setting out the main developments in its policies and programmes. Then the Secretariat and the examiners visit the capital to interview officials, parliamentarians, as well as civil society and NGO representatives of the donor country to obtain a first-hand insight into current issues surrounding the development co-operation efforts of the member concerned. Field visits assess how members are implementing the major DAC policies, principles and concerns, and review operations in recipient countries, particularly with regard to poverty reduction, sustainability, gender equality and other aspects of participatory development, and local aid co-ordination. During the field visit, the team meets with representatives of the partner country's administration, parliamentarians, civil society and other development partners.

The Secretariat then prepares a draft report on the member's development co-operation which is the basis for the DAC review meeting at the OECD. At this meeting senior officials from the member under review respond to questions formulated by the Secretariat in association with the examiners.

This review contains the Main Findings and Recommendations of the Development Assistance Committee and the report of the Secretariat. It was prepared with examiners from Austria and Portugal for the Peer Review of Ireland on 6 October 2014.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

AADF	Africa Agri-Food Development Fund
AfDB	African Development Bank
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action
CAP	UN Consolidated Appeals Process
CERF	UN Central Emergency Response Fund
CODEV	EU Council Working Party on Development Cooperation
CRED	Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters
CSO	Civil society organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DCD	Development Co-operation Division
DEVCO	EC Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DPER	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
DREF	Disaster Relief Emergency Fund of the IFRC
ECHO	EU Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department
EEAS	European External Action Service
EPA	EU Economic Partnership Agreement
EU	European Union
GAVI	Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation
GoI	Government of Ireland
IAEAG	Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
ICF	Investment Climate Facility for Africa
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDCD	Inter-Departmental Committee on Development
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INCAF	International Network on Conflict and Fragility
LDC	Least developed country
PAEG	Programme Appraisal and Evaluation Group

UNAIDS	UN Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCTAD	UN Conference on Trade and Development
UNDG	UN Development Group
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNFPA	UN Population Fund
UNHCR	UN Refugee Agency
UNHRD	UN Humanitarian Response Depot
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
UNISDR	UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

Signs used:

EUR	Euro
USD	United States dollars
()	Secretariat estimate in whole or part
-	(Nil)
0.0	Negligible
..	Not available
...	Not available separately, but included in total
n.a.	Not applicable

Slight discrepancies in totals are due to rounding.

Annual average exchange rate: 1 USD = EUR

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
0.7305	0.6933	0.7181	0.755	0.7192	0.778

Ireland's aid at a glance

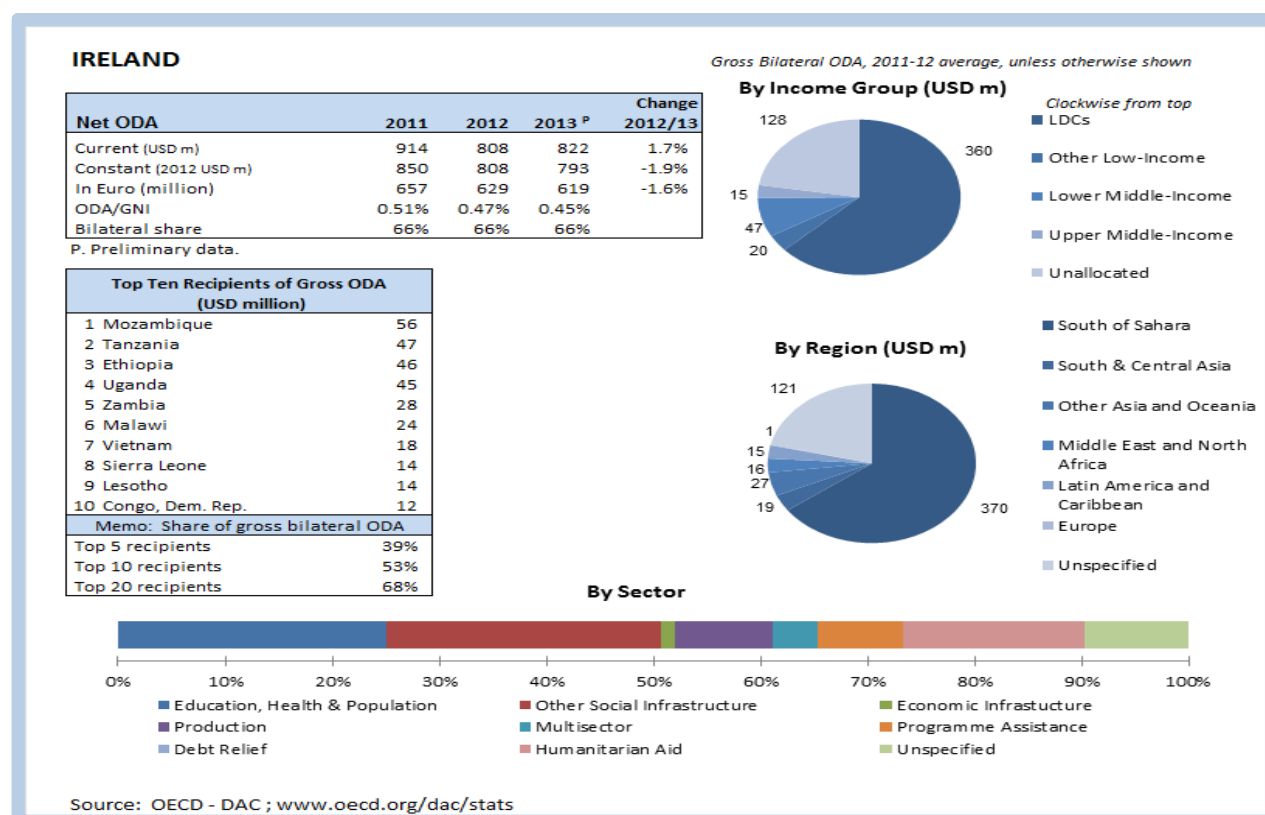
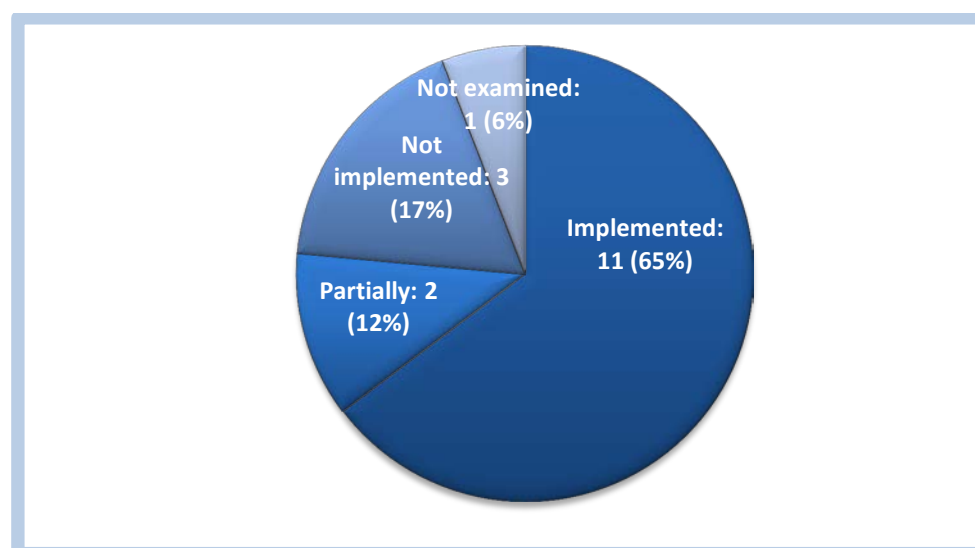


Figure 0.1 Ireland's implementation of 2009 peer review recommendations



Context of Ireland's Peer Review

Economic and political context

Since 2008 Ireland has experienced a severe banking and fiscal crisis and, linked to that, considerable fiscal consolidation, which has had an impact on all parts of the Irish economy and society. This DAC peer review of Ireland's development co-operation takes place as the country is getting back on its feet (OECD, 2013). Structural reforms and fiscal consolidation have helped to rebalance the economy, which is recovering gradually, and underpinned a successful return to the sovereign bond market at declining costs. Gross national product (GNP) is estimated to have grown by 3.3% in 2013. According to Ireland's Economic and Social Research Institute, "this shows an economy that is recovering quite vigorously" (ESRI, 2014). GNP is expected to grow by 3.5% in 2014 and 3.7% in 2015 (ibid).

Ireland successfully exited the European Union/International Monetary Fund (EU/IMF) accord at the end of 2013. However, a programme of fiscal austerity and reform will continue to guide economic policy in the medium term. The government aims, for example, to narrow the budget deficit from around 31% of GDP in 2010 to less than 3% of GDP by 2015 (EIU, 2014).

The crisis has left a legacy of unemployment and debts, among the highest in the OECD. Ireland is implementing policies that will promote sustainable growth and job creation, including by reforming public institutions and regulations (OECD, 2013).

Public service reform has been a key element of the government's strategic response to the economic crisis and is a central theme in the Programme for Government 2011-16. The first phases of the government's Public Service Reform Plan of 2011 focused on reducing the cost of delivering public services (DPER 2014). Public service cutbacks are an important and relevant backdrop for this peer review (ibid).

For example:

- Gross government expenditure has been reduced from its peak of EUR 63.1 billion in 2009 to EUR 54.6 billion in 2013. This represents a reduction of approximately 13.5%.
- The government expenditure limit for 2014 will be EUR 52.9 billion. The expenditure limits for 2015 and 2016 will be EUR 51.5 billion and EUR 51.9 billion, respectively.
- The Public Service Pay Bill was reduced to EUR 14.1 billion in 2013, from its peak of EUR 17.5 billion in 2009.
- Public servants experienced two pay reductions, totalling an average of 14%. Those earning over EUR 65 000 per annum experienced further reductions after July 2013.

Ireland's foreign policy increasingly plays a part in supporting economic recovery. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has a leading role in fostering the international dimension of Ireland's economic growth, in close co-operation with the State Agencies and the private sector. Its high-level goal of promoting Ireland's economic interests in Europe and internationally has cascaded down throughout the foreign service, including to Irish embassies in Africa, where Ireland has a strong track record in fighting poverty and hunger.

Sources:

EIU (Economist Intelligence Unit) (2014), Country Report, Ireland, January 2014, EIU, London.

ESRI (Economic and Social Research Institute) (2014), Quarterly Economic Commentary Spring 2014, ESRI, Dublin.

DPER (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform) (2014), Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016, DPER, Dublin.

OECD (2013), OECD Economic Surveys. Ireland, OECD Publishing, Paris.

The DAC's main findings and recommendations

Main Findings

Ireland delivers effectively on its commitment to international development and to promoting global public goods such as peace, human rights and food security. The government's strategy is informed by a realistic understanding of how Ireland can play a leadership role at the global level. It does this by:

- working with other countries, and civil society, to take on and advocate for its priority issues;
- mobilising expertise available across government, in its universities, and civil society;
- building on extensive field level experience and feeding that knowledge up to the international level; and
- enlisting the support of national leaders who leverage their political capital and partnerships for global development.

Ireland's successful efforts internationally on hunger and nutrition show how it rallies a range of actors behind a common objective. It is a founding member of the Scaling-up Nutrition Movement and initiated a high level partnership with the United States focusing on the first 1 000 days of a child's life. In 2013 Ireland worked with the United Kingdom to get G8 leaders to endorse the Global Nutrition for Growth Compact. During its Presidency of the European Union it facilitated an EU approach to resilience.

At home, Ireland has developed effective whole of government approaches on hunger and resilience. The Inter-Departmental Hunger Task Force is a prime example of how several government departments can pool their skills and expertise for a co-ordinated response to hunger and nutrition. Another good example of cross-government collaboration is the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's focus on building resilience, including through multilateral partners such as the UN's Food and Agricultural Organisation.

In the EU, Ireland has been promoting more systematic approaches to policy coherence for development. It called, for example, for this issue to be a standing item on the agenda of the Foreign Affairs Council. The government has also invested significant resources in strengthening its evidence base for more development-friendly policies. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine has used the research to select indicators for monitoring progress. In light of these advances in the area of

agriculture and the centrality of hunger and food security to its development policy, Ireland might consider playing a stronger role – at home and internationally – in raising the perspective of development in agricultural policy-making. For example, its Agri-Food sector is growing while it needs to reduce its Co2 emissions in line with EU targets for 2020.

Nevertheless, finding cross-government agreement on the specific policy areas where coherence with development objectives can be enhanced is proving to be challenging. Identifying and agreeing on indicators for tracking progress is also complex. The government committed to do these two things in its 2013 development policy One World, One Future. In addition, Ireland does not have clear processes for managing trade-offs between competing policy priorities. While the Inter-Departmental Committee on Development has a mandate to address issues of policy coherence for development, it rarely meets (it did not meet in 2013). It is not serving fully as a channel for alerting the government to potential policy conflicts and resolving tensions, which was recommended in the last peer review of Ireland.

Ireland recognises that official development assistance can help bring in private investment to support development. The Irish government sees grant aid to basic services as an important channel to build the human capital that is fundamental to attracting private investment. In addition, by scaling up development co-operation for inclusive economic growth, Ireland hopes to strengthen capacity for trade and investment in partner countries, although how it will do this has yet to be clarified (see sections two and five).

Recommendation

- 1.1.** To deliver on its commitment to policy coherence for development, Ireland can build on its whole of government approaches to develop a clear cross-government plan of action on a few policy issues of strategic priority which it can influence.

Main Findings

Ireland's clear overall vision for development co-operation, which is integral to its foreign policy, is centred on fighting hunger and poverty. The focused approach to hunger is, in particular, a legacy of Ireland's own history of famine in the 1840s.

A strength of Ireland's development co-operation is the way in which development priorities are grounded in the needs of partner countries and in what the Irish public supports, while being informed by Irish Aid's country level experience.

One World, One Future – Ireland's Policy for International Development (2013), provides a sound rationale and basis for making decisions on where to focus Ireland's official development assistance. This policy as well as sector strategies help ensure that Irish aid targets poor people and gets to where it is most needed. Sub-Saharan Africa is the priority region of focus and poverty and fragility are formal criteria for selecting priority countries. In addition, Ireland's holistic approach to recovery and overall focus on resilience helps bind humanitarian and development programming. Ireland's co-operation with Sierra Leone, which became a new priority country in 2014, is a good example of how it implements this approach.

The three overall goals and six priority areas of focus presented in the 2013 development policy, which are generally consistent with past priorities, provide an evidence-based rationale for allocating Ireland's development assistance. At the same time, the thematic priorities are quite broad and the government has committed to rationalise the delivery of the programme for maximum impact. In particular, it needs to be realistic about what it can deliver so that staff can consistently add value and meet workload expectations. The draft implementation plan for One World, One Future takes this agenda forward but with 155 priority actions it is very ambitious. Ireland needs to focus on getting a good match between priorities and resources.

Ireland is adapting its development co-operation to a changing world. As outlined in its 2011 Strategy for Africa – Our partnership with a changing continent, it is reinforcing the links between its development, foreign and commercial goals, which includes promoting two-way trade with Africa. The development policy has also placed greater

emphasis than in the past on inclusive economic growth and trade. However, it is not yet clear how Ireland will deliver on these objectives in its bilateral and multilateral programming in a coherent way that capitalises on synergies between the different objectives. The process for managing possible trade-offs between the different priorities is also unclear. The work being undertaken by the Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group should be helpful in this regard.

Ireland adds value to its multilateral policy engagement by ensuring it is informed by lessons and experience in partner countries. While the overall development policy guides DFAT's and other government departments financing decisions, Ireland does not have a holistic view of what it wants to achieve through the multilateral channel and how. The planned review of multilateral co-operation is an important first step towards clarifying this.

Priority cross-cutting issues – gender equality, environmental sustainability, HIV/AIDS and good governance – are supported by a comprehensive package of policies, tools, resources and dedicated advisors. In addition, Ireland is particularly appreciated by its partners for the effective agenda-setting role it plays on gender equality and women's empowerment. There is still scope, as recommended in the last peer review, to document lessons better and to share good practices on mainstreaming environment and climate change, governance and HIV/AIDS into programming.

Recommendations

- 2.1.** DFAT's guidance and tools for taking decisions about programming and partnerships should provide clarity of purpose, help rationalise delivery of the programme, and take staffing capacity into account.
- 2.2.** The Irish Government should set out its ambition and priorities for all its multilateral engagement and use these to guide strategic allocations to multilateral organisations.
- 2.3.** DFAT should clarify how it will operationalise the One World, One Future priority on inclusive economic growth and define the coherence and linkages with the Africa Strategy's trade objective. It can learn from DAC members' experience in this area.

Main Findings

In 2013 Ireland's net ODA was USD 822 million (preliminary data), the equivalent of 0.45% of gross national income (GNI). This is well above the 2013 DAC average of 0.30%. In a severe economic environment of a fiscal consolidation programme driven by Ireland's banking and fiscal crisis, Ireland's aid volume declined by 30% between 2008 and 2013 and the ratio of ODA to GNI fell from a peak of 0.59% in 2008 to 0.45% in 2013. Wide ownership of the programme across political parties and in civil society helped to safeguard the budget from even more significant cuts.

The strategic and balanced manner in which the Irish authorities managed the budget cuts is exemplary. Three key actions are particularly noteworthy: (i) after a big cut in 2009 (-18.4%), Ireland made a major effort to stabilise decreases in the aid budget in the following years (average -4.4% from 2010-12); (ii) it protected the budgets of its key partner countries to optimise predictability; and (iii) senior management put greater emphasis on developing and implementing a more strategic approach to managing for results to maximise the quality of Irish aid.

Ireland remains committed to meeting the 0.7% ODA/GNI target as soon as economic circumstances permit. It has a good track record to build on: prior to the onset of the crisis, it had made steady increases to reach its ODA target. It had surpassed, well in advance of the 2010 deadline, the EU target of 0.51%.

The Irish economy is returning to growth at a projected 1.9% increase in real GDP in 2014 and 2.2% in 2015 (OECD economic forecast, May 2014). While the economy is vulnerable to global shocks, and must continue to meet EU fiscal targets and narrow the budget deficit, expectations are rising, notably among Irish NGOs, that the ODA budget can start growing again. The government, however, has not explained what level of economic improvement would trigger an increase in development assistance.

Ireland allocates its aid according to its geographical priorities. Between 2008-12 it allocated 81% of total bilateral aid to Sub-Saharan Africa. At 0.24% of GNI in 2012, Irish aid going to least developed countries (LDCs) is well above the UN target of 0.15%.

Moreover, it allocated 52% of total ODA to LDCs – the largest share of any DAC member.

Sectoral allocations also reflect Ireland's commitments with more than 50% of bilateral disbursements going to social infrastructure and services in 2011-12. In addition, Irish Aid is meeting its target of spending 20% of its budget on fighting hunger. ODA commitments supporting gender equality and women's empowerment averaged 50% of aid allocated by sector in 2011-12 and the share of environment-focused aid has been increasing.

Ireland focuses on two to three sectors in its partner countries. It channels a good share of its country strategy budgets through pooled funds, using partner country public financial management systems. However, data on aid allocations show that there is scope to rationalise the delivery of the programme, as recommended in section two. Doing this would also free up more staff time for national policy dialogue and sharing knowledge in selected priority areas, while managing partnerships that have strong capacity building elements. In recognition of this, Irish Aid in Malawi used the evaluation of the country strategy and evidence from results-based approaches to identify where it can be most effective. It is consolidating the programme on this basis.

While the overall share of Ireland's multilateral aid in total ODA remained stable at 30%, the volume declined by 19% between 2008 and 2012 - from USD 397 million in 2008 to USD 272 million in 2012. Non-core contributions to multilateral organisations saw the greatest cuts between 2008 and 2010 at -31% in real terms. Ireland could allocate its multilateral aid more strategically: while the top allocations (UNDP, UNICEF and WFP) reflect priorities, it is not clear why a further 43% of its UN contributions go to "other UN agencies". Furthermore, Ireland is a member of the Asian Development Bank but not of the African Development Bank despite its strong focus on Africa.

Recommendation

3.1. Ireland should communicate the rationale and projections for scaling up its ODA towards 0.7% of GNI to the public and key stakeholders. It should also start planning how increases will be allocated.

Main Findings

Ireland's institutional structures and systems enable it to deliver co-ordinated, quality development co-operation and to be a pragmatic and flexible development partner.

Strong strategic leadership and a dynamic senior management group are informed about reality on the ground and invest significant time in planning. Programming and budgeting authority are delegated to embassies in key partner countries.

Institutional co-ordination is fairly easy since a small number of governmental actors are engaged in development co-operation. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) manages the bulk of the budget (80%).

DFAT and the development co-operation division (DCD) have good flexibility to reorganise their structures to keep them fit for purpose. Since the last peer review DCD has been integrated further into the department as part of efforts to reinforce the interconnections between its policy objectives. It is, for example, now responsible for political affairs, trade promotion and development co-operation with Africa. By giving the mandate for the three policies to one division Ireland is in a good position to exploit synergies on the ground.

In line with a suggestion of the last peer review, the two multilateral units were merged, consolidating capacity and creating a critical mass for strategic engagement. In addition, a new independent non-executive body, the Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group, has been created to bolster DFAT's access to independent policy advice. However, to capitalise on the group's analysis and advice, DCD needs to ensure that it draws on its work in a timely manner.

Irish development co-operation continues to be managed, however, from two locations, following the decentralisation of DCD to Limerick in 2008. This imposes additional transaction costs that Ireland needs to keep under review.

Ireland's partners value DCD's capacity to be innovative and to pilot programmes to test out new ideas, modalities and partnerships. Some procedures for programme management exist, however these are not always applied consistently. As a result, there appears to be a

diffusion of approaches and systems at the country level making quality assurance and control as well as knowledge sharing across the organisation difficult. To address this, DCD has started to standardise its procedures for programme management and quality assurance. However, getting the balance right between having flexible procedures so that embassies can respond to field imperatives and requiring compliance against a range of standardised administrative and programming procedures can be tricky. Whatever the system, Ireland, like other DAC members, needs to ensure that programme staff have adequate time and resources to focus on the core work of development co-operation in partner countries.

Managing human resources effectively continues to be a challenge at DCD. Staffing levels and skills for development co-operation still need to be reinforced. This issue has been accentuated by the cuts in staffing and salaries induced by the economic crisis. In addition, DFAT does not have a clear strategy for managing human resources working on development co-operation and ensuring the necessary skills are in the right places, including in fragile situations where specific incentives may be necessary for posting staff to the field. There is also a strong sense among staff, including those recruited locally in partner countries, that human resource management procedures are not applied consistently.

DCD approved the Learning and Development Strategy in 2014 as recommended in the last peer review. While managers appear to be signalling to staff that training and learning is a priority, they also need to ensure staff can free up time to keep up their competencies.

Recommendations

- 4.1.** DFAT should finalise its human resource policy for development co-operation staff and introduce medium-term workforce planning to ensure it has the right levels of staff and competencies to deliver its policy and respond to field imperatives.
- 4.2.** DCD should ensure that more standardised management systems produce information that is relevant for, and feeds into, context-specific strategic planning.

Main Findings

Delivering aid that reaches and benefits poor people in developing countries underpins Ireland's development co-operation. To achieve this, it remains fully committed to aligning to national and local development priorities. It supports and enables partner governments and civil society organisations to lead their development efforts while ensuring that it has a good understanding about the context in which it operates. Partners value Ireland as an honest broker, and a trusted and long-term partner.

Ireland clearly takes the context as the starting point for strategic planning and programming. Country strategy papers provide a good framework for programming in key partner countries. Objectives are grounded on evidence, aligned to partner country needs, and agreed in consultation with the partner government. By providing multi-year indicative budgets for its programmes, Ireland gives good predictability to its partners. Reflecting its commitment to use country systems as default, in 2013, 82% of Ireland's aid to the government sector used partner countries' public financial management and procurement systems (OECD/UNDP, 2014).

Realistic about the context, Ireland uses a basket of mixed funding mechanisms, which in fragile situations especially allows it to adapt the programme and the means of delivery as the situation evolves. Moreover, it is not afraid to take on critical areas outside government priorities, such as education in Karamoja, a fragile context inside Uganda, and gender-based violence in Liberia.

In addition, Ireland's aid is fully untied. It is committed to keeping it that way.

Ireland remains committed to delivering its development programme according to international best practices and the principles for making aid more effective. However, it notes an apparent shift in donor behaviour in developing countries away from harmonised and aligned practices. It would welcome reflection within the DAC on this trend.

Since the misappropriation of Irish ODA in the Prime Minister of Uganda's Office in 2012, more robust risk management systems are being put in place within DFAT. While there is realistic acceptance, also at political level, that development co-operation comes

with risk, Ireland is rightly cautious that pooling of risk does not reduce overall responsibility for risk. Going forward, DFAT should ensure that the focus on reducing risk does not stifle programme innovation or lead to missed opportunities.

Stepping up engagement with the private sector to deliver pro-poor economic growth is a relatively new priority for Ireland. However, DCD has limited capacity and expertise in partnering with the private sector.

DCD has invested significant resources in ensuring that its policies, tools and approach to partnering with civil society support the delivery of quality aid. This is crucial as civil society organisations are major partners: Ireland channelled 39% of its bilateral ODA to NGOs in 2010-12. Headquarter-managed partnership agreements are underpinned by a strong results focus that includes an analysis of the capacity of NGO partners to deliver results. Funding criteria are also more transparent. NGO partners welcome the progress made in this regard.

At the same time, there is scope to improve synergies between activities of Irish NGOs and Irish Aid country strategies and programmes in the field. For example, Irish NGOs in Malawi would welcome opportunities to reinforce dialogue and to increase the visibility of the totality of Ireland's support to the country.

Recommendations

- 5.1.** Ireland should continue to deliver locally owned development co-operation aligned to partners' priorities and work with development providers to push for effective delivery of international commitments for making aid effective.
- 5.2.** To deliver on the trade and economic growth objectives of One World, One Future and the Africa Strategy, Ireland needs rigorous analysis, a clear policy and the right tools and instruments for effective engagement with the private sector.
- 5.3.** Embassies and NGOs receiving support from headquarters should work together to improve dialogue and co-ordination for more effective programming in the partner country.

Main Findings

Ireland has made good progress since the last peer review with institutionalising results-based management to inform programming decisions and serve accountability needs. It is clearly committed to continue to strengthen its system of planning and managing for results. The 2012 internal review of managing for development results, for example, provided useful lessons that are being taken on board.

Ireland is realistic about the long-term nature of development co-operation and tries to avoid the trap of setting unrealistic results targets. Expected results in fragile contexts are based on what can be achieved in these difficult environments within a particular timeframe. As suggested in the 2009 DAC peer review, Ireland has rolled out extensive training for staff, created a pool of results resource persons, and set up a community of practice. Its approach to building the capacity of partners to plan and manage for results is also good practice.

DCD has prioritised a bottom-up approach to results planning and reporting in order to have sound evidence for programming decisions. The approach is starting to bear fruit. For example, the second generation of results-oriented country strategy papers build on lessons and results information.

In line with a cross-government drive for greater domestic accountability on performance against policy priorities, DFAT is starting to identify corporate level results. The draft implementation plan for One World, One Future identified a top tier of 10 outcomes and 31 results areas. In order for the information on these results to be meaningful also for management, DCD should identify a limited set of indicators related to key priorities.

Ireland's evaluation system is in line with the DAC evaluation principles: it has a solid policy, an impartial and independent evaluation process, dedicated resources, and good multi-annual planning of evaluations. The independence of the Evaluation and Audit Unit has been reinforced. An Independent Audit Committee, which oversees DFAT's system of accountability, provides vital oversight and suggestions to the Department. Evaluation is used effectively as a management tool in Ireland's development co-operation. Progress is also being made with disseminating evaluation results.

However, the feedback mechanisms for following up on programme evaluations could be clearer. The Evaluation and Audit Unit could play a greater advisory role in this regard, provided it has appropriate resources. To increase transparency and facilitate exchange of experiences DCD should also consider making decentralised evaluations public.

Although progress has been made, the culture and the system for sharing and managing knowledge remain weak in DFAT. In particular, DFAT's decentralised system for saving information is not fit for the purpose of institutional learning and knowledge sharing. For example, embassies and units in headquarters have their own filing systems which makes it difficult for other parts of the organisation to access or share documents.

Strong public demand for information and domestic oversight mechanisms ensure good accountability. While DFAT successfully published aid data in line with the Busan common standard in June 2014, it could do more to build an institutional culture that is more open to publishing information. For example, information about programmes, projects and results on the Irish Aid and embassy websites is limited, difficult to find, and varies greatly among embassies.

Ireland's strategic and consistent efforts to communicate about development and build public awareness through development education are good practice. The government is conscious that public support and the national consensus on development can never be taken for granted. To keep up support, Ireland should communicate systematically about the results to which it is contributing and build understanding of the challenges developing countries face.

Recommendations

- 6.1.** DFAT should build on the work underway to strengthen its information management systems, creating a culture of learning and investing in knowledge sharing.
- 6.2.** Ireland should further improve the transparency of its development co-operation.

Main Findings

Ireland has a comprehensive approach to humanitarian response, risk reduction and recovery, as reflected in both its humanitarian and development policies. There is clear and coherent humanitarian messaging across government, including in political dialogue, and operational relationships among different areas of government appear to be working well.

Ireland has embraced a strong commitment to build resilience and has successfully embedded that commitment across its programmes and processes; other donors could learn from this. There is also a holistic effort to support recovery across programme design and funding mechanisms.

The humanitarian share of the overall ODA budget has remained stable throughout the current crisis. On the global stage, Ireland continues to punch above its weight on humanitarian and resilience issues.

Ireland understands the need to adapt its tools to the context, and thus has a flexible and broad humanitarian toolbox to fit different contexts and partners.

Policy commitments to be a good partner are followed through with predictable, flexible and timely funding, active and open discussions and an appropriate administrative burden for all partners. Ireland also plays an active role in donor co-ordination, advocating for better humanitarian donorship and promoting more joined up responses.

Progress in meeting Ireland's policy and programming goals is reviewed against annual targets. There is a clear focus on setting out and measuring partner results. Ireland also has an extensive research portfolio to help itself and partners develop more effective responses.

Ireland takes an objective approach to determining geographical priorities and areas of greatest need. Ireland's prioritisation model is also used to detect and monitor deteriorating situations, highlighting areas where early funding is required. How Ireland

determines the capacity of partners to deliver results is less clear, however, especially with respect to the criteria for deciding which NGOs are eligible for longer-term humanitarian funding, and the allocation process for funding to new emergencies.

The small humanitarian team has proven a remarkable force in international humanitarian fora. The team has also created effective tools, systems and procedures to ensure that Ireland's humanitarian programme remains fit for purpose and a good partner, open to dialogue. Keeping up this pace and energy might be a challenge; Ireland needs to consider prioritising the issues with which it engages going forward (see section 2).

As with development co-operation, issues with information management systems make it hard for Ireland to systematically report on progress and results. For example, the results of programme reviews and policy monitoring exercises are not made public. There is scope to improve this area.

Recommendations

- 7.1.** To improve predictability, Ireland should ensure that its eligibility criteria and procedures for the various humanitarian funding schemes are better communicated.
- 7.2.** Ireland should work towards more systematic publication of both its programme reviews, and the results of its humanitarian programme.

Report

Chapter 1: Towards a comprehensive Irish development effort

Global development issues

Ireland leverages its political capital to promote international development at the global level and works effectively with other countries to build alliances in order to deliver change. It adopts a selective approach, focusing on issues like hunger and under-nutrition where it believes it can add value. Through its foreign policy, Ireland is also committed to addressing global public risks, working actively with the international community to promote peace, human rights and global food security.

Ireland builds political partnerships to promote development and tackle global public risks

Ireland punches above its weight on global development issues. It has a talent for building political networks, alliances and coalitions to support development. This was perhaps best exemplified by its presidency of the European Union (EU) in 2013, during which a unified post-2015 EU position was endorsed for the first time by EU Environment and Development Ministers; a new EU Nutrition Policy was secured; an EU Action Plan on Resilience was approved; and new EU Accounting and Transparency Directives¹ were adopted.

At the international level, Ireland focuses its attention on a number of selected issues such as hunger and under-nutrition. It draws on its extensive development programming experience in these areas to add value. For example, it was a founding member of the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement, which brings together a wide range of stakeholders to tackle hunger and under-nutrition; it initiated a high-level political Ireland-United States partnership focusing on the first 1 000 days of a child's life; and it worked with the United Kingdom during its G8 presidency to persuade world leaders to endorse the Global Nutrition for Growth Compact (2013). Ireland was also engaged in the first high-level meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation in Mexico in 2014, launching, with other donors, a three-year programme supporting civil society in campaigning for more effective development.

Ireland actively contributes to addressing global public risks. Its foreign policy, of which development is a key element, emphasises the importance of Ireland contributing to international peace and human rights. It is clear Ireland takes this commitment seriously. Its defence forces are engaged in UN mandated peace-keeping missions, led by the United Nations, the EU, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). In 2012 Ireland was elected to the United Nations Human Rights Council for a three-year term. Ireland's new policy for international development, *One World, One Future* (GoI, 2013b), tackles global risks such as food insecurity, conflict and fragility, inequality and climate change.

Policy coherence for development

Indicator: Domestic policies support or do not harm developing countries

Ireland remains committed to making its policies coherent for development and works at the EU level to achieve this. While there has been progress in making some of its policies more development friendly since the last peer review, there is scope to do more. Ireland has invested in a significant amount of research in the last four years, creating an inventory of policy areas where Irish government decisions may have consequences for development and a comprehensive list of policy indicators for monitoring progress in these areas. It now needs to adopt a more strategic approach, devoting its attention to a few policy issues where greater coherence is required and developing a clear plan of action. It also needs to strengthen its inter-departmental policy arbitration mechanisms, as recommended in the last peer review.

Ireland's clear political commitment to make its policies coherent with development requires a more strategic approach to ensure delivery

The Irish government renewed its commitment to policy coherence for development in its new policy for international development, *One World, One Future* (Gol, 2013b). At the EU level it has been active in promoting a more systematic approach to this issue in line with the commitments made in the Treaty of Lisbon (Article 208). It has, for example, called for policy coherence for development to be a standing item on the agenda of the Foreign Affairs Council and for joint representation with trade and environment ministers in key meetings (Gol, 2013a).

While Ireland has made progress since the last peer review in making some of its policies more development friendly (Box 1.1), it recognises, like many other DAC members, that it can go further. For example, Ireland is at significant risk of not meeting its 2020 greenhouse gas emission targets agreed under the EU's Climate and Energy package.² Its per capita CO₂ emissions are still among the highest in the OECD, with 88% of electricity generation still based on fossil fuels; the EU average is around 40% (OECD, 2013b).

Ireland is also struggling to implement the OECD's Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions. It has not prosecuted a foreign bribery case in the 12 years since the Convention came into force. A recent assessment of Ireland's progress in implementing the Convention (OECD, 2013c) highlighted two cases of foreign bribery in developing countries involving a company with strong links to Ireland. In one case³ better information sharing across government departments could have enabled the Irish government to respond more swiftly to allegations.⁴

In order to make further progress on policy coherence for development, Ireland should develop a more strategic framework that identifies a few policy issues on which greater coherence is required and set out a clear action plan for achieving progress. Experience from other DAC members such as Denmark, Finland and Switzerland shows that an issue-driven approach to policy coherence for development is helpful in galvanising change.

Mechanisms for identifying potential policy conflicts and resolving existing tensions could be strengthened

There is a high level of awareness across the Irish government of the need to ensure policies are conducive to development. Informal communication and co-ordination channels have enabled the Development Co-operation Division (DCD), the division within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) responsible for development assistance, to engage with other parts of the government on specific policies in order to try to avoid or minimise these policies' negative impacts on development. However, Ireland's formal co-ordinating body responsible for addressing policy coherence issues, the Inter-Departmental Committee on Development (IDCD), could play a stronger role in alerting the government to potential policy conflicts and resolving existing tensions, as recommended in the last peer review. At present, IDCD functions more as a space for exchanging information. Even this role is limited – the Committee did not meet in 2013.

The last peer review also recommended strengthening the Committee's analytical capacity by identifying a person to assist it with research. While Ireland has met this recommendation, the IDCD could do more to exploit research and analysis carried out by external stakeholders in its deliberations. Irish civil society groups, for example, have pointed out that their participation in and inputs to the Committee are limited. Ireland should consider how it can enable external stakeholders in Ireland and in Irish Aid partner countries to have more regular dialogue with the Committee.⁵

Ireland has invested in research, which includes looking at the impact of policies in partner countries

Ireland is to be commended for investing in a substantial amount of research since the last peer review to help it improve its analysis and monitoring of policy coherence for development.⁶ This includes the report *Policy Coherence for Development: The state of play in Ireland* (Barry et al., 2009),⁷ which provides an inventory of domestic policy areas that could have an impact (positive or negative) on developing countries, and the report *Policy Coherence for Development: Indicators for Ireland* (King and Matthews, 2012), which identifies 52 potential indicators across eight policy areas for monitoring progress. Ireland now needs to fully capitalise on this research, selecting a few priority policies to analyse in more detail and identifying relevant indicators to monitor progress. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) has shown the way by already picking three indicators to use to monitor progress in meeting the commitment to policy coherence for development within Irish agriculture policy making (DAFM, undated).

Ireland has taken positive steps at the field level, commissioning three research papers⁸ that look at the impact of the EU's Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) on its partner countries. One of these reports, *Trade Liberalisation and Fiscal Adjustment: The Case of EPAs in Africa* (Bilal et al., 2012), was presented to other EU member states at a roundtable discussion on EPAs in Brussels to inform debate. Ireland could emulate this practice with respect to other issues, using targeted research on the impact of specific EU and Irish domestic policies on partner countries to support its policy making.

Since the last peer review Ireland has committed to strengthening its reporting on policy coherence. From now on, the IDCD intends to produce a report on a biennial basis which the Minister of State for Trade and Development will present to the government for approval.

Policies on health workers and taxation are more development friendly

Ireland, despite not having a clear action plan in place to tackle policy coherence for development, has demonstrated progress in making its policies on health worker recruitment and international taxation more development friendly since the last peer review (Box 1.1).

Box 1.1 Making Irish health and tax policies more development friendly

Ireland, relative to other OECD countries, is highly dependent on foreign-trained health workers with around a third of all of its doctors foreign-trained (OECD, 2010). It has worked hard since 2012 to ensure that it upholds ethical international recruitment practices in order to prevent Irish policies from contributing to the brain drain of qualified health workers from developing countries. In 2010 DFAT signed a Memorandum of Association with the Health Service Executive, the organisation responsible for running all public health services in Ireland. The memorandum focused on the need to build capacity and improve the workforce situation in the developing countries from which a large number of health workers migrate to Ireland. This collaboration has paid off; Ireland was awarded the Health Worker Migration Policy Council Innovation Award in October 2013 by the World Health Organization in recognition of its leadership in developing innovative solutions that support the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel.

In 2013 Ireland issued a new International Tax Strategy and Charter that places a strong emphasis on tackling international tax evasion and avoidance – practices that can deprive developing country governments of much needed domestic revenues. Along with only four other OECD countries, Ireland is already fully compliant with the standards set out by the OECD's Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes (OECD, 2013).^{*} However, its new strategy commits Ireland to go further, supporting global automatic exchange of tax information and the OECD's work on base erosion and profit shifting in order to address aggressive tax practices. That work is particularly pertinent given that Ireland is home to many multinational companies working in developing countries, attracted by Ireland's low corporate tax rates.

^{*} This standard is based on information exchange on request rather than automatic exchange.

Source: Irish Aid (2013), "OECD DAC Peer Review of Ireland Memorandum", Irish Aid, Dublin; Department of Finance, Ireland (2013), Ireland's International Tax Strategy and Charter, Department of Finance, Dublin; OECD (2013), Measuring OECD Responses to Illicit Financial Flows to Developing Countries, OECD Publishing, Paris.

Engaging in partner countries: A co-ordinated government approach at partner country level

Indicator: Strategic framework, institutional structures and mechanisms facilitate coherent action

Ireland has strengthened its whole-of-government approach since the last peer review using a variety of mechanisms to foster greater collaboration across the Irish government. Ireland's strategy for Africa (2011), in particular, brings together for the first time its development, trade and political objectives for the continent. However, while the strategy emphasises the potential synergies between Ireland's trade and development co-operation objectives, it does not provide a clear framework for managing potential policy conflicts between these differing priorities in the field.

Collaboration across the Irish government in order to deliver development has been strengthened

Since the last peer review, the Development Co-operation Division has increasingly worked with different parts of the government to deliver Ireland's development co-operation strategy. Ireland does not have a single mechanism for enabling collaboration, but uses a variety of processes. The Inter-Departmental Hunger Task Force is a good example, with five government departments⁹ pooling their skills and expertise to deliver impact on the ground. The Task Force has benefited from strong political leadership across government, with high-profile interventions by the prime minister (Taoiseach) and strong partnerships between the DFAT and other government departments supporting agricultural research and nutrition in key partner countries.

Other examples include training of the Ugandan police force by the Irish police force (as part of Irish Aid's justice, law and order work) and the Irish Revenue Commission's activities with Rwandese authorities and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to help develop risk assessments (as part of domestic resource mobilisation work by Irish Aid). There is scope to improve inter-governmental co-ordination mechanisms for working across government, for example by ensuring greater information sharing on reporting of foreign bribery cases among relevant government departments (1.2.1).

Ireland has produced a strategy for Africa, *Ireland and Africa – Our Partnership with a Changing Continent* (DFAT, 2011), which brings together for the first time its development, political and trade objectives for the continent. This strategy signals Ireland's intention, like other DAC members, to strengthen its political and trade links with Sub-Saharan Africa. It emphasises the potential for synergies between Irish economic diplomacy and development co-operation, stressing win-win opportunities. However, it says less about how Ireland will manage conflicts among different priorities, such as ensuring the pursuit of Irish economic interests does not come at the expense of keeping aid fully untied or respect for universal human rights. Ireland needs to identify or establish a mechanism to address potential conflicts. The work of the Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group (IAEAG)¹⁰ to identify how DFAT's new trade role can be realised in a way that is coherent with Ireland's development assistance principles should be helpful in this regard.

Financing for development

Indicator: The member engages in development finance in addition to ODA

Ireland uses its aid as a catalyst to stimulate economic growth and trade in partner countries. Its capacity to use ODA to leverage private investments is limited, as it has no official financial instrument enabling it to do this. Ireland reports on its official and private development flows to the OECD.

ODA is used as a catalyst for economic growth and trade, but there is scope for scaling up work in this area

Ireland's new policy on international development acknowledges that additional development finance, beyond aid, is required. Ireland takes a broad perspective on how it uses its aid as a catalyst to stimulate economic growth and trade. For example, it views its grant aid in support of basic services in partner countries as catalytic since it builds human capital, which is vital for attracting private finance.

Ireland also provides support to more traditional areas, such as developing an enabling environment for investment and trade in its partner countries. It funds the International Trade Centre (ITC), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the Africa-based Investment Climate Facility (ICF). It also provides direct support to its partner countries' governments to build their trade and investment capacity, as is the case

in Malawi (Annex C). However, aid for trade support accounts for a relatively small share of Ireland's ODA (7%), especially compared with some other DAC members such as Japan and Germany.¹¹ If Ireland wants to scale up its work in this area, it will need to strengthen capacity and expertise in the field, as evidenced in Malawi.

No official leveraging instruments

Ireland does not have any official financial instruments to leverage private investments for developing countries and has always provided its aid in grant form. As stated in its Memorandum, Ireland has reservations about using loans, as they might lead to increased debt levels in developing countries. It has no plans to start using other instruments such as guarantees, equities or export credits (GOI, 2013a).

Ireland reports on official and private flows

In 2012 Ireland reported on its official flows, net private grants, and private flows at market rates to the OECD. Grants from Irish charitable organisations reached USD 427 million in 2012, and purchases of equities by Irish banks (i.e. portfolio investment) were USD 1 billion in 2011. According to the OECD, Ireland's foreign direct investment (FDI) flows are negligible in developing countries, reaching their peak for the last decade in 2011 at USD 171 million (compared with USD 76 million in 2012).

Notes

1. The new EU Accounting and Transparency Directive requires multinational companies based in Europe to report payments they make to developing countries for access to oil, gas and minerals.
2. Ireland's Environmental Protection Agency, an independent public body, recently highlighted these concerns.
3. Referred to as Case 2 in the report.
4. The assessment notes that in one of the cases (Case 2 in the report) it took Ireland's national police forces service two years to send a request via Interpol to ascertain the circumstances of the case, as they had not been aware of it until foreign media picked up on it. An on-site visit by the examiners of the report found that the embassy had followed proceedings closely at the time of the allegations and reported the matter to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), but that DFAT had not reported this on to the Irish national police due to lack of a final report from the foreign government. The report recommends, among other things, that Ireland devote more resources to enforcing the Convention and put in place better reporting procedures to ensure a more co-ordinated government approach.
5. This was proposed by research Irish Aid commissioned on policy coherence for development (Barry et al., 2009).
6. See note 2 above.
7. The report identifies a large number of key issues and explores how Irish policies in these areas could be made more development friendly.
8. The first paper (Matthews, 2008) explores whether EPAs would maintain the benefits to commodities producers given that they are replacing the EU's existing commodities protocols on sugar, beef and bananas. The research concludes that EPAs extend the benefits of the banana and beef protocols, but the end of the sugar protocol has more ambiguous effects. The second paper (Boysen and Matthews, 2009), examines the impact on poverty in Uganda of the EU's requirement to liberalise EU exporters' access to the Ugandan market.
9. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the Department of Finance, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, and the Department of Health.
10. The Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group (IAEAG) was established in 2011 to offer independent advice on the aid programme to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister of State for Trade and Development.
11. Ireland's aid for trade accounted for 7% of its ODA in 2011 (net disbursements). By comparison, in 2011 aid for trade accounted for 58% of Japan's ODA and 22% of Germany's.

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Chapter 2: Ireland's vision and policies for development co-operation

Policies, strategies and commitments

Indicator: A clear policy vision and solid strategies guide the programme

Ireland's clear policy vision for fighting global hunger and poverty, which is rooted in public support, is a major strength of its development co-operation. Strong public and political support have also enabled the government to deliver on its development policy commitments since the last peer review despite a very challenging economic context. Wide consultation during the preparation of the 2013 development policy, *One World, One Future*, mobilised wide ownership of the policy across government, Irish civil society organisations and the public.

Firm and clear policy vision, with solid public backing and wide ownership

In 2013 the Irish government approved a comprehensive and clear policy vision for fighting hunger and poverty in a changing world, *One World, One Future – Ireland's Policy for International Development* (Gol, 2013b). The policy's overarching goal reflects the long-standing motivations and values behind Ireland's development co-operation and its foreign policy (Figure 2.1) (DFAT, 2011). Ireland will renew its foreign policy in late 2014. Its commitment to keep development co-operation at the heart of this policy is welcome.¹

Country-level experience has fed into the development policy, ensuring that it is well grounded in reality. Ireland's priorities are also deeply rooted in what the public supports. Strategic engagement and communication with the public and key stakeholders in the review of the former development policy (referred to as the 2006 White Paper for Irish Aid) gathered views which were integrated into this policy (Gol, 2013b: 7). The focused approach to hunger reflects, in particular, the legacy of Ireland's own history of famine in the 1840s.

Wide and deep ownership across government and with civil society organisations (CSOs) also provides a good basis for a strengthened whole-of-government approach, building on the positive experience with the Hunger Task Force (Chapter 1).

A strong focus on where development co-operation is needed most

One World, One Future, sub-strategies and guidelines focus on achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with a strong emphasis on fighting hunger and malnutrition and building resilience. Strategic orientations clearly prioritise providing official development assistance where it is needed most: to vulnerable people in least developed countries, including in fragile situations. Ireland remains committed to delivering aid according to the principles for making aid more effective, although it notes an apparent shift in donor behaviour in developing countries away from harmonised and aligned practices (Chapter 5). Ireland would welcome reflection within the DAC on this trend.

In *One World, One Future* the government places greater emphasis on environmentally sustainable inclusive economic growth and climate change than was the case in the 2006 White Paper. Ireland should ensure that the strong emphasis on climate change

is combined with continued attention to environmental concerns, notably environmental sustainability as a cross-cutting issue. Given Ireland's limited experience and expertise in its new priority area of trade and economic growth, it is positive that it plans to develop a policy for promoting inclusive, pro-poor economic growth (Gol, 2014).

The priority areas of action in *One World, One Future* (Figure 2.1), are consistent with past priorities. The social sectors and HIV/AIDS are clustered under "essential services".

Figure 2.1 Ireland's strategic and geographic priorities



Source: Gol (2013b), *One World, One Future – Ireland's Policy for International Development*, DFAT, Dublin.

Decision-making

Indicator: The rationale for allocating aid and other resources is clear and evidence-based

One World, One Future provides a sound rationale and basis for making decisions on where to focus Ireland's aid, voice and capacity up to 2017. However, Ireland needs clear, and feasible, guidance for implementing its commitment to a sharper prioritisation of where it will concentrate efforts to achieve the strategic objectives. A strong focus on Sub-Saharan Africa is a key feature of its development co-operation and there is political backing for addressing fragility. The planned update of Ireland's strategy and rationale for allocating aid to multilateral organisations will increase the transparency of its funding decisions. This new strategy should apply to all government departments allocating aid to multilateral organisations.

There is a clear rationale for allocating aid to channels and countries, but insufficient guidance to ensure a good match between priorities and resources

The goals and priority areas of action outlined in *One World, One Future* provide a clear rationale and basis for allocating Ireland's aid and focusing its voice and capacity. Development and humanitarian criteria² drive aid allocations while the overarching Africa Strategy guides the nature and scope of engagement in key African partner countries. A rigorous approach to results-based management also fits into its approach to allocating resources by providing evidence for selecting partners that can deliver results (Chapter 6).

Nevertheless, the Development Co-operation Division (DCD) faces an important challenge: it needs to get the right balance between a positive culture of enthusiasm to engage in new partnerships and initiatives and, in a constrained human resource setting, being realistic about what it can deliver effectively. *One World, One Future* emphasises the need to sharpen the way Ireland concentrates its aid.³ More strategic guidance that helps staff prioritise and deepen strategic engagement with key partners could help rationalise delivery of the programme, while also containing the risk of over-committing. The purpose of the draft Framework for Action,⁴ which is a work-in-progress, is to concentrate the programme around the policy's priorities (Irish Aid/DFAT, 2014). However, it is very ambitious. It sets out an extensive range of priority actions (155 in total) for delivering a more focused programme. According to DCD, it is developing guidance to prioritise and sequence the delivery of the draft Framework for Action. This guidance, once delivered, can fill an important gap.

DFAT appears to be pursuing a differentiated and pragmatic approach to implementing its Africa Strategy,⁵ which fits into its wider responsibility of trade promotion through Ireland's network of Embassies. It could, however, clarify further the level of ambition it expects from its embassies in the key partner countries so that efforts match the opportunities that these countries present for Irish businesses and do not undermine capacity to implement the core priority of reducing poverty. The current review of Ireland's foreign policy offers an opportunity to set out clearly the parameters of its differentiated approach to implementing the Africa Strategy (DFAT, 2014).

The policy concentrates on Sub-Saharan Africa and on addressing fragility

Sub-Saharan Africa continues to be an explicit geographical priority for Ireland's development co-operation (Figure 2.1). Ireland is phasing out its programme in Timor-Leste and plans to increase the share of bilateral aid going to its key partner countries.

There is strong political backing for addressing fragility. Ireland plans to reorient its efforts towards developing countries that are experiencing greater degrees of hunger, fragility and instability because of conflict, disaster, or the harmful effects of climate change (Gol, 2013b: iv). Fragility is also an area of interest for the Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group.

The next multilateral review will examine how the focus on fragility can be pursued through multilateral partnerships. Ireland has clearly implemented its strategy for Sierra Leone and Liberia, which was referred to as "bilateral programmes in incubation" in the last peer review. In 2009 it was already thinking about transitioning from humanitarian assistance to development co-operation through a pragmatic blend of the two forms of assistance (OECD, 2009). Sierra Leone is now a partner country and engagement with Liberia is deepening. While there is good political support for working in these difficult contexts, maintaining political appreciation of the risks is critical for success.

The planned multilateral review provides an opportunity to set out the rationale and strategy for multilateral co-operation and to make it whole-of-government

Ireland's current policy for multilateral co-operation, as outlined in its development and foreign policies, focuses essentially on overall principles. The multilateral system is particularly important to Ireland for its norm-setting and convening role and its capacity with respect to a diverse range of development co-operation issues. Ireland adds value to its multilateral policy engagement by sharing experiences and lessons from its country programmes, for example through the written comments it provides ahead of meetings of the European Development Fund.

Nevertheless, while government departments – notably foreign affairs and finance – providing support to multilateral organisations emphasise the strategic and opportunistic approach to deciding what to support, they also recognise that Ireland has limited resources and capacity to finance a broad range of organisations and themes.⁶ A more explicit, whole-of-government multilateral strategy could clarify Ireland's priorities for multilateral co-operation; strengthen coherence and reinforce synergies between activities supported; and increase the transparency of Ireland's support to the multilateral system. Multilateral organisations consulted for the peer review and Irish non-governmental organisations (NGOs) would welcome more information on Ireland's support.⁷

The objectives of the planned multilateral review (to be conducted in 2014) are to ensure that this support is fully aligned with its strategic goals and is as effective as possible. According to DFAT, the review will be an input for updating the rationale for selecting key multilateral partners⁸ and strengthening synergies with its bilateral programme. The rationale could also explain the principles and criteria that will be applied to decisions on core and non-core contributions to multilateral organisations, which saw the greatest cuts in 2009 (Chapter 3).

According to its development policy, Ireland hopes to increase strategic engagement with the World Bank, which it sees as an important partner for sustainable and inclusive growth. Close co-ordination between Irish Aid, the Department of Finance and embassies for key meetings of international financial institutions and good co-operation with the Chair of the regional grouping in which Ireland sits help ensure that its strategic policy points are raised with the World Bank. However, the mission in Washington lacks specific capacity on development issues. Ireland should consider how it can reinforce the development expertise of missions to multilateral organisations, including in Washington.

Policy focus

Indicator: Fighting poverty, especially in LDCs and fragile states, is prioritised

Ireland's commitment to fighting poverty is firm and unquestionable. Poverty and fragility are formal criteria for selecting priority countries. Ireland has developed a comprehensive approach to recovery and resilience. It emphasises the need to address the state of society and to learn from significant experience in fragile contexts. Ireland is a strong leader internationally on gender equality and women's empowerment. It has clear policies with respect to its four cross-cutting issues and specific guidance for integrating these issues. Its approach to mainstreaming continues to evolve on the basis of experience and good practice. The recommendation in the last peer review to share good practice (and capture and document lessons and outcomes) on mainstreaming has been implemented in relation to gender equality but only partially implemented for the other cross-cutting priorities.

A robust focus on building the resilience of vulnerable poor people in least developed countries

Poverty reduction and supporting achievement of the MDGs is the primary focus of Ireland's development co-operation. This is evident in its choice of key partner countries (Figure 2.1) and its consistent policy focus on "tackling not just the effects of poverty, hunger and insecurity in developing countries but also addressing the root causes so that [Ireland] can help people to lift themselves out of poverty" (Gol, 2013b: 11). Reaching the most vulnerable people and building their resilience cascades down from overall policies to sectoral and thematic policies (Gol, 2013b). This was in strong evidence during the peer review team's field visit to Malawi.

In its efforts to support sustainable solutions to hunger, Ireland invests across multiple sectors, with improving nutrition as a common thread.⁹ In pursuing an integrated approach to development, as seen in Malawi, Ireland engages in several sectors at the national and local levels through a range of partners (Chapter 5). A challenge that needs to be managed carefully in the embassies is identifying the areas of national policy where Ireland can add most value while also managing partnerships that have strong capacity building elements.

Poverty and fragility are formal criteria for selecting priority countries

Poverty and fragility are formally incorporated in Ireland's criteria for selecting partner countries, with the first criterion being "the level of poverty, fragility, and inequality in the country". Ireland's nine key partner countries are among the world's poorest and several are also recognised as fragile (Figure 2.1).

Ireland takes a comprehensive approach to recovery and resilience

Irish engagement in new, fragile situations often starts with humanitarian programming, followed by a comprehensive approach to recovery (Chapter 7). The overall focus on resilience helps bind humanitarian and stability programmes together towards a common goal; for example, humanitarian issues and risks are systematically integrated into country strategies, allowing Ireland to address the root causes of crises. A range of tools, including a stability fund and flexible, multiannual grants, help Ireland implement this approach.

Ireland emphasises the need to address the state of society, and to learn from its significant experience in fragile contexts

Ireland has very recently approved a new policy brief on fragile states and situations. Its approach to fragility is based on the idea of “situations of fragility” (areas where the social contract is insufficiently resilient). Ireland feels this concept captures more clearly the broad spectrum of country experiences and the need to look beyond the government towards the state of society, in order to properly assess and address fragility. This approach, which is very much in line with the Fragile States Principles (OECD, 2007), is informed by learning from Ireland's long experience in fragile contexts, including ten years of programming in Timor-Leste, and significant programmes in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Peacebuilding and statebuilding goals are recognised in the fragility policy brief. Ireland is encouraged to share its lessons and the results of on-going evaluations, especially in Timor-Leste, with other donors.

There is clear policy commitment and guidance for mainstreaming the four cross-cutting issues; implementation of policies should be monitored systematically

Ireland remains committed to mainstreaming gender equality, environmental sustainability, HIV/AIDS and good governance. A comprehensive package of policies, dedicated budgets and advisors, guidelines, programming tools, targeted research (e.g. on gender based violence¹⁰), learning platforms and training maintains a focus on integrating these cross-cutting issues into the programme.¹¹ As President of the EU Council, Ireland played a crucial role in clearly articulating cross-cutting issues in the EU Council conclusions on the Post 2015 development framework.

Since the last peer review, Ireland has consistently played an important agenda-setting role on gender equality and women's empowerment. For example, it co-chaired the DAC's Gendernet in 2011 and 2012, called for the formation of UN Women, and was a powerful force behind the stronger donor focus on tackling violence against women.

Ireland has also increased competencies on the four cross-cutting issues through capacity building and by making these issues an integral component of the country strategy paper process.¹² It has, however, only partially implemented the recommendation of the last peer review on cross-cutting issues. The annual monitoring report on implementing the Gender Policy is an excellent example identifying good practice. Monitoring exercises could also be undertaken for the other cross-cutting policies.

Through vulnerability assessments for country strategy papers, Ireland has introduced an innovative and holistic approach to bringing out cross-cutting issues and identifying how they interact with poverty. This approach, as seen in Malawi, helps ensure that the cross-cutting issues are rooted in programmes (Annex C).

Integrating cross-cutting issues continues to be work-in-progress for Ireland, as it is for most DAC members. Irish officials are aware of some of the challenges that need to be managed. These include, for example, maintaining specialist staffing and building up available resources, capacity and understanding of the issues to ensure staff are capable of implementing ambitious cross-cutting policies.

Notes

1. The objective of the foreign policy review in 2014 was to update Ireland's foreign policy statement and ensure that the government was equipped with the right mix of policies and instruments to promote values and interests in a complex and changing international environment (DFAT, 2014). The consultation for the foreign policy review sought views on how Ireland's commitment to international development could be better reflected in its foreign policy (DFAT, 2014: 9).
2. Factors are (i) the level of poverty, fragility and inequality in the country; (ii) commitment to human rights, accountability, and prevention of corruption; (iii) Ireland's history of partnership and the added value its presence would bring; (iv) the likelihood of achieving sustainable results for people living in poverty; (v) commitment to exiting from dependence on aid.
3. According to One World, One Future, Irish Aid needs to prioritise further and to focus even more intently on the results it wants to achieve and on getting value for money, especially given the domestic context of public expenditure reform and continued budgetary cutbacks (Gol, 2013b).
4. The draft Framework for Action was approved by the Minister for State for Trade and Development in April 2014.
5. Ireland states clearly in One World, One Future that it will implement the Africa Strategy and expand ties with African countries under the priority area of action "trade and economic growth", notably in East and South Africa. It also states that it will have different development relationships in key partner countries, according to needs and opportunities, addressing the causes of acute hunger where needed and building stronger economic relations where possible (Gol, 2013b).
6. According to Irish officials, hunger, gender equality, fragility, sustainable and inclusive growth, climate change, governance and transparency, and UN reform are the main priorities.
7. The Irish Aid Annual Report 2012 (Irish Aid/DFAT, 2013) provides a good overview of total flows to multilateral organisations and some information about activities. There is limited information, however, on results achieved or success stories in partner countries. Irish NGOs find it is unclear how allocations are made to multilaterals and on what basis (Trócaire, 2014).
8. The Irish Aid Annual Report 2012 (Irish Aid/DFAT, 2013) refers to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (or UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and World Health Organization (WHO), as well as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and UN Women.
9. Ireland's approach to addressing hunger and building resilience focuses on working with partners and a range of interlinked measures from the level of the smallholder farmer to research on agriculture, state level regulations on access to land and markets, being climate smart and nutrition sensitive, and working internationally to ensure organisations prioritise and invest in fighting hunger and building resilience (Irish Aid/DFAT, 2013: 8-10).
10. See, for example: www.gbv.ie/learning-briefs-from-the-consortiums-learning-and-practice-days/.

11. These include: the Irish Aid Mainstreaming Strategy; the managing for results tools and processes which present a common approach to addressing all four cross-cutting issues; Ireland's commitment to allocate EUR 100 million to HIV/AIDS and health issues; and dedicated central budgets of EUR 900 000 for governance and gender. The environmental advisor has a central budget of EUR 3.2 million per year.
12. For example, a review of Irish Aid's Environmental Partnerships Programme 2009-2011 found that the programme heightened staff awareness and expertise on environmental matters. Training ensured embassy staff were better placed to mainstream environment.

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Chapter 3: Allocating Ireland's official development assistance

Overall ODA volume

Indicator: The member makes every effort to meet ODA domestic and international targets

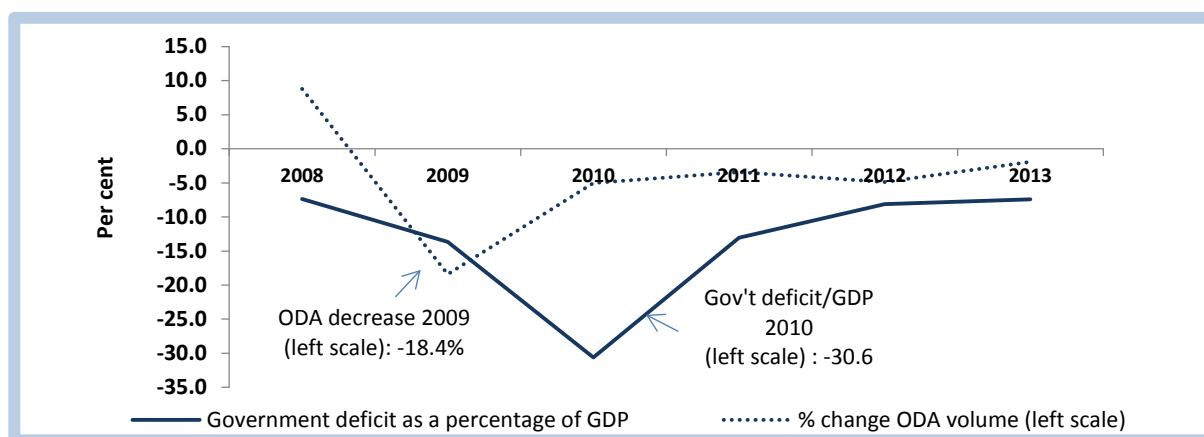
The solid commitment and efforts of the government, backed by Irish taxpayers, to meet Ireland's ODA targets during a tough economic period is impressive. Ireland's ODA budget declined substantially following the last peer review and did not manage to reach 0.7% ODA/GNI by 2012. However, Ireland did meet its 2010 aid target of 0.51%. It remains committed to meet the 0.7% ODA/GNI target and can reinforce its credibility with respect to meeting this target by defining a plan and timeline. Ireland complies with DAC recommendations on aid. However, it could improve the timeliness and quality of its statistical reporting on aid to the OECD.

Ireland remains committed to meeting its 0.7% ODA/GNI and other aid targets

In 2013 Ireland's net ODA was USD 822 million (preliminary data), the equivalent of 0.45% of gross national income (GNI). At 0.45%, its ratio of ODA to GNI ranked tenth among DAC donors in 2013. Ireland is committed to meeting the 0.7% ODA/GNI target (Gol, 2013a, 2014). However, the severe financial crisis from which it is starting to recover, has prevented it from meeting its original 2012 deadline, and the 2015 deadline set out in the 2011 Programme for Government, for reaching the 0.7% ODA/GNI target (Gol, 2011).

Ireland's strategic approach to managing a declining aid budget is commendable and provides valuable lessons (Box 3.1). Its ODA decreased by just 1.9% in 2013 compared to 2012. This decrease compares favourably to the 2010-12 three-year average decrease of 4.4% and the 18.4% decrease in 2009 (Figure 3.1). Overall, between 2008 and 2013 Ireland's ODA/GNI ratio declined from a peak of 0.59% in 2008 to 0.45% in 2013. Aid volume decreased by 30%.

Figure 3.1 Trends in Ireland's ODA compared to government deficit to GDP, 2008-13

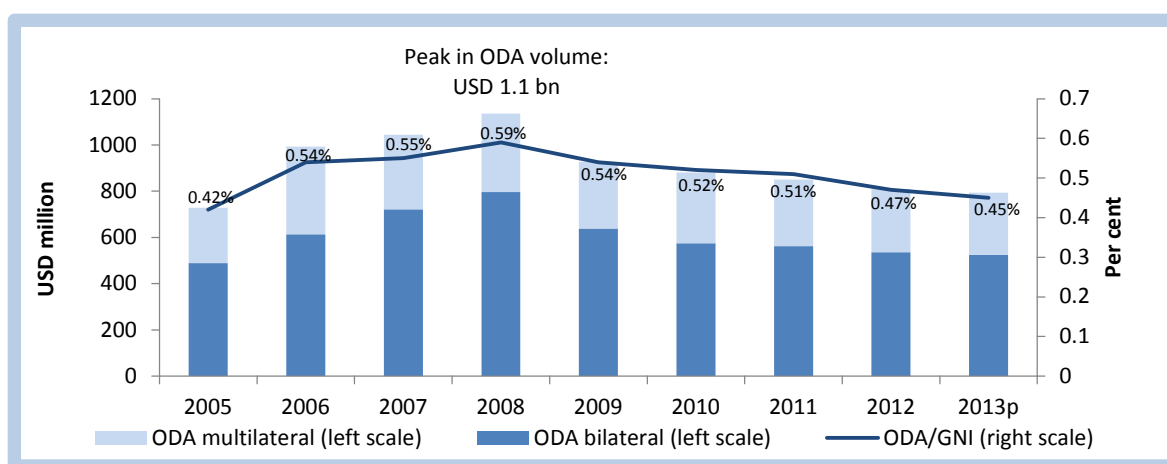


Source: OECD DAC Statistics and Economics: Key tables from OECD - ISSN 2074-384x - © OECD 2013.

Reinforce credibility for meeting the ODA target by defining a plan and timeline

Ireland has a good track record from the period prior to the financial crisis of increasing ODA to reach its targets, however it needs to reverse the more recent trend of declining aid volume and ratio of ODA to GNI (Figure 3.2). It is committed to maintain ODA expenditure at current levels up to 2015 and to move towards the 0.7% target when the economy improves. This sends an important signal to developing countries and the international community about the strong priority Ireland gives to development co-operation. While Ireland continues to be bound by strict fiscal discipline rules,¹ it successfully exited the Troika programme in 2013 and its economy has returned to growth (see Context). It could therefore make its commitment to provide 0.7% of GNI as ODA more credible by planning how it will reach this target and committing to a new timeline.

Figure 3.2 Evolution in Ireland's ODA volume and ODA as a percentage of GNI, 2005-13



Source: OECD DAC Statistics; Note: p – preliminary data for 2013.

Ireland complies with DAC recommendations on aid; the quality of statistical reporting to DAC could improve

Ireland complies with the DAC recommendations on the terms and conditions of aid and on good pledging practice (OECD, 1978, 2011). While it conforms to the rules for statistical reporting on ODA, the timeliness of reporting could be improved and there is scope to improve the quality of reporting on some data.

Managing aid predictability while the domestic budgetary environment continues to change is challenging. Nevertheless, Ireland performs well on annual and multi-annual predictability. It does this by delivering on its commitments and staying within the budget envelope attached to country strategy papers. Seven of the nine partner country governments surveyed in the OECD/UNDP 2014 Busan monitoring report, had knowledge of Ireland's forward spending plans up to 2016.²

To give partner governments a fuller picture of the aid flowing into the country, Ireland requires NGOs, through its headquarter-funded Programme Grant scheme, to disclose funding information in partner countries. Efforts are also underway to give more visibility to the whole of Ireland's ODA support to partner countries by providing information on all aid flows on Irish Aid's intranet. Irish Aid might also consider providing this information on its website and embassy websites.

Core multilateral budgeting is annual, as in most DAC countries. When reviewing its approach to multilateral co-operation, Ireland could consider providing partners with indicative multi-annual budgets.

Box 3.1 Managing a declining aid budget while trying to optimise predictability

Ireland has managed significant aid cuts since the last peer review, strategically and in a balanced manner, by safeguarding aid predictability and long-term commitments to its priority partner countries. It has taken these key strategic decisions:

- Ireland made a one-time cut in 2009 and a major effort to stabilise the budget in following years (Figure 3.2).
- It made a clear decision at the start to protect the budgets of key partner countries, but to stagger its funding over a longer period to enable full disbursement.
- It communicated quickly with partners whose budgets would be cut significantly, such as the UN agencies receiving earmarked aid. Through its engagement in executive boards, Ireland alerted partners to the planned cuts. It decided to pay its full contribution at the beginning of the year as an act of confidence.
- It increased the focus on the quality of its development co-operation, adjusting organisational structures to increase efficiencies and exiting sectors, initiatives and organisations which did not match its priorities.
- It pushed forward implementation of its results frameworks, so that funding decisions could be taken on the basis of results.

Lessons:

- The cutback obliged Irish Aid to prioritise more and concentrate resources on core priorities.
- Political leadership, and parliamentary and public support, helped steady the aid budget from 2009.
- Strategic planning and good communication are important to reassure partners that programmes will not be closed, and local staff that jobs are secure. It is also important to provide a clear message about budget growth to donor partners and ministries of finance.

Source: Interviews held by the Peer Review team in Ireland.

Bilateral ODA allocations

Indicator: Aid is allocated according to the statement of intent and international commitments

Ireland's ODA allocations provide an excellent reflection of its policy priorities to fight hunger and poverty for vulnerable people, as well as its commitment to the MDGs and the least developed countries. Official development assistance is strongly concentrated on Sub-Saharan Africa and least developed countries, and on fighting hunger.

The aid programme concentrates on Sub-Saharan Africa and least developed countries

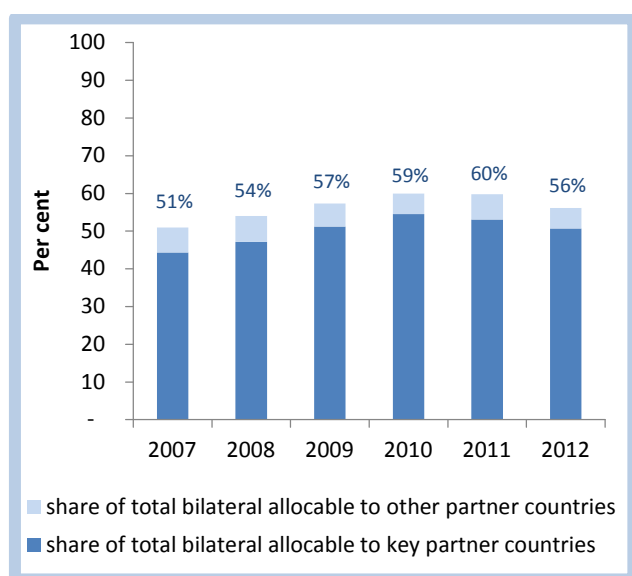
Ireland has increased the proportion of ODA delivered to its priority countries as recommended by the previous peer review. However, the share decreased in 2012 when the Timor-Leste programme closed and aid to Uganda was reduced due to the corrupt diversion of Irish Aid funds (Figure 3.3).

The high geographic concentration of Ireland's ODA on the world's poorest countries is a good reflection of its strategic priorities. Ireland's aid allocations perform well against several measures:

- 81% (2008-12 average) of total bilateral aid allocable by region went to Sub-Saharan Africa (Annex B, Table 3).
- In 2012 it disbursed the equivalent of 0.24% of GNI to LDCs, which is above the target of 0.15% (Annex B, Table 6). In addition, 52% of total aid in 2012 was allocated to LDCs, making Ireland the highest ranking DAC member against this measure (Annex B, Table 6).
- Country programmable aid (41% in 2012) combined with humanitarian assistance and core aid to NGOs make up 88% of Ireland's gross bilateral ODA, revealing a high focus on these three components of ODA. In addition, 42% of its aid programmed at country level consisted of contributions to pooled programmes and funds, which is a good reflection of Ireland's commitment to harmonisation.

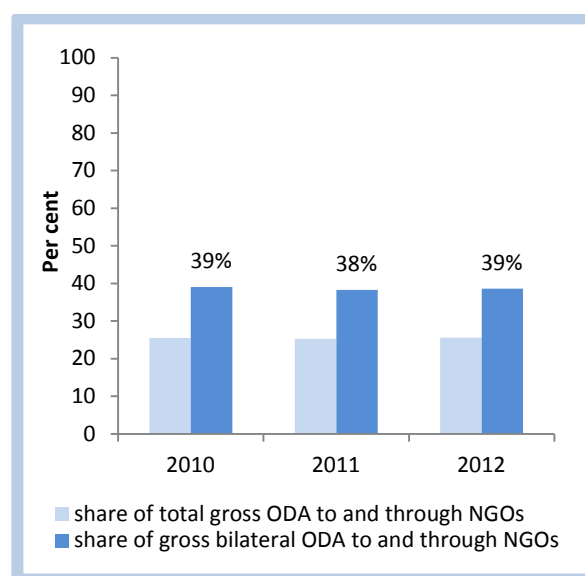
As shown in Figure 3.4, NGOs are major implementing partners for Ireland: on average, 39% of bilateral ODA was channelled to and through international, Irish and developing country NGOs between 2010 and 2012. To ensure that aid delivered through NGOs is effective, Ireland has strengthened its funding criteria since the last peer review (Chapter 5). Moreover, as seen in Malawi, Ireland participates in basket funds for civil society as a way to increase the capacity of CSOs and reduce administrative costs for the embassy as well as partner organisations.³

Figure 3.3 Share of Ireland's bilateral ODA allocated to its main partner countries, 2007-12



Source: DAC Statistics.

Figure 3.4 Share of Irish ODA channelled to and through NGOs, 2010-12



Source: DAC Statistics.

Sector allocations reflect strategic priorities, with scope to rationalise the number of activities it supports

Ireland's overall sectoral allocations reflect its commitment to fight poverty, with more than 50% of bilateral disbursements allocated to social infrastructure and services in 2011-12 (Annex B, Table 5). Within this social sector there is a strong focus on government and civil society (16%), health (13%) and education (9%). Support to agriculture has increased slightly since the last peer review, accounting for 9% of bilateral aid in 2011-12 compared to the 2006-10 average of 7%. Humanitarian aid allocations remain stable at 18% of disbursements in 2011-12 compared to the 19% average in 2006-10. Ireland has also reached its target of 20% of the Irish Aid budget to fight hunger.⁴

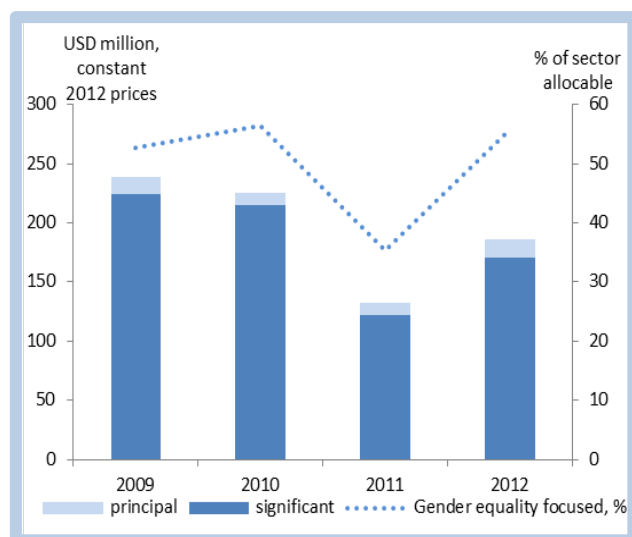
Sectoral and thematic priorities are reflected in Ireland's allocations at partner country level. In its key partner countries Ireland supports the areas of social infrastructure, agriculture, government and civil society, education and health.

A key aid allocation challenge for Ireland, as also noted in Chapters 2 and 5, is "to rationalise its engagements, programmes and activities for maximum value for money and impact" (Gol, 2013a: 27). OECD data on the fragmentation of sector allocable country programmable aid show that Ireland is a significant partner in an average of 2.5 sectors in its key partner countries. However, the data also show that it supports an average of seven sectors in these countries, giving the impression that the aid portfolio is fragmented. At the same time, Ireland's country strategy papers and annual reports for key partner countries show that it tends to focus on three to four thematic areas and these often require a multi-sector approach to be effective (Chapter 2).

Funding for government programmes also appears to be quite focused. In Tanzania, for example, 60% of Ireland's country strategy budget went to two sectors and the poverty reduction budget support in 2013.⁵ Over 50% of the country strategy budget in Ethiopia went to two pooled funds.⁶ In addition, Ireland supported 21 activities/partners with an average budget EUR 420 000 in Tanzania. In Malawi, Irish Aid was supporting 27 projects/activities in 2014 with an average EUR 480 000 per activity under the three pillars of Agriculture and Nutrition, Resilience, and Governance. As recognised by the government, there is scope to consolidate and rationalise activities and partnerships.

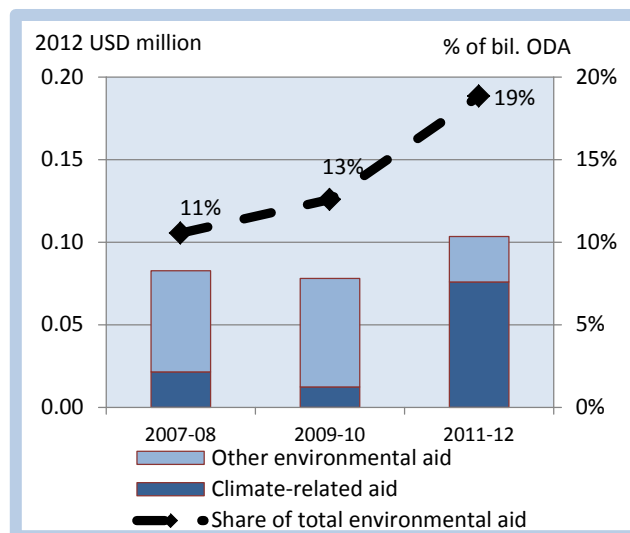
ODA commitments to activities in which gender equality and women's empowerment are principal or significant objectives have been stable since the last peer review, averaging 50% of aid allocated by sector, although the share dipped to 35% in 2011 (Figure 3.5). Environment-related aid as a share of bilateral sector allocable aid and in volume has increased from 13% in 2009-10 to 19% in 2011-12 (Figure 3.6). This is lower than the DAC average of 23.3%. There is scope for Ireland to improve performance in this area, given its strong policy focus on climate change and sustainable development.

Figure 3.5 ODA for gender equality and women's empowerment, Ireland, 2009-12



Source: DAC Statistics.

Figure 3.6 Environment-related aid, Ireland, 2007-12



Source: DAC Statistics⁷.

Multilateral ODA channels

Indicator: The member uses the multilateral aid channels effectively

Ireland's multilateral allocations reflect its policy, with priority given to supporting the core operations of multilateral partners. Ireland is delivering on its commitment to help increase multilateral effectiveness through joint initiatives and other targeted support.

Multilateral aid allocations generally reflect thematic priorities

Ireland continues to meet (and has exceeded) its target of allocating 30% of total ODA to multilateral organisations. The three-year average for 2010-13 was 34% of total ODA. At the same time, the volume of multilateral aid has declined by 19% since 2008 (from USD 397 million in 2008 to USD 272 million in 2012; Annex B, Table 2).

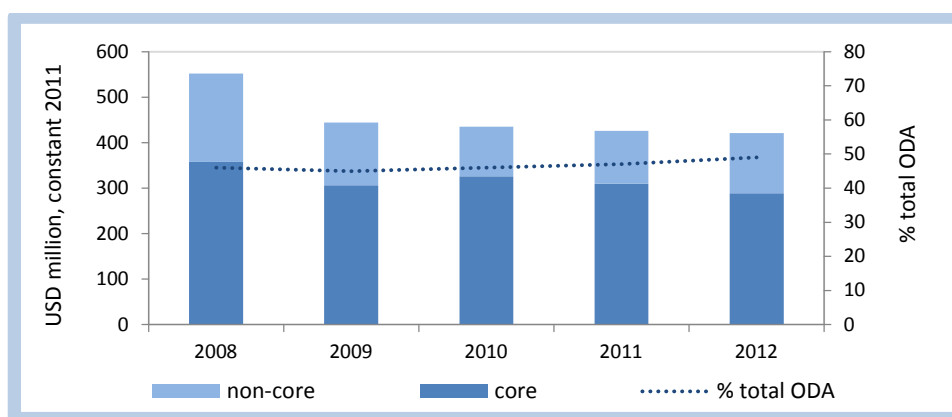
In 2012 Ireland allocated USD 272 million as core contributions to multilateral organisations, of which USD 128 million (47%) was allocated to EU institutions, USD 88 million to UN agencies and USD 31 million to the World Bank Group. Despite the financial crisis, it maintained its EUR 90 million allocation to IDA 16 and IDA 17⁸ in line with its commitment to shoulder its share of the burden. In addition, Ireland's non-core contributions to multilateral organisations, which are mainly allocated from its bilateral aid budget, totalled USD 124 million in 2012. When core and non-core contributions are combined, the equivalent of 49% of Ireland's total ODA is delivered through the multilateral system (Figure 3.7). Non-core contributions decreased significantly between 2008 and 2010 (by 31% in real terms), reflecting the government's decision to cut contributions to UN agencies (Box 3.1), but they started to increase in 2011.⁹

While Ireland does not have a formal list of priority multilateral organisations, the main recipients of Irish multilateral aid reflect its strategic priorities well (Annex B, Table 2 and

Irish Aid/DFAT, 2013b). About 50% of Ireland's core multilateral contributions are provided through the EU and about one-third is channelled to UN funds and programmes – with UNDP, the World Food Programme (WFP) and UNICEF as the top recipients of Ireland's core and non-core contributions in 2012. Comparatively high allocations to the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria (UNAIDS) (USD 15 million in 2012) reflect Ireland's commitment to addressing HIV/AIDs.

At the same time, the links between Irish policy priorities and the high share (43%) of contributions to “other UN agencies” are less clear (Annex B, Table 2). Moreover, Ireland is a member of the Asian Development Bank but is not a member of the African Development Bank (AfDB). Given its focus on Africa and commitment to greater engagement with African and regional institutions, the Department of Finance is looking into joining the AfDB.¹⁰ The planned review of Ireland's multilateral contributions can help increase clarity on these other contributions and will be a useful basis for deciding on future allocations (Chapter 2).

Figure 3.7 Core and non-core multilateral allocations, Ireland, 2008-12



Source: DAC Statistics.

An active supporter of joint efforts to increase multilateral effectiveness

In line with its commitment to support multilateral reform, effectiveness and efficiency (DFAT, 2010), Ireland engages actively in joint efforts to improve multilateral effectiveness at the global level (e.g. MOPAN and the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation) and in partner countries (e.g. One UN in Tanzania, Vietnam and Zambia, and provision of Irish young professionals to the UN resident co-ordinator's office). By giving feedback to headquarters on the performance of multilateral partners, embassies also contribute to headquarters decision-making.

Ireland states that "providing funding for core operations is crucial to enable UN partner agencies to deliver on their commitments and provide immediate responses to humanitarian disasters" (Irish Aid/DFAT, 2013b). Its support to strengthening the evaluation capacity of the UN's quadrennial comprehensive policy review and its emphasis on building a fully operational UN Women, reflecting the strong gender equality focus of Ireland's development co-operation, are particularly appreciated by multilateral partners.

Notes

1. For example, under the Fiscal Responsibility Act aggregate expenditure can only grow in line with volume growth of GNP, the government budget should be balanced by 2018, and work must continue towards a 60% debt to GDP level.
See: www.finance.gov.ie/sites/default/files/John%20McCarthy%20-%20post-troika.pdf and www.macgillsummerschool.com/after-the-troika-very-tight-fiscal-discipline-will-be-necessary/.
2. Multi-annual predictability is measured in the survey according to the degree to which partner governments are aware of a donor's future aid spending plans on a three-year basis. The two countries where there are no forward-looking plans to financial year 2016 are Malawi, which is currently developing a new country programme for the next four years, and Lesotho, which is no longer a key partner country for Ireland.
3. Along with other donors, Irish Aid funds civil society support programmes or mechanisms such as the Civil Society Support Programme in Ethiopia, the Tilitonse Fund in Malawi, the Civil Society Support Mechanism (MASC) in Mozambique, the Democratic Governance Fund in Uganda and the Zambia Governance Foundation in Zambia.
4. The target applies to the budget managed by DFAT – Vote 27. Ireland's Information note on the 20% Hunger Target (DCD, June 2013) sets out a clear methodology for calculating the target in line with the recommendations of the Hunger Task Force. The methodology lists the types of expenditure which have a particular hunger focus or a significant impact on reducing hunger that will be counted, as well as those that will not be counted. Ireland met the target in 2011 and 2012.
5. Agriculture Sector Development Programme (EUR 4 million), Health Basket Fund (EUR 6.95 million) and Poverty Reduction Budget Support (EUR 8 million).
6. Productive Safety Nets Programme (EUR 11 million) and Health MDG Performance Fund (EUR 4 million).
7. The figure nets out the overlaps between Rio and environment markers: it shows climate-related aid as a sub-category of total environmental aid. Biodiversity and desertification are also included (either overlapping with climate-related aid, or as additional – other – environmental aid) but are not separately identified for the sake of readability of the chart. "Climate-related aid" covers both aid to climate change mitigation and to adaptation from 2010 onwards, but only mitigation aid pre-2010.
8. The most recent replenishment of the World Bank Group's International Development Association (IDA) resources, the seventeenth (IDA17), was finalised in December 2013.
9. According to DAC statistics, non-core allocations decreased in 2008-10 (year on year by 8%, 29% and 21%, respectively) but increased in 2011 and 2012 (by 7% and 14%, respectively). Overall there was a 22% increase in non-core to UN funds and programmes from 2011 to 2012 (the largest increase was to UNDP: +22%). It seems that a substantial share of those resources was allocated to respond to emergencies and crises; the share of non-core to humanitarian aid increased from 37% in 2011 to 45% in 2012.
10. An objective of the Department of Finance's 2014 business plan is to look into joining the African Development Bank.

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Chapter 4: Managing Ireland's development co-operation

Institutional system

Indicator: The institutional structure is conducive to consistent, quality development co-operation

Ireland's institutional structures enable it to deliver well co-ordinated, quality development co-operation. Since the last peer review, development co-operation has been further integrated into the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, enabling the Development Co-operation Division (DCD) to work more closely with other parts of the Department. However, the decentralisation of DCD to Limerick in 2008 has imposed additional transaction costs with regard to co-ordination and integration, which should be kept under review. The Development Co-operation Division has committed to standardise its management procedures to ensure it has a consistent approach across its partner countries. The rollout of these new procedures needs to be sequenced appropriately in light of Department-wide system reforms. It may also be useful to clarify further the roles and responsibilities between headquarters and the field under the new procedures.

There has been strong strategic leadership and management during challenging times

Ireland's institutional system continues to support effective implementation of its development co-operation policy. Strengthened strategic management of the Development Co-operation Division, during a challenging period of budget cuts and extensive public sector reforms, has been critical to enabling Irish Aid to maintain quality programming. The Division's senior management group, in particular, has met more regularly to review the Division's performance and provide critical guidance on future reforms and next steps since the onset of the ODA budget cuts.

Good institutional co-ordination overall, but the transaction costs of decentralisation need to be monitored

Compared to other DAC members, a relatively small number of governmental actors manage Ireland's development co-operation, making co-ordination fairly easy.¹ Since the last peer review, development co-operation has been further integrated into DFAT, as recommended by the 2008 Management Review of Irish Aid.² This integration has taken place at the same time as DFAT's mandate has been enlarged to incorporate trade promotion.³ As a result, one of the key aspects of integration⁴ has been the delegation of responsibility for trade promotion and political affairs in Africa to the Development Co-operation Division. Bringing the three policies for Africa – development, trade and foreign policy – under the mandate of one division has enhanced Ireland's ability to co-ordinate between different objectives and exploit synergies on the ground. Given Irish Aid's long-standing focus, expertise and networks in Africa, this makes sense. Attention needs to be paid, however, to ensuring that DCD - at headquarters and in the field - has sufficient capacity and expertise to deliver on this wider agenda while maintaining Ireland's high-quality development assistance.

Since the decentralisation of the Development Co-operation Division to Limerick in 2008, Ireland's development co-operation is, de facto, being managed from two locations. Whilst DFAT is managing the challenges of decentralisation with pragmatism, using

technologies that facilitate communication and providing flexible working arrangements so that staff can work from either city, the transaction costs still remain high.

For example, senior management and staff commute regularly between the two locations to ensure good co-ordination with the rest of DFAT, other government departments and Irish NGOs, most of which are based in Dublin. Ireland needs to keep the costs of this decentralisation under close review and continue to find pragmatic ways of reducing them.

DCD has committed to standardise management processes to ensure a consistent approach

Since the last peer review DFAT has reformed its structures for managing development co-operation, enhancing efficiencies and bolstering its access to independent external policy advice. In particular, it has merged its two multilateral units into one, consolidating capacity and creating a critical mass for strategic engagement in line with a suggestion of the last peer review. It has also replaced the Irish Aid Advisory Board with a new, independent non-executive body, the Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group, with a focused mandate to provide policy advice directly to the Minister for Trade and Development.⁵

DCD has also committed to standardise its management processes (Irish Aid, 2014), including for programming and risk management, and to clarify and streamline its quality assurance and oversight procedures. These reforms are crucial as Ireland currently tends to rely on informal processes to guide much of its work. This can lead to variations in its programming approach across partner countries and poses problems for carrying out quality assurance. A recent report by the Evaluation and Audit Unit (2014), for example, raised concerns that as a result of a lack of consistent approach to programme management, some partner country offices were not sufficiently addressing risk at the individual programme component level.

Ireland needs to pay attention to ensuring that in achieving a more standardised approach so that it does not lose its ability to be a flexible and responsive partner (Chapter 5). In addition, DCD should take care in sequencing the rollout of this reform in order to ensure coherence between this and other system reforms taking place across DFAT.⁶

As part of its drive to establish clear management standards, DCD could benefit from clarifying further the roles and responsibilities between headquarters and the field. Ireland has decentralised its development assistance, delegating programming and financial decision-making authority to its embassies in key partner countries. It has a high proportion of staff working in the field, relative to other DAC members.⁷ The majority are local staff clearly empowered to manage programmes and represent Ireland in technical and policy dialogues. However, it is not completely clear what the division of labour is between headquarters and the field, particularly with regard to the embassies' relationship with the partner country section at headquarters.⁸

Innovation and behaviour change

Indicator: The system supports innovation

Ireland's organisational structures and systems are regularly reviewed and reforms are initiated where necessary. Ireland is an innovative development provider. Its culture and systems enable staff to test new ideas with an eye to scaling them up if successful.

Good flexibility to reform systems and structures at DFAT

Ireland is able to reform its organisational structures and systems in response to new priorities and in anticipation of changing needs. It regularly undertakes reviews to assess the appropriateness of current structures and systems, and is able to implement reform on the basis of these findings and monitor progress.

Ireland is an innovative provider of development assistance

Ireland has a valued reputation among its partners as an innovative development provider. DCD's culture and systems enable staff to pilot programmes on a small scale in order to test out new ideas, modalities and partnerships, with an eye to getting its partners (often with access to larger resources) to scale up those that are successful. A 2010 staff survey noted that over half of respondents agreed that DCD, as a whole, encourages continuous improvement and innovation (Mercer, 2010). As for other DAC members, scaling-up innovative projects is challenging. To make the most of innovation, Ireland could monitor its experience and the bottlenecks to taking innovative projects to scale.

Human resources

Indicator: The member manages its human resources effectively to respond to field imperatives

Ensuring that management of human resources can effectively respond to field imperatives continues to be a challenge for Irish development co-operation. While the Development Co-operation Division has protected and even marginally increased staffing numbers in the face of cross-government public sector staffing and salary cuts, staffing levels and skills still need to be reinforced. DFAT should have a clear strategy for human resources management and for ensuring necessary skills are in the right places, including in fragile situations. While steps have been taken to improve training, the Department needs to give this area greater priority, with appropriate incentives in place for developing and strengthening competencies and expertise.

Ireland needs a clear strategy to manage human resources and ensure the right skills are in the right places

Since the last peer review, the Irish government has experienced a challenging period of public sector staffing and salary cuts (see Context). During this period DFAT has managed to protect DCD's staffing numbers. However, staffing levels and skills still need to be reinforced as suggested in the last peer review of Ireland.

DCD has been innovative in addressing staffing challenges, leveraging expertise through a public-service wide redeployment programme, recruiting a limited number of new development specialists, and establishing a Junior Professional Intern scheme. Nevertheless, more needs to be done to ensure it has appropriate staffing levels and competencies to deliver the development policy. For example, the current draft implementation plan for *One World, One Future* (Irish Aid/DFAT, 2014) highlights the need for greater staff capacity in the areas of human rights, fragile states and situations, and inclusive economic growth.

There is also scope to strengthen the effectiveness of human resource management in DFAT. The Department faces a number of challenges, which have also been identified by the organisational review conducted by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER, 2012). For example, DFAT's human resource unit comprises civil service and diplomatic staff rotating on a four-year basis, which makes it difficult to sustain institutional memory and have the requisite skills and expertise for managing human resources. To address this challenge, the Department would benefit from having access to non-

rotating human resource management expertise.

In order to ensure Ireland gets the right skills in the right places, including in fragile and conflict-affected situations, there is a need for more strategic workforce planning and appropriate staff incentives to work in difficult contexts. Staff management procedures are perceived to be ad hoc and to be applied inconsistently across the department (DPER, 2012). The planned new DFAT strategy for managing human resources provides an opportunity to address these challenges and could set out how DFAT, and DCD in particular, should plan for the skills and competencies, including succession planning, needed to deliver the programme.

Training and learning appears to be given greater priority by DFAT

Since the last peer review, DCD has invested in developing staff competencies both at headquarters and field level. It has also implemented the peer review recommendation to put in place a training strategy for the Division.⁹

Through its staff Performance Management and Development System, DFAT has strengthened the link between staff roles, organisational outputs and individual staff training needs. Nevertheless, many staff do not benefit from training. The principal constraint identified is lack of time. DCD's new Learning and Development Strategy (DCD, 2014) reflects a commitment to give greater priority to training, including by giving responsibility for its implementation to a member of the senior management group. It could also look at the incentives it can put in place to meet the objectives of the strategy, especially regarding on-the-job learning and mentoring given heavy workloads. To ensure the strategy is implemented effectively, DCD should set out a clear and focused annual learning and development plan that is adequately resourced and is based on an analysis of competencies required to implement *One World, One Future*.

Notes

1. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) is responsible for 80% of the ODA budget managed by its Development Co-operation Division (DCD). The remaining 20% comprises ODA eligible contributions from other government departments, notably the Department of Finance, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) and the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.
2. The review recommended that this be done in order to strengthen the programme as a key element of Irish foreign policy, and to provide greater policy coherence on a whole-of-government basis.
3. Other countries such as Canada, the Netherlands and, most recently, Australia have taken the same direction in their foreign aid policy. In October 2013 Denmark launched its Opportunity Africa initiative to boost its presence in the region through a combination of foreign policy, aid, and trade and investment.
4. A high-level steering group, chaired by the Department's Secretary-General, was established to oversee the process of integrating development policy into the Department. A cross-departmental team from the political division and DCD helped co-ordinate EU Presidency priorities on peace, security and conflict resolution. Other areas of integration include further integrating central corporate services at the Department level, although DCD still retains some functions, and extension of the Evaluation and Audit Unit's mandate to cover the whole Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (previously it covered only the activities of the Development Co-operation Division).
5. The former Irish Aid Advisory Board had a very broad mandate to provide oversight and policy advice and to undertake research functions. This was highlighted as problematic in the 2003 OECD DAC peer review. The Irish Management Review 2008 recommended the board be replaced by an independent, non-executive expert body.
6. The Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade is upgrading its business planning, budgeting and financial procedures as part of a government-wide initiative to improve public expenditure management.
7. In 2013, 68% of Ireland's development co-operation staff was in the field, compared to the DAC average of 50% stated in the OECD's Decentralisation Report (2013).
8. For example, it is unclear at present in *A Management Approach to Country Strategy Papers* (Irish Aid, 2013) whether the Head of Mission in the field or the Head of Partner Country section at headquarters is responsible for signing off on the final version of the country strategy paper that goes to a Programme Appraisal and Evaluation Group (PAEG) for sign-off. A recent review of country systems by the Department's Evaluation and Audit Unit (2013) also recommended that there is scope for greater clarity between the field and headquarters with regard to decision-making.
9. The Development Co-operation Division's produced in 2014 its *Learning and Development Strategy 2014 – 2017* which aims to set out a strategic approach to training and development within the Division. Training has been delivered to 100 staff members on managing for development results since 2008, and a considerable number of staff have been trained on how to undertake political economy analysis.

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Chapter 5: Ireland's development co-operation delivery and partnerships

Budgeting and programming processes

Indicator: These processes support quality aid as defined in Busan

Ireland's budgeting processes support multi-year predictability and flexibility. Its aid is aligned to partner countries' priorities, uses country systems as default and is fully untied. Risk management processes have been considerably strengthened since the last peer review within the Development Co-operation Division and across the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, but attention needs to be paid to ensuring a more standardised approach at the country level.

Ireland has predictable and flexible budgeting processes

Ireland has striven to be as predictable a partner as possible since the last peer review (Chapter 3). In line with its Busan commitments, it has multi-year indicative programme budgets for the majority of its bilateral aid.¹ Its budgeting process enables it to be responsive to partner needs and flexible and nimble in its programming. In Malawi Ireland was praised by its partners for its ability to find additional funds quickly to help replenish strategic grain reserves in 2010/11 in the face of country-wide food shortages. Attention, however, needs to be paid to ensuring financial reporting requirements from headquarters do not become too cumbersome and jeopardise this programme flexibility.²

To ensure greater consistency, Ireland is standardising its programming

Ireland has a clear process in place for developing its partner country strategies,³ which provide a solid framework for its programming. This process devotes considerable time⁴ to ensuring that the strategy is grounded on evidence-based analysis and aligned to partner country needs. It also actively encourages staff to draw on joint research where possible to reduce transaction costs. In Malawi, for example, Ireland took part in joint donor research, *Malawi Joint Country Analysis – Five Big Challenges* (Joint Donor Analysis, 2014), identifying future challenges facing the country.

However, while the country strategy process is well documented, Ireland does not have a standardised approach to programme management at the country level (EAU, 2014) leading to inconsistent approaches and quality across partner countries (Chapter 4). Ireland is in the process of standardising its programme management cycle to address this issue.

Country systems are used as default and a good mix of modalities is used

Ireland supports development that is locally owned and led, and its default position is to use country systems in line with commitments made in the Busan Partnership for Effective Development. According to the OECD/UNDP 2014 Progress Report, 82% of Ireland's aid to the government sector in seven of its key partner countries used partner countries' public financial management and procurement systems in 2013 (OECD/UNDP, 2014). Ireland has also put processes in place to strengthen its assessment of partner countries' public financial management systems.

Ireland uses a mix of aid modalities at the country level to spread risk. In 2012, according to the OECD Creditor Reporting System, it delivered 12% of its bilateral aid as general and sector budget support, the majority through sector budget support; 60% of its aid through core contributions and pooled funds; and 19% as project aid.

Box 5.1 Important efforts taken to strengthen Ireland's risk management systems since the last peer review

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has taken a number of steps to improve risk management processes. Appointment of a member of the senior management team as Chief Risk Officer has provided crucial leadership on the issue. A new risk policy is also being developed to set out the Department's approach to and process of risk management, including its link to the business planning process (DFAT, 2013). The Department is in the process of devising a new risk dashboard system to help identify any deterioration in the risk environment, so that appropriate action can be taken at an early stage. The risk dashboard system will ensure a dynamic approach to risk management and will be regularly reviewed by members of senior management, with a full formal risk assessment completed each year as part of the business planning process. Key departmental risks are also subject to independent reviews by the Evaluation and Audit Unit.

In the Development Co-operation Division, the largest spending division in the Department, steps have also been taken to reduce fiduciary risks and strengthen internal controls, including placing a professional qualified auditor in all key partner country embassies. Staff are now required to undertake public finance management assessments when choosing aid modalities, and to undertake corruption profiles to inform their programming.

Sources: DFAT (2013), "Risk Management Policy Working Document", November 2013, DFAT, Dublin; interviews held by the Peer Review team in Ireland.

Risk management is being upgraded; there is scope for a more standardised approach

Risk management systems are being upgraded (Box 5.1), predominately in response to a heightened domestic demand for government accountability but also in light of the misappropriation of Irish aid in Uganda as a result of a high level corruption scandal involving funds channelled through the Prime Minister of Uganda's Office in 2012. Importantly, within senior management there is a realistic acceptance that development risks have to be managed and cannot always be avoided. Maintaining this approach would help ensure Ireland's increased focus on risk does not stifle its ability to innovate.

There is scope for a more standardised approach to risk management, as recommended in a recent report by Ireland's Evaluation and Audit Unit which assessed the internal controls and risk management systems of all of the key partner countries. The report highlights, among other things, the need to pay greater attention to risks at the programme component and partner level in particular (DFAT/IA, 2014).

The Development Co-operation Division has issued new guidance on assessing and measuring corruption (Irish Aid, 2013b) as part of its drive to ensure corruption profiles are drawn up in each of the key partner countries. The policy highlights a zero-tolerance approach and calls on staff to draw on joint assessments of corruption to reduce transaction costs. Ireland has demonstrated in Malawi that when confronted with corruption scandals in partner countries, it makes an effort to ensure a co-ordinated response with other donors. For example, through its observership to the joint group on budget support it helped develop a set of jointly agreed performance indicators that the government of Malawi is required to meet in order for budget aid to be resumed (Annex C).

Irish aid is 100% untied

Ireland continues to be fully committed to untying its aid, and 100% of its aid was untied in 2012. This is in line with its international commitments made in Accra (HLF3, 2008) and Busan (HLF4, 2011). As the government delivers on the *Ireland and Africa – Our Partnership with a Changing Continent* (DFAT, 2011) and seeks to expand its trade relations with African countries, it will be important to ensure that it keeps its aid fully untied.

Ireland uses mutually agreed conditions

Conditions attached to Irish aid partnerships are mutually agreed with partners and are based on clear performance results and reporting requirements. In Malawi partners were satisfied with the level of conditionality set by Ireland. However, many partners did note that Ireland needed to do more to ensure that the number of conditions it applies does not increase and become burdensome when working in joint-funding partnerships with other donors.

Partnerships

Indicator: The member makes appropriate use of co-ordination arrangements, promotes strategic partnerships to develop synergies, and enhances mutual accountability

Ireland continues to excel in delivering effective aid. Its approach to operationalising the international aid effectiveness principles is good practice. It is valued as a trusted and long-term partner. Ireland is aware, however, that it could benefit from focusing on fewer partnerships in order to avoid overstretching staff capacity and diluting programme focus. It has a solid approach to working with civil society, and has put in place a new results-focused, multi-year funding mechanism which has been welcomed by civil society groups. More could be done, however, to improve dialogue in partner countries between Irish NGOs and embassy staff. Ireland has also indicated a desire to scale up its partnerships with the private sector in coming years. In order to do this, it will need to bolster its expertise and develop a strategic policy framework.

Ireland is an international leader on aid effectiveness, implementing best practice

Ireland remains an international leader on delivering effective aid. It makes maximum use of country-led co-ordination arrangements and provides two-thirds of its aid through programme-based approaches. It is also active in numerous joint programming arrangements. In Malawi, for example, it was part of the Agricultural Sector Wide Approach and the joint donor fund on Public Finance Management. Its approach to delivering the international aid effectiveness principles is good practice, and other DAC donors could learn from it (Box 5.2).

Ireland has met the last peer review's recommendations to engage partners and peers in implementing the Accra Agenda for Action (HLF3, 2008) at the country level. However, it has noted that implementing the international aid effectiveness commitments at the country level is increasingly challenging due to "a changing context for aid effectiveness" which has resulted in fewer incentives for donors to work together (see Box 5.1 in Gol, 2013a). Given the benefits of adhering to the aid effectiveness principles, Ireland needs to stay the course despite this challenging environment (Box 5.2).

Box 5.2 Understanding Ireland's success in delivering on its international aid commitments

Ireland's success in delivering on the international aid effectiveness agenda is largely a result of two factors. Firstly, it has institutionalised aid effectiveness, embedding its commitments into its policies, planning, programming, monitoring and evaluation processes. Secondly, it has articulated a clear business case for applying the principles of aid effectiveness. As a small donor, this approach has enabled Ireland to leverage its funding, have a greater voice in policy discussions and share risks. The business case is communicated throughout the organisation, providing an additional incentive to use the principles in delivery.

Source: interviews held by Peer Review team in Ireland and Malawi.

Ireland promotes mutual accountability	Ireland has shown leadership at the international level on promoting mutual accountability. It chaired the OECD DAC Working Party on Aid Effectiveness task team on mutual accountability from 2009 to 2011. It has also worked closely with the UN Development Co-operation Forum on enhancing mutual accountability and transparency through mapping progress across countries and developing a new more specific indicator to better define mutual accountability.
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Ireland is a trusted and valued partner, but there is a need for fewer partnerships; working with the private sector remains a work in progress	<p>Working in partnership is fundamental to Ireland's approach to development assistance. It has a solid reputation for building trust, developing sustainable relationships, and enhancing the capacity of its partners. However, attention needs to be paid to ensuring that in its enthusiasm to work with others Ireland does not engage in too many partnerships, overstressing staff capacity and diluting the focus of its aid programme. Ireland recognises this as a challenge and its new policy, <i>One World, One Future</i> (GoI, 2013b), calls for greater prioritisation of partners to achieve maximum impact and value for money. In Malawi, for example, the 2012 mid-term review report for Malawi called for "fewer and more manageable partnerships" in order to assist with a more focused programme (Irish Aid, 2012). The embassy has set a target to reduce the number of partners.</p>
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Since the last peer review, Ireland has signalled a desire to scale up its engagement with the private sector.⁵ This is an area where it has limited experience to date. It is currently piloting a number of new approaches, including setting up a small catalytic fund in Ethiopia to work with the local private sector to deliver Ireland's aid programme and piloting a EUR 2 million Africa Agri-Food Development Fund initiative in Kenya and Tanzania that seeks to develop partnerships between the Irish agri-food sector and African countries to support sustainable growth of the local food industry, as well as mutual trade between Ireland and Africa.⁶ However, there is no policy to guide staff in partnering with the private sector, as is the case for partnering with civil society.

Using relatively small amounts of money to pilot new approaches is sensible. Nevertheless, if Ireland is serious about scaling up its private sector partnerships it will need to bolster its expertise and develop a solid strategic framework that sets out its objectives, principles and ways of working with the private sector.

New results-focused, multi-year funding mechanisms for civil society

Civil society organisations are major partners for Ireland. To guide this relationship, Ireland has a comprehensive Civil Society Policy (Irish Aid, 2008) which includes support for establishing an enabling environment for CSOs and building Southern CSOs' capacity. It also has various funding mechanisms suitable for different types of civil society, including one dedicated to development education.

A feature of Ireland's support to NGOs is the distinction made between funding at partner country and headquarters level. At the partner country level, funding is restricted to local civil society and international NGOs in order to support Ireland's country strategy. Funding from headquarters, on the other hand, focuses primarily on Irish NGOs and does not support the country strategy explicitly. There is potential to better exploit the synergies between the objectives of the country strategy papers and NGO activities supported from headquarters. In addition, Irish NGOs in Malawi, for example, would welcome more strategic engagement and co-ordination with the Embassy (Annex C).

Since the last peer review, Ireland has put in place a new headquarter-managed Programme Grant for funding civil society with a strong focus on results and performance. This mechanism provides long-term un-earmarked funding using a transparent resource allocation model. It has been welcomed by the 16 Irish NGOs funded by it, as it enables them to improve their own results-based management systems. However, initial transaction costs have been high and the system has not yet managed to provide sufficient incentives for good performance. In the second roll-out of the system, Ireland could monitor transaction costs to ensure they fall (as is expected) and explore ways to incentivise good performance.

Fragile states

Indicator: Delivery modalities and partnerships help ensure quality

Ireland has a flexible, realistic, context-specific approach to delivering and measuring results in fragile contexts.

The guidance on planning and programming for fragile situations is comprehensive

The Development Co-operation Division has developed very comprehensive guidance on how to integrate the Fragile States Principles (OECD, 2007) into its country strategy policies; this guidance could usefully be shared with other donors. Ireland clearly takes the context as the starting point for strategic planning and programming and is not afraid to take on critical areas outside government priorities, such as education in Karamoja, a fragile context inside Uganda, and gender-based violence in Liberia. Political economy analysis often underpins the contextual analysis, and in certain circumstances an external analyst will be hired for additional research, deepening Ireland's understanding of the context. Ireland acknowledges the need for flexibility in planning and programming (recognising that the context can evolve rapidly) and thus has a shorter planning cycle in fragile contexts than in other partner countries.

Committed to donor co-ordination, Ireland will pool resources when it makes sense

Ireland is a member of the International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF), has signed up to the New Deal and is committed to co-ordinating with other donors, engaging, for example, in joint donor/government planning exercises in both Liberia and Sierra Leone. Ireland also recognises the benefits of pooling resources. It has done so, for example in Afghanistan and Iraq, but is rightly cautious that pooling of risk does not necessarily reduce risks and could lead donors into a false sense of security.

Funding choices are based on an assessment of government capacity and aim to retain programme flexibility

Ireland currently supports situations of fragility mostly through partnerships with NGOs and UN agencies, although there is an intention to provide more support through pooled mechanisms in support of joint strategies (Gol, 2013b). Ireland's approach, however, underlines the importance of presence on the ground, remaining actively involved in capacity building, and understanding the context rather than just providing funding through partners. Its choice of programming tools is based on an assessment of government capacity and consensus on policy priorities. Accordingly, Ireland supports fragile contexts with a mixed basket of funding mechanisms, allowing it the flexibility to adapt the programme and the means of delivery as the situation evolves. Examples of Ireland's funding tools include:

- In Liberia Ireland helped set up the health pool fund, a mechanism that allowed country-led prioritisation of funding, but with oversight by an external audit body.
- In Timor-Leste it supported pooled funding to provide budget support for civil servant salaries.
- In Zimbabwe it supported an HIV/AIDS programme focused on building local civil society and government capacity to deliver services without putting funds on budget.

Notes

1. In line with its Busan commitments, Ireland has developed indicative five-year country programme budgets for all but one of its key partner countries (HLF4, 2011). The majority of its bilateral aid given directly to civil society organisations from headquarters is on a three-year basis. As in the case of most DAC members, Ireland's multi-annual budgets are indicative and subject to annual parliamentary approval.
2. Staff in the field noted that reporting requirements have increased, with requests for detailed project level budget plans at the start of each year. This has the potential to restrict programme flexibility, something that is highly valued by Ireland's partners as a key asset of their approach.
3. Irish Aid (2013), A Results-based Management Approach to Country Strategy Papers, DFAT, Dublin.
4. Three months of a 10- to 12-month planning process are dedicated to analysis of the partner country context.
5. As seen in its new policy on international development, One World, One Future – Ireland's Policy for International Development (GoI, 2013b) and in Ireland and Africa – Our *Partnership* with a Changing Continent (DFAT, 2011).
6. The EUR 2 million Fund is currently being piloted in Tanzania and Kenya. The role of the Fund is to facilitate establishment of these partnerships and provide seed funding for initiatives which would complement the input of Irish private sector participants (financial, technical assistance or technology transfer). No aid money will be provided directly to the Irish private sector. Take-up of the Fund's financial resources has been limited, with only EUR 100 000 spent so far from a EUR 2 million budget.

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Chapter 6: Results and accountability of Ireland's development co-operation

Results-based management system

Indicator: A results-based management system is in place to assess performance on the basis of development priorities, objectives and systems of partner countries

Ireland has institutionalised management for development results to inform decisions and serve accountability needs. It is clearly committed to continue strengthening its results system. Capacity building of partners to plan and manage for results is good practice. Going forward, attention should be given to enhancing the quality of results frameworks as well as the usefulness of reports on performance. A reinforced and more systematic approach to quality assurance should also be pursued.

Ireland is committed to continue strengthening a sound system of planning and managing for results

Ireland has made good progress since the last peer review with institutionalising results-based management. It prioritises a bottom-up approach to results planning and reporting which provides evidence for programming decisions. It has decided not to apply standard indicators across programmes that would then be aggregated. However, a top tier of 10 outcomes and 31 results areas have been identified in the *Framework for Action* for the international development policy *One World, One Future* (Irish Aid/DFAT, 2014). This decision is in line with the drive across the Irish government to demonstrate overall performance in relation to the policy priorities.

The Development Co-operation Division translates results-based management approaches into operations at the country level through two key delivery channels: (i) country strategy papers; and (ii) the programme grant system for NGOs. The second generation results-oriented country strategy papers that are being rolled out, build on lessons and recommendations from the 2012 internal review of managing for development results (Irish Aid, 2013a, 2013b), as well as mid-term reviews and evaluations on the results approach (ITAD, 2012).¹

DCD, along with NGO partners, has invested significant time and energy in transforming the former multi-annual (EUR 69.4 million in 2011) and block grant funding schemes so that partnership agreements are underpinned by a results focus. While ambitious to start out with, and quite laborious for implementing partners, the new Programme Grant system is starting to bear fruit: DCD and NGOs have better and more objective evidence for decision-making (Irish Aid, 2013a; Gol, 2013a: 38).

Institutionalising results-based management is challenging and resource intensive. Irish Aid staff and local partners, whether governmental, civil society or private sector, often struggle with the complexity of the various components. In line with a suggestion in the last DAC peer review (OECD, 2009), Ireland rolled out extensive training for staff, created a pool of results resource persons, and set up a community of practice (Gol, 2013a: 39). In addition, Ireland's strong emphasis on building partners' capacity to develop strong systems that demonstrate change over time is important for sustainability.

As outlined in Ireland's Memorandum, the Development Co-operation Division is adapting its results-based management system in light of the findings² of the 2012 internal review (Gol, 2013a: 40). DCD can make further steps in institutionalising the system for managing for results by improving the use of current instruments and processes and strengthening further the quality and rigour of results frameworks.

Ireland is realistic about the long-term nature of development co-operation and tries to avoid the trap of setting unrealistic results targets for the aid programme. However, at present it is hard to determine from annual reports or mid-term reviews whether programmes are on track to meet their overall objective. This weakens their usefulness, and Ireland could consider identifying targets in its results framework for tracking progress.

DCD also needs to manage carefully the way it rolls out the draft *Framework for Action's* overarching results areas and the suite of indicators that will accompany them. Clear guidance and support from headquarters will be essential to ensure that programme staff are appropriately equipped to work with the indicators and report against them.

Results measurement draws on evaluations and partners' data

Results and performance assessment frameworks are linked with partner countries' performance measurement frameworks. Ireland uses this information to report on its contribution to achieving national results. However, it faces the challenge of weak statistical capacity in partner countries and most baselines are not necessarily updated annually. Ireland manages this by using supplementary proxy indicators provided by external reviews or assessments (see, for example, Embassy of Ireland, Tanzania, 2013).

As Ireland standardises its programme and project management (Chapters 4 and 5), it should ensure that it sets appropriate minimum standards for partners' results reporting. Partners consulted by the peer review team in Malawi appreciate Ireland's approach to joint monitoring. However, they would like standardised tools for monitoring and reporting, including on cross-cutting issues. A more standardised approach would cut the administrative cost of adapting to new and different requests from programme managers.

Realistic understanding of results in fragile contexts

Understanding the context is a critical part of Ireland's planning process in fragile contexts. Expected results are realistic, based on what can be achieved in these difficult environments within a particular timeframe. NGO partners are encouraged to develop their own indicators for programming in fragile contexts, and to use these for monitoring progress; partners agree that although this process has had some teething problems, it has led to better measures for monitoring peacebuilding.

Evaluation system

Indicator: The evaluation system is in line with the DAC evaluation principles

Ireland's evaluation system is in line with the DAC evaluation principles: a solid policy, an impartial and independent evaluation process, dedicated resources, and good multi-annual planning of evaluations. Ireland engages in joint evaluations, reflecting its firm commitment to the development effectiveness principles of harmonisation and alignment. Plans by the Evaluation and Audit Unit to play a greater advisory role in improving the quality of decentralised evaluations are welcome and should be pursued.

Solid evaluation policy in line with DAC principles

The 2007 Evaluation Policy (Irish Aid, 2007), which explicitly adopts the DAC's principles for evaluation and criteria for evaluating development assistance, continues to be implemented by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The mandate of the Evaluation and Audit Unit has been extended to cover the entire Department. A key task for the Unit in the coming years is to build up the Department's evaluation culture. The new Evaluation Operations Manual, which draws on evaluation quality standards, is a useful reference guide for introducing staff to evaluation (DFAT, 2012). The Department may want to monitor the budgetary and staffing resources of the Unit to ensure it can deliver on its objectives, given that staffing levels have not increased with the extended mandate.³

Increased independence for the Evaluation and Audit Unit

Since the last peer review, the independence of the Evaluation and Audit Unit has been reinforced. It now reports directly to the Secretary-General of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. This organisational change appears to have increased the authority and strategic role of evaluation across the Department.

The independent Audit Committee, which oversees DFAT's systems of accountability, provides vital oversight and suggestions to the Department on audit. Its increasing focus on evaluations undertaken by the Unit can contribute to further strengthening of strategic use of evaluation as a management and accountability tool.

Good multi-annual planning of evaluations

Multi-annual rolling evaluation plans are now a standard tool for the Evaluation and Audit Unit. As seen in Malawi, which has a 2010-14 monitoring and evaluation plan, evaluation is also well integrated into programming. All country strategy papers are required to have an evaluation plan.

Mid-term reviews and end-of-phase evaluations of country strategies serve as crucial tools for tracking process against the evaluation criteria and reorienting programmes where necessary. However, as seen in Malawi, the quality of some operational/programme evaluations can be low, due in part to weak local capacity. It is positive that the Evaluation and Audit Unit plans to play a greater advisory role in improving the quality of these evaluations. It could do this by conducting quality reviews and spot checks, provided it has appropriate resources to play this role.

Ireland engages in joint evaluations

Ireland supports partners' capacity building in evaluation through training. This was evident in Malawi, where the embassy has a dedicated monitoring and evaluation position which supports the whole programme. In addition, Irish Aid pays for dedicated evaluation officer positions in key NGO partner organisations. This approach to capacity building helps ensure sustainability and is a key strength of the programme.

Ireland engages in joint evaluations with other donors.⁴ It remains committed to this type of evaluation and participated in the recently completed joint evaluation of HIV and AIDS support in Uganda, which Denmark led (Irish Aid, 2013d).

Institutional learning

Indicator: Evaluation and appropriate knowledge management systems are used as management tools

Evaluation is used effectively as a management tool in Ireland's development co-operation, thanks to well established feedback mechanisms and systems to track implementation of recommendations. This does not, however, apply to programme/project evaluations. The Evaluation and Audit Unit should continue to build on the progress made with disseminating evaluation results. However, both the culture of sharing knowledge and the system for managing knowledge are weak. Addressing institutional learning as a matter of priority would help DFAT and DCD to strengthen the evidence-base for programming and forward looking management.

Well established feedback mechanisms

Good incentives and rigorous feedback mechanisms for strategic evaluations ensure that findings are acted upon. The new Evaluation Recommendation Tracking Mechanism, which is managed by the Evaluation and Audit Unit, is a useful tool for making this happen. Management responses are required for independent evaluations. Moreover, the Comptroller and Auditor General follow up on implementation of recommendations and the Audit Committee monitors how findings are used.

There was good evidence in Malawi that external and independent mid-term reviews of the programmes are used strategically and impact on programme design. However, the mechanisms and incentives for following up on programme/operational evaluations could be clearer. For example, management responses do not seem to be a systematic requirement.

Progress is being made with disseminating evaluation results

The Evaluation and Audit Unit has taken some positive steps to disseminate evaluation results and lessons beyond the immediate stakeholders for evaluations. For example, it publishes all of its evaluations on the Irish Aid website and on the DAC's Evaluation Resource Centre (DEReC). The introduction of thematic learning briefs on the basis of evaluations of country strategy papers is also a good initiative.⁵ Briefs such as this should be planned for all strategic and thematic evaluations. DCD should also consider publishing more systematically the reports or their summaries from programme/operational evaluations.

The Unit and the Development Co-operation Division could build on this progress by adopting a more strategic and forward planning approach to disseminating and communicating results and lessons to programme managers in partner countries, members of the Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group and key partners, in line with the commitment made in *One World, One Future*. Irish NGOs, for example, would welcome more structured and

regular events on lessons emerging from evaluations and the research Ireland commissions.⁶

Strong leadership is needed to promote and build a culture of knowledge management

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade does not have an appropriate knowledge management system that can be used as a forward-looking management tool. It is positive that DFAT is starting to address this challenge, which was described clearly in the Third Report of the Organisational Review Programme (DPER, 2012: 135). The review found that within DFAT "knowledge management is perceived as being an information and communication technology issue when in fact it is much more of an organisational and behavioural matter. The solution to the issue is not just better information management systems; senior management needs to understand knowledge as an asset to be mined".⁷ In its "Vision for Knowledge Management and Innovation" (DFAT, 2013) the Department has set an ambitious objective.⁸ If accompanied by leadership from senior management in promoting an institutional culture of knowledge management and learning, DFAT can be effective in strengthening the evidence-base for programming and forward looking management.

Communication, accountability, and development awareness

Indicator: The member communicates development results transparently and honestly

Ireland has implemented the peer review recommendation to enhance communication about development results. In addition, strong public demand for information and domestic oversight mechanisms ensure good accountability. DFAT successfully published aid data in line with the Busan common standard in June 2014. To take the government's transparency agenda forward, DFAT should set out a clear vision and strategy that would help build an institutional culture that is more open to publishing information. Strategic and consistent efforts to raise public awareness of development issues is good practice that Ireland should continue to build on, and that DAC members can learn from.

DFAT should keep up good efforts to achieve transparency commitments and promote an institutional culture that is comfortable with greater transparency

Domestic accountability for development co-operation is assured through several channels, including parliamentary oversight structures such as the Public Accounts Committee and the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade, whose members have a deep understanding of the long-term nature, the challenges, and the risks in development co-operation. The Irish NGO community, universities and the media also play an active role in holding the government to account. Consistent engagement and dialogue with these stakeholders by the political leadership and senior officials and staff at DFAT is effective in reinforcing accountability.

There is a real drive to increase the transparency of Irish development co-operation, which sits well within "a broader national reform to improve openness, transparency and accountability in Ireland" (OECD, 2013: 28). The OECD recommended in its 2013 Economic Survey that Ireland "improve public trust in Government, [and] increase transparency and accountability of Government institutions" (OECD, 2013). To achieve its commitment to openness, transparency and accountability of ODA, Ireland set up a cross-divisional task force and submitted a timeline for publishing information according to the common standard outlined in the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation. It is also buying in expert capacity to help reach the 2015 deadline and joined the Open Government Partnership.⁹

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade published aid data in the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) Registry in June 2014, which is in line with transparency initiatives agreed at the 2011 Busan High Level Forum for Development Effectiveness. At the same time, DFAT could have a clearer vision and strategy for increasing transparency and building an organisational culture that is more open to and comfortable with publishing. As found in Malawi, transparency could be easily increased if uploading relevant documents¹⁰ such as final research reports and results frameworks was prioritised and promoted as standard practice.¹¹ Information about programmes, projects and results on the Irish Aid and embassy websites is limited, difficult to find, and varies greatly between embassies.¹²

Ireland can continue to build on more strategic and systematic communication about development co-operation

Ireland has implemented the recommendation of the last peer review to enhance its efforts to communicate development results that have been achieved. Results are communicated through several communication channels, including websites, a volunteering centre, and targeted communication products such as *Irish Aid; We are making a difference*.

Irish Aid annual reports systematically provide quantitative information on results achieved in key partner countries and through other channels, such as NGOs and humanitarian assistance. The annual report also includes specific stories about how people's lives have been improved by specific projects. An efficient system of communication focal points and the inclusion of results stories in embassies' annual reports continue to feed new and up-to-date results stories to the communication team. The field visits DCD organises for parliamentary committees and other stakeholders also serve to show the development results to which Ireland is contributing.

Continually engaging with the Irish public about the work and impact of the programme is a key priority *One World, One Future*. Moreover, maintaining the national consensus in support of official development assistance cannot be taken for granted. Ireland should continue its efforts to find innovative and convincing ways of keeping the public engaged and interested in development co-operation. DAC members can learn from Ireland's approach and experience in this regard.

Strategic and consistent efforts to raise public awareness are good practice

Ireland's strategic, results-focused approach to raising development awareness in close collaboration with the Department of Education, civil society organisations, universities and teacher training is good practice (Box 6.1). DCD and its partners continue to reinforce efforts and to innovate¹³ in this area since relatively high public support for development co-operation¹⁴ might be eroded easily during tough economic times. DAC members could also learn from Ireland's strategy for public engagement.

Box 6.1 Key features of Ireland's good practice in building development awareness

Ireland has a comprehensive, multidimensional, long-term strategy and tools. It works in partnership with governmental bodies and a broad range of CSOs, including diaspora organisations and trade unions, to build public awareness. Examples of Ireland's approach include:

- public consultation when developing *One World, One Future*, so that it reflects taxpayers' concerns and priorities (e.g. about famine and ending hunger).
- a dedicated budget for development education and awareness – approximately USD 8 million annually (DAC Creditor Reporting System); NGOs receiving programme funding are also required to undertake development awareness activities in Ireland.
- engaging and working with the Department of Education to develop curriculum-related teaching and learning resources for schools on development.¹⁵
- supporting, through the Irish Development Education Association,¹⁶ a dedicated capacity building programme for the development education sector.
- setting measurable results for development education (e.g. in 2012 every student teacher was required to have had the opportunity to study development education and intercultural education through the Development and Intercultural Education (DICE)¹⁷ project, a national strategic educational initiative.
- monitoring and reviewing progress with implementing the strategy (e.g. in 2011 thematic reviews were conducted of development education within primary, post-primary, higher education, youth, adult and community sectors).
- engagement with media through, for example, the Simon Cumbers media fund to facilitate balanced media coverage of development challenges.¹⁸

Source: Government of Ireland (2013), Irish Aid Annual Report 2012, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Dublin; meetings in Dublin and Limerick.

Notes

1. Minimum standards for results frameworks are also part of the programme cycle management guidelines for NGOs (Irish Aid, 2013c) and the Partner Programme Cycle Management Guidelines projects, which have yet to be standardised (Embassy of Ireland, Zambia, 2013).
2. The review found that significant progress had been made overall with implementing managing for development results (MfDR) and identified areas where further progress could be made, such as: making MfDR tools more user-friendly; better linking decisions around resources and the impact on results; remaining gaps remain in staff capacity; building partner capacity is time-consuming and challenging; identifying change in complex areas such as governance, gender or humanitarian assistance; and knowing the impact of Ireland's aid at an aggregate level, which is hindered by absence of an overarching results framework. It should be noted that the draft *Framework for Action* has produced an overarching results framework.
3. The Audit Committee recommended in its 2012 report that the Unit's qualifications, skills and experience be maintained, notwithstanding the resource challenges faced by DFAT.
4. For example, the joint Evaluation of Budget Support of Tanzania (<http://www.oecd.org/derec/ec/Joint-Evaluation-of-Budget-Support-to-Tanzania-Lessons-Learned-and-Recommendations-for-the-Future-Vol1.pdf>).
5. See, for example, the learning brief on results-based management on the basis of an evaluation of the Ethiopia country strategy.
6. According to *One World, One Future*, Irish Aid will select research themes that reflect priorities and have the potential to contribute significantly to international development and poverty reduction. It will also work with partners to ensure that research is well communicated and shared with those that are best placed to use it so that it can make a difference.
7. The report also found that the current approach to electronic filing promotes silos of information and knowledge, which has a negative effect on the Department's institutional memory over time (DPER, 2012: 135).
8. In its "Vision for Knowledge Management and Innovation" DFAT plans to transform the Department over three years (from 2013) into one of the foremost knowledge organisations in the Irish public service (DFAT, 2013).
9. The Open Government Partnership is a global initiative bringing developed and developing country governments and civil society together in the drive towards greater openness and transparency in government.
10. The DCD will also need to set clear parameters in relation to sensitive information and manage the risk that internal reporting may become less frank and self-critical if it is made public.
11. The OECD Economic Survey of Ireland (OECD, 2013) suggests that the government could consider instituting practices that are compulsory or routine in many other OECD countries: on-line official information requests, automatic publication of administrative datasets and audit documents, and declaration of liabilities (in addition to assets, as is the case now) by senior members of all government branches.

12. Irish embassy websites for the key partner countries were viewed on 12 March 2014. These websites provide limited information about the programme, projects and evaluation findings. In some instances (e.g. the embassies of Ethiopia and Mozambique) there was no or outdated information about Ireland's development co-operation in these countries. A range of relevant information was available about the Uganda and Vietnam programmes.
13. For example, engaging with Irish farmers at the national ploughing competition.
14. A September 2013 national survey of Irish adults found that 54% of them are in favour of government aid to developing countries, while 22% are against.
15. More information about this work available here: www.worldwiseschools.ie/.
16. More information about this work available here: www.ideaonline.ie/.
17. More information about this work available here: www.diceproject.ie/about/.
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Chapter 7: Ireland's humanitarian assistance

Strategic framework

Indicator: Clear political directives and strategies for resilience, response and recovery

Ireland has a comprehensive approach to humanitarian response, risk reduction and recovery, as reflected in both its humanitarian and development policies. There is a holistic effort to support recovery across programme design and funding mechanisms. Ireland has embraced a strong commitment to building resilience and has successfully embedded that commitment across its programmes and processes; other donors could learn from this. The humanitarian share of the overall ODA budget has remained stable throughout the current crisis. On the global stage, Ireland continues to punch above its weight on humanitarian and resilience issues.

A comprehensive approach to response, risk reduction and recovery

Ireland has issued new humanitarian policy guidance documenting its comprehensive approach to humanitarian response, risk reduction and recovery (DFA, 2009), and respecting the Good Humanitarian Donorship principles (GHD, 2003) and the EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid (EU, 2007), thereby implementing the 2010 peer review recommendation. Focus areas of the humanitarian policy, such as commitments to linking to development through building resilience, are also picked up in Ireland's development policy (Gol, 2013). On the global stage, Ireland continues to leverage its expertise and political capital to contribute to humanitarian processes, as demonstrated during the recent presidency of the European Union. There are plans to update the humanitarian policy by mid-2014, with greater depth in certain areas; it may, however, be more useful to provide this depth in an implementation plan for the existing policy. This plan should also provide concrete targets to help monitoring progress towards policy goals.

Ireland is supporting recovery through programme design and funding tools

Ireland has made concerted efforts to develop holistic responses to recovery. Flexible, often multi-annual, humanitarian funding streams allow both UN and NGO partners to incorporate recovery elements into their programming. Humanitarian issues are included in the country strategy policies that drive development programming (Chapter 2), allowing Ireland to address the root causes of crises – refer, for example, to Ireland's work in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Finally, Ireland has a dedicated stability fund to support specific initiatives on conflict prevention, crisis management, peace building and post conflict stabilisation, funding both ODA-eligible and non-eligible activities.¹

Other donors could learn from Ireland's work on building resilience

Ireland has embraced resilience as part of its overall development policy, setting “reduced hunger and stronger resilience” as one of its three overall development goals. The policy commits Ireland to build the resilience of people, communities and states to cope with stresses and shocks.² It has done this by building a focus on resilience into its main planning and funding arrangements, including development funding envelopes. Resilience features in Ireland's context analyses – as seen in Malawi (Annex C) – and in the results-based management system. It is also a factor in the choice and appraisal of partner organisations. The peer team witnessed a strong commitment to resilience across government, with, for example, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) placing a clear focus on building resilience, including through multilateral partners such as the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). On the global stage, Ireland used the EU presidency to facilitate the EU Approach to Resilience (EU, 2013). Other donors could learn from Ireland's systematic approach to resilience.

A stable budget through the crisis period

Humanitarian funding has remained steady at around EUR 65 million over the last five years, representing around 15% of total Irish ODA (GoI, 2013). Partners report that there have been clear efforts to protect the humanitarian budget share during the financial crisis; this is highly appreciated. The commitment to increase the overall ODA budget when the domestic fiscal situation returns to growth should increase the overall funding available for humanitarian programmes, although this seems unlikely in the short term (Chapter 3).

Effective programme design

Indicator: Programmes target the highest risk to life and livelihood

Ireland takes an objective approach to determining geographical priorities and areas of greatest need. This model is also used to detect and monitor deteriorating situations, highlighting areas where early funding is required. Criteria for choosing NGO partners and allocating funds in rapid onset emergencies could be more transparent.

Objective, evidence-based determination of geographical needs; the choice of partners could be more transparent

The humanitarian policy states that the scale of Ireland's response should be commensurate with need; this is determined using a wide variety of evidence sources³ brought together in a needs categorisation matrix, and updated during the year as needs evolve. Results of this analysis are shared with NGO partners; this is good practice. The wider donor community may also find the analysis useful. There is also a welcome emphasis on forgotten emergencies, using a variety of approaches to increase funding and entice new actors to engage in these contexts (Box 7.1). How Ireland determines the capacity of partners to deliver results is less clear, however, especially with respect to the split between multilateral partners and NGOs (Chapter 2). The criteria for deciding which NGOs are eligible for humanitarian programme plan funding arrangements, and the allocation process for funding to new emergencies, could also be more transparent.

Box 7.1 Ireland's efforts to increase support for neglected crises

Ireland makes good on its policy commitment to focusing on neglected crises by:

- using its needs categorization matrix to identify the most at-risk situations, not relying solely on existing appeals for these crises.
- facilitating greater presence of operational partners in neglected crises, through early calls for proposals.
- raising awareness of neglected crisis situation (e.g. the Irish Tánaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) and Minister for Foreign Affairs went to Mogadishu, Somalia in 2012⁴ and followed up this visit with advocacy for increased support in both the EU and the UN).

Source: Discussions with Irish Aid and partners during the peer review process.

Evidence from indicators that show deteriorating situations lead to early funding measures

Updating the needs categorisation matrix helps to highlight deteriorating situations and provide early warning of crises; this has led to early funding in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, for example (GoI, 2013). Information on changing situations from indicators also led to a call for proposals for the Central African Republic before the crisis in that country hit international headlines.⁵ Early warning of sudden onset crises can also promote early response. Planning for the response to Typhoon Haiyan, for example, began before the storm had made landfall in the Philippines.

Partners are charged with ensuring the participation of affected people

Ireland has made a policy commitment to ensure humanitarian responses are informed by the priorities of, and owned by, the intended beneficiaries (GoI, 2013). As with most donors, it implements this commitment through its operational partners, including a review of participation as part of the proposal appraisal process, and in the monitoring of partner programmes. Flexible funding allows partners to adapt their programmes based on the feedback received.

Effective delivery, partnerships and instruments

Indicator: Delivery modalities and partnerships help deliver quality assistance

Ireland understands the need to adapt its tools to the context, and thus has a flexible and broad humanitarian toolbox to fit different contexts and partners. Policy commitments to be a good partner are followed through, with predictable, flexible and timely funding, active and open discussions, and an appropriate administrative burden for all partners. Ireland also plays an active role in donor co-ordination, advocating for better humanitarian donorship and promoting more joined up responses.

A flexible toolbox is in place for complex emergencies, recognising that different humanitarian contexts and partners require different financing mechanisms

Ireland understands that different humanitarian contexts and partners require different financing mechanisms, and has allowed for this in designing its toolbox for complex emergencies. The humanitarian programme plan system, introduced in 2009, provides eight NGO partners⁶ with predictable funding, renewed on an annual basis under a simplified proposal process. Ireland says this funding is based on a robust appraisal process with incentives for good performance (Gol, 2013); in practice the process continues to evolve, and partners would appreciate greater stability of the administrative requirements and clear eligibility criteria for NGOs which might want to join the plan in the future.

Ireland also provides multi-annual, softly earmarked funding to international organisations,⁷ some of which, for the World Food Programme, comes through the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; the quality of all this funding is appreciated by partners. Ireland is open to funding innovative programmes, including cash and the use of new technologies;⁸ this shows good leadership. Partner governments can receive funds to deal with crisis risks through bilateral development programmes, including in Malawi (Annex C). Finally, pooled funding is supported where Ireland feels this adds value;⁹ usefully, Ireland also funds pooled fund structures to ensure there is adequate capacity to manage the funds in-country, and collects feedback from NGOs to inform discussions on pooled fund boards. Ireland remains committed to improving the overall effectiveness and efficiency of pooled funds. Continuing these efforts is encouraged.

An effective rapid response toolbox

Ireland already had an effective rapid response toolbox at the time of the last peer review, including support to pooled mechanisms,¹⁰ some funds pre-positioned with NGO partners, and the Rapid Response Initiative, covering stockpiled emergency supplies¹¹ and standby emergency experts.¹² The Irish military can also be deployed to support the early stages of crisis response. Additional funding can come through NGO calls for proposals, with proposals turned around in a week. There can also be additional funding for multilateral partners, including through the Department of Agriculture, although Ireland, given its size, is not really seen as the first port of call when a major crisis hits. Partners have called for greater clarity on the criteria for eligibility for the NGO pre-positioned funds, including why some NGOs are provided with more funds than others. Ireland responded by sharing these criteria with the Dóchas Humanitarian Aid Working Group and making them available on the website.¹³

Making good on commitments to be a good partner

Ireland has made policy commitments to good partnership, recognising the key roles played by different partners, committing to minimal earmarking and pledging to continue dialogue with all partners (DFA, 2009). Partners agree that funding is predictable and timely – with funding notifications and disbursements coming early in the year, even during the financial crisis. The overall relationship with Ireland is cordial, supportive and constructive, with regular discussions with the Dóchas Humanitarian Assistance Working Group and open discussions with individual partners. The previous peer review recommended that Ireland play a more prominent role on the boards of key multilateral agencies. There has certainly been progress in this area, although this remains difficult given Ireland's limited human resources. Finally, the administrative burden is seen as appropriate, although some more predictability for NGOs, which see requirements changing from year to year, would be appreciated.

Punching above its weight on the global stage

Ireland does more than just co-ordinate with other donors. It also plays an active role in advocating for better humanitarian donorship and more joined up responses. Ireland used its presidency of the EU especially effectively, to promote the resilience agenda, stimulate a joint donor field mission of the European donor group, and steer initial discussions on the evaluation of the EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid (Ireland remains active, post-presidency, on the steering group for this evaluation). Other donors note that Ireland actively seeks exchanges in preparation for multilateral agency board meetings, and appreciate its co-chairing of the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative in 2009-10. Ireland is not often present in-country, but will co-ordinate with other donors where it can.

Organisation fit for purpose

Indicator: Systems, structures, processes and people work together effectively and efficiently

There is clear and coherent humanitarian messaging across government, including in political dialogue, and operational relationships among different areas of government appear to be working well. Military staff are being tasked appropriately in humanitarian crisis response, under clear civilian authority. The small humanitarian team has proven a remarkable force in international humanitarian fora, has created effective tools, systems and procedures to ensure they remain fit for purpose, and continue to be good partners, open to dialogue. Keeping up this pace and energy might be a challenge; Ireland may need to consider prioritising the issues it engages with to ensure that its small team can consistently add value and meet workload expectations.

A joined up approach to humanitarian policy and operations across government

There is clearly a joined up political and operational approach to humanitarian and resilience issues in Ireland, with joint messages regular inserted into political speeches. This was particularly evident during Ireland's presidency of the EU, when it supported coherent EU approaches on Syria, Mali, hunger and resilience.¹⁴ Domestically, there are working relationships with the police on security sector reform, and with other departments¹⁵ on the Hyogo Framework for Action, promoting resilience to disasters. For operational response, there is a clear lead; the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Appropriate use of military personnel

Ireland's humanitarian policy states that the use of military assets is informed by international good practice and guidance (OCHA, 2007; IASC, 2008). Although there do not appear to be any active safeguards in place, the primacy of civilian leadership of military responses appears to have been upheld during this peer review period. There is a service level agreement with the Irish defence forces, military staff serve as part of the rapid response initiative but in a civilian capacity, and Ireland has a long history of participating in the Viking simulation exercises, providing useful training for military staff pre-deployment.¹⁶

With a small team, Ireland is doing a remarkable job; it now needs to make sure the pace is sustainable

Ireland's humanitarian team have proven themselves to be effective players on the global stage, active in international policy dialogue and driving change in various humanitarian fora; they are also good partners, developing a broad toolbox and engaging in continuous dialogue with partners. Somehow the team also finds time to reflect on its performance, make changes, and ensure that systems and processes are fit for purpose going forward. Clearly, with a team of only 14 permanent staff, this is a remarkable performance.

Ireland will now need to ensure that this pace is sustainable. Already, partners are concerned that too many of its excellent initiatives are based on the personal interests and commitments of individual staff members, and that these issues risk falling off the radar as staff turnover. Ireland may wish to reflect on its broad policy and programming engagements, and consider prioritising key areas of interest, to ensure that the team can continue to systematically add value to the initiatives that matter, and that it has sufficient skilled staff to cope with workload expectations.

Results, learning and accountability

Indicator: Results are measured and communicated, and lessons learnt

Progress against Ireland's policy and programming goals is reviewed against annual targets. There is a clear focus on setting out and measuring partner results. Ireland also has an extensive research portfolio to help itself and partners develop more effective responses. Systemic issues with information management systems make it hard for Ireland to systematically report on progress and results, and there is scope to improve this area.

Progress and learning reviews take place, but are not published

The previous peer review asked Ireland to identify specific targets and action plans for its humanitarian policy. The humanitarian programme does have an annual business plan with measurable indicators, and progress against it is regularly measured. This is supplemented by internal reviews of major responses and of different systems. Other proposed initiatives, such as placing emergency stocks at Shannon airport, are also reviewed for effectiveness. Ireland listens to the results; the planned depot at Shannon was abandoned, and the humanitarian programme plan process was simplified based on the findings from another review. However, the results of reviews and the monitoring of progress against policy goals are not made public,¹⁷ hurting accountability.

Clear focus on partner results

The culture of results-based management is strong in Ireland (Chapter 6) and the humanitarian programme is no exception. Ireland monitors its partners' programmes through field visits, regular dialogue and written reports, based on an intervention logic set out at the beginning of the grant – although partners often require significant support at this stage of the grant application process. Ireland also supports research to inform better humanitarian programming.¹⁸

Communicating results could improve

Irish Aid's outdated information management system (Chapter 6), and difficult to navigate website, complicate communications with major stakeholders, including the Irish public. Major funding decisions, for example with respect to new emergencies, will be announced by press releases and through social media; however, the results of the humanitarian programme are not systematically communicated.

Notes

1. For example, many activities related to peacekeeping are not eligible as ODA. For more information, refer to www.oecd.org/development/stats/34086975.pdf.
2. “We will also help to build the resilience of people, communities and states to plan for and cope with the increased vulnerability, risks and uncertainties associated with present day stresses and shocks such as crop failure, climate change, natural disasters and conflict. Being resilient means being better prepared, better able to cope, and better placed to recover” (Gol, 2013).
3. These sources include: the Consolidated Appeals Process and percentage funding received; UN needs assessment reports; NGO early warning and needs assessment reports; the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET); Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED); the EU Vulnerability Index; the EU Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO) Global Needs Assessment and Forgotten Crises; the Global Hunger Index; the UNICEF Multi-Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS); ECHO Daily Flash Updates; OCHA situation reports and updates (DFAT, 2013).
4. Ireland's Tánaiste visited Mogadishu in July 2012.
5. No responses to this call for proposals were received, however.
6. Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide, Médecins Sans Frontières Ireland, Plan International, Trócaire, Goal, Oxfam Ireland, and World Vision.
7. Including the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (some core funding), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).
8. As a response to on-going difficulties in accessing populations in northern Syria, Ireland provided in-kind stocks, accompanied by support for an innovative monitoring approach that allowed humanitarian actors to monitor consumption, which in turn allowed for a better understanding of the context and needs. Eventually this evidence provided support for a voucher programme for northern Syria.
9. Including in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan.
10. Including the global Central Emergency Response Fund, country specific Emergency Rapid Response Funds, and the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREC).
11. Emergency supplies are provided through the UN's Humanitarian Response Depot System (www.unhrd.org), with Ireland retaining authority over where the supplies should be delivered.
12. Over 200 emergency response experts are on Ireland's roster. The roster is open to European Union citizens.
13. The criteria are available at:
<https://www.irishaid.ie/media/irishaid/allwebsitemedia/20newsandpublications/eligibility-criteria-for-general-er-funding-may-2014.pdf>.
14. For further details, refer to:
<http://eu2013.ie/media/eupresidency/content/documents/Irish-EU-Presidency-achievements-report-English.pdf>.
15. Principally the Department of Environment, Communities and Local Government.

16. More about the Viking exercises here:
<http://folkebernadotteacademy.se/en/Activities/Training-and-Exercises/VIKING/>.
17. Evaluations of performance were not yet published on the website at the time of this review, but the results of the Shannon airport study can be found at:
www.irishaid.ie/news-publications/publications/publicationsarchive/2012/december/shannon-airport-feasibility-study/.
18. Ireland supports research organisations including the Sphere Project, the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership, the Humanitarian Practice Network (HPN) of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) and the Feinstein International Centre.

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Annex A: Progress since the 2009 DAC Peer Review recommendations

Key Issues: Strategic orientations

Recommendations 2009	Progress in implementation
Irish Aid's approach to mainstreaming its priority issues – namely gender, environment, HIV/AIDS and governance – is a strong, though evolving feature of its aid programme which already provides lessons that could be shared with other donors. Irish Aid is encouraged to improve reporting on mainstreaming and focus on measuring development impacts to enhance its own learning as well as that of other donors.	Partially implemented
To maintain public support for the aid programme, Ireland is encouraged to enhance its efforts to communicate the development results achieved by working with other donors and partner countries.	Implemented

Key Issues: Development beyond aid

Recommendations 2009	Progress in implementation
Ireland should ensure that the Inter-Departmental Committee on Development has sufficient political backing and institutional support to effectively address any inconsistencies and potential policy conflicts between government departments that might adversely affect developing countries.	Not implemented
To support the IDCD it should identify a policy coherence focal point with the capacity to analyse potential areas of policy conflict; commission longer-term studies; co-ordinate research; and monitor and champion policy coherence for development among government departments on the IDCD's behalf. The focal point will also need to find innovative ways to overcome the physical limitations linked to Irish Aid's relocation to Limerick.	Implemented

Key Issues: Aid volume, channels and allocations

Recommendations 2009	Progress in implementation
The DAC commends Ireland for its impressive growth in ODA from 2003 to 2008. The DAC, further, strongly urges Ireland to continue to make progress towards meeting the ODA/GNI target of 0.7% in 2012. Reaching its interim target of 0.6% in 2010 is essential even in an environment of declining GNI. This would send a strong, positive signal to the development community.	Not implemented
Ireland should clarify how it prioritises aid channels, modalities and sectors in its priority countries and fulfil its intention to rebalance its programme by increasing the proportion of ODA delivered through these countries.	Implemented
To fulfil the White Paper's support for pro-poor economic growth, Ireland should invest strategically in initiatives linked to agriculture, rural development and the private sector, and avoid programme fragmentation.	Partially implemented (agriculture and rural development implemented; unclear implementation of private sector and pro-poor economic growth dimensions)

Key Issues: Organisation and management

Recommendations 2009	Progress in implementation
Irish Aid should finalise the training strategy for staff development as a priority and review staffing levels and skills regularly to ensure that they provide the expertise needed to deliver the aid programme. It is encouraged to dedicate appropriate resources to engage actively with its key multilateral partners.	Implemented
Irish Aid should institutionalise its approach to knowledge management building on the results framework for country strategies as well as on evaluations, and ensure that the analytical, evaluation and policy functions are well integrated.	Not implemented

Key Issues: Aid effectiveness and results

Recommendations 2009	Progress in implementation
Ireland is a leading player in implementing the aid effectiveness principles. Irish Aid is encouraged to engage peers, civil society and partner country governments to implement the Accra Agenda for Action and to continue working collectively at country level to strengthen partner countries' monitoring and results frameworks.	Implemented
Ireland should make every effort to enhance synergies across the different aid channels and provide a full ODA picture to allow partner governments to track aid, build consolidated accountability mechanisms and plan future investments for development.	Implemented
Irish Aid should consider developing guidance to support capacity development of partner governments and civil society. It should also co-ordinate and build synergies across the different capacity building initiatives which it finances. It is encouraged to further enhance efforts to access and measure the impact of its intervention in this area.	Recommendation not examined by the peer review
In finalising its draft strategy on Building Good Governance Irish Aid is encouraged to ensure that it promotes a coherent overall approach, taking into account available principles and instruments addressing the promotion of good governance in specific contexts, including in fragile states.	Implemented
The next round of country strategy papers offers an opportunity to identify priorities and outcomes and to better document and report on mainstreaming activities.	Implemented

Key Issues: Humanitarian assistance

Recommendations 2009	Progress in implementation
Ireland should ensure that its commitments under the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative are adequately reflected in the policy frameworks and operational guidelines of other government departments and joint training is promoted.	Implemented

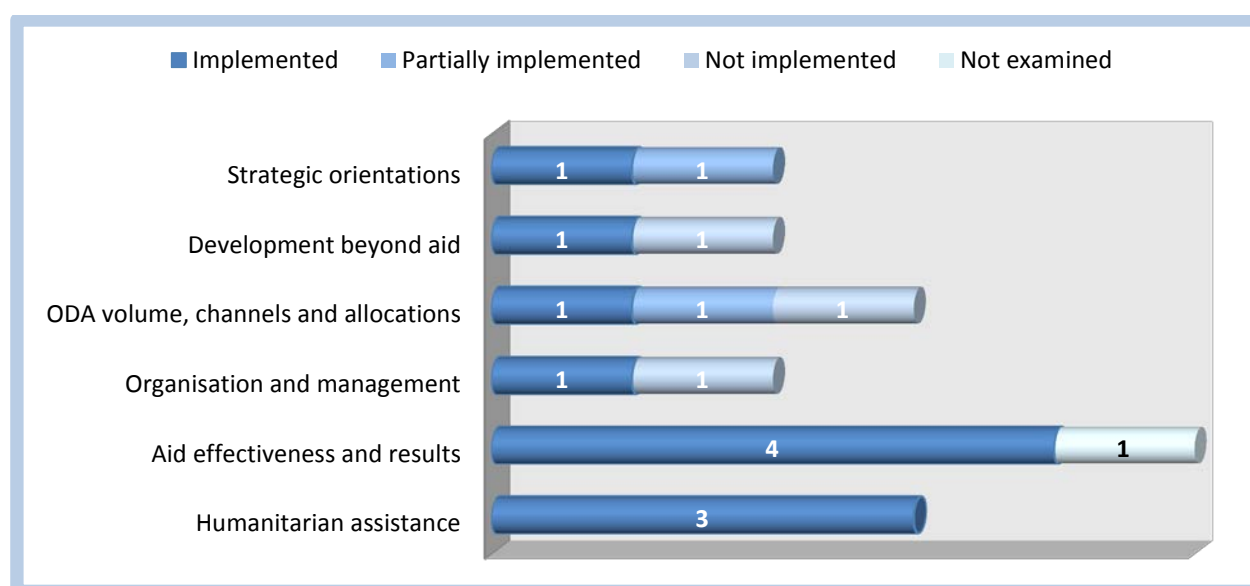
Ireland is urged to ensure the timely release of its policies on the linkages between humanitarian and development assistance as well as its associated guidelines in order to present a comprehensive package to the Irish humanitarian community. Ireland should identify special targets and action plans for both humanitarian policy documents in order to provide suitable transparency.

Implemented

Ireland should build on its expanding financial commitments in the humanitarian sector and the positive impressions created by the Rapid Response Initiative and the Hunger Task Force to play a more prominent role in international humanitarian fora and governance structures of key multilateral agencies.

Implemented

Figure A.1 Ireland's implementation of 2009 peer review recommendations



Annex B: OECD statistics on official development assistance

Table B.1 Total financial flows
USD million at current prices and exchange rates

Ireland	Net disbursements						
	1998-2002	2003-2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total official flows	272	809	1 328	1 006	895	914	808
Official development assistance	272	809	1 328	1 006	895	914	808
Bilateral	176	540	931	693	585	604	536
Multilateral	97	269	397	313	310	310	272
Other official flows	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bilateral	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Multilateral	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Private Grants	66	296	273	182	300	530	148
Private flows at market terms	460	3 407	4 500	3 000	1 500	1 000	-
Bilateral: <i>of which</i>	460	3 407	4 500	3 000	1 500	1 000	-
Direct investment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Export credits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Multilateral	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total flows	798	4 512	6 101	4 188	2 695	2 444	956
<i>for reference:</i>							
ODA (at constant 2011 USD million)	434	831	1 196	984	941	914	859
ODA (as a % of GNI)	0.33	0.47	0.59	0.54	0.52	0.51	0.47
Total flows (as a % of GNI) (a)	0.86	2.62	2.71	2.27	1.57	1.37	0.56
ODA to and channelled through NGOs							
- In USD million	33	177	550	391	243	390	232
- In percentage of total net ODA	12	22	41	39	27	43	29
- DAC countries' average % of total net ODA	8	8	7	8	10	13	13

a. To countries eligible for ODA.

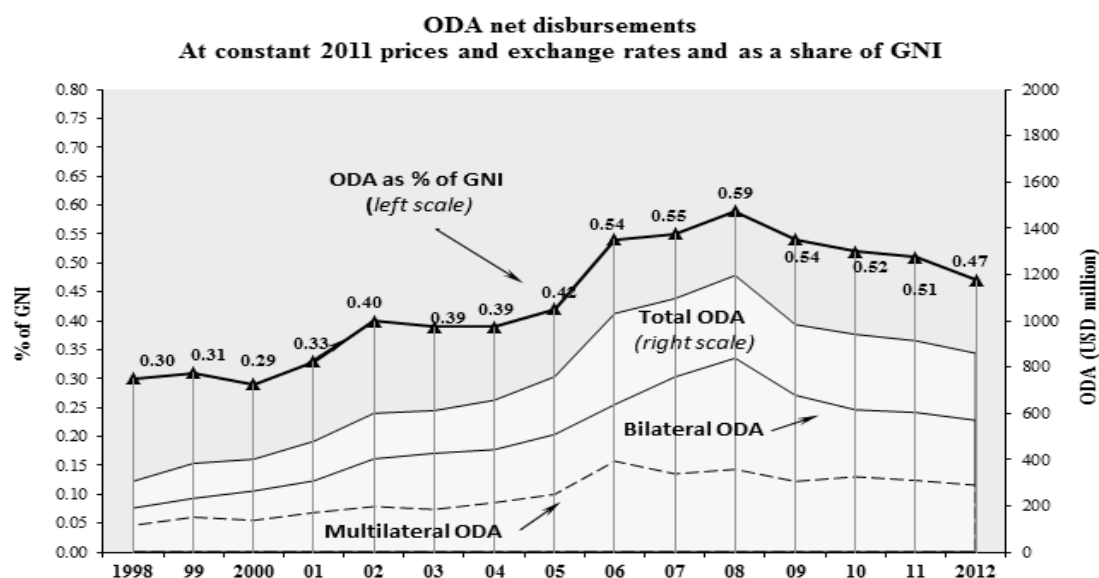
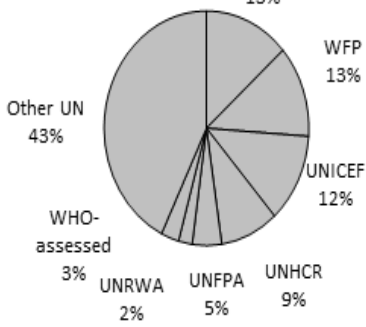



Table B.2 ODA by main categories

Disbursements

Ireland	Constant 2011 USD million					Per cent share of gross disbursements					Total DAC 2012%
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	
Gross Bilateral ODA	838	678	615	604	570	70	69	65	66	66	73
General budget support	39	32	31	29	25	3	3	3	3	3	1
Core support to national NGOs	159	115	98	118	118	13	12	10	13	14	1
Investment projects	3	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	11
Debt relief grants	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Administrative costs	46	44	43	39	37	4	4	5	4	4	5
Other in-donor expenditures	20	10	8	3	3	2	1	1	0	0	3
Gross Multilateral ODA	358	306	326	310	289	30	31	35	34	34	27
UN agencies	120	75	91	89	94	10	8	10	10	11	5
EU institutions	139	159	172	153	136	12	16	18	17	16	9
World Bank group	42	25	28	26	33	4	3	3	3	4	6
Regional development banks	10	15	13	14	1	1	2	1	2	0	3
Other multilateral	46	32	22	28	25	4	3	2	3	3	5
Total gross ODA	1 196	984	941	914	859	100	100	100	100	100	100
Repayments and debt cancellation	-	-	-	-	-	Contributions to UN Agencies (2011-12 Average) 					
Total net ODA	1 196	984	941	914	859						
<i>For reference:</i>						Contributions to Regional Development Banks (2011-12 Average) 					
<i>Free standing technical co-operation</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>						
<i>Net debt relief</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>						
<i>Imputed student cost</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>-</i>						
<i>Refugees in donor countries</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>						

ODA flows to multilateral agencies, 2012

Agency	Ireland	DAC
UN agencies	11.5	5.5
EU institutions	15.5	9.0
World Bank group	4.5	7.0
Regional dev. banks	0.5	3.5
Other multilateral	3.5	5.5

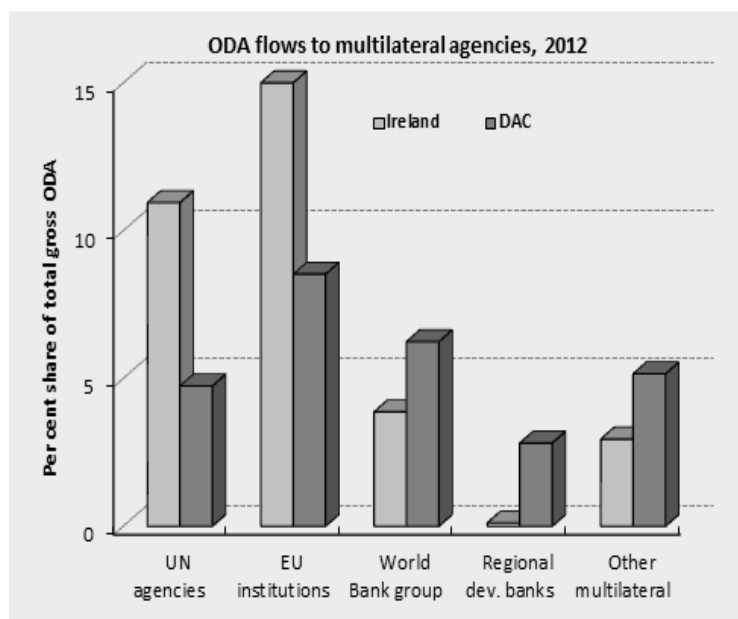
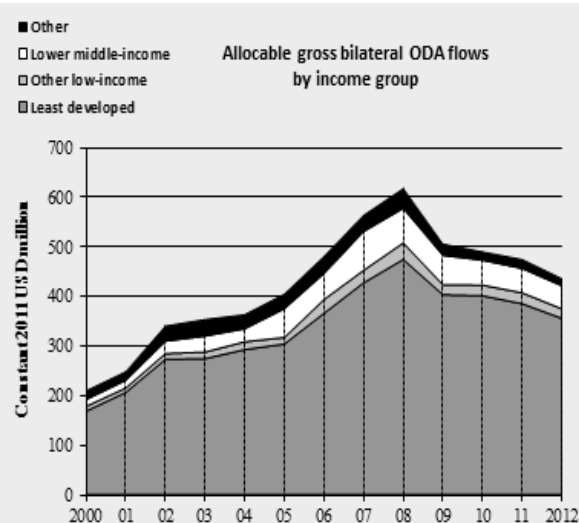
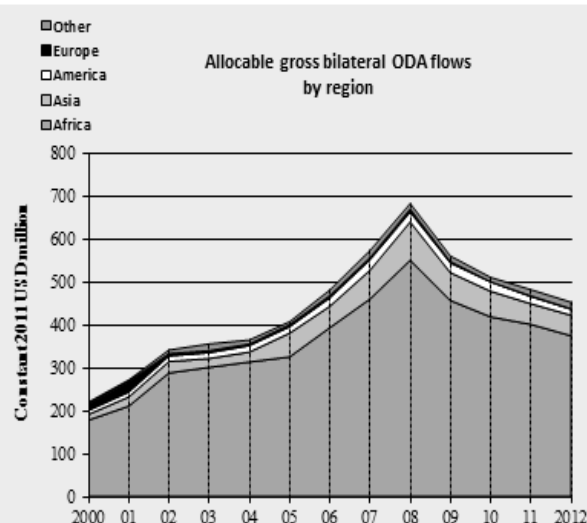


Table B.3 Bilateral ODA allocable by region and income group

Gross disbursements											
Ireland	Constant 2011 USD million					Per cent share					Total DAC
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2012%
Africa	550	456	418	401	374	81	82	82	83	83	43
Sub-Saharan Africa	530	456	414	395	367	78	81	81	82	81	37
North Africa	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	1	0	4
Asia	89	65	60	48	48	13	12	12	10	11	34
South and Central Asia	42	25	28	20	20	6	5	5	4	4	20
Far East	48	39	31	28	28	7	7	6	6	6	14
America	23	23	22	17	14	3	4	4	4	3	10
North and Central America	16	17	16	11	9	2	3	3	2	2	4
South America	7	6	6	6	5	1	1	1	1	1	5
Middle East	13	13	10	14	15	2	2	2	3	3	7
Oceania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Europe	7	3	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	3
Total bilateral allocable by region	682	560	510	481	452	100	100	100	100	100	100
Least developed	474	403	401	385	356	77	80	82	81	82	41
Other low-income	33	20	21	22	19	5	4	4	5	4	4
Lower middle-income	70	59	51	49	46	11	12	10	10	11	36
Upper middle-income	39	22	16	18	14	6	4	3	4	3	18
More advanced developing countries	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	-
Total bilateral allocable by income	617	505	489	474	435	100	100	100	100	100	100
For reference:											
Total bilateral	838	678	615	604	570	100	100	100	100	100	100
of which: Unallocated by region	156	119	106	122	118	19	17	17	20	21	24
of which: Unallocated by income	221	173	126	130	135	26	25	20	22	24	32



1. Each region includes regional amounts which cannot be allocated by sub-region. The sum of the sub-regional amounts may therefore fall short of the regional total.

Annex B: OECD statistics on official development assistance

Table B.4 Main recipients of bilateral ODA

Gross disbursements																
Ireland	2001-05 average			Memo:		2006-10 average			Memo:		2011-12 average			Memo:		
	Current	Constant	Per cent	DAC		countries'	Current	Constant	Per cent		DAC	countries'	Current	Constant	Per cent	DAC
	USD million	2011 USD mln	share			USD million	2011 USD mln	share			USD million	2011 USD mln	share			
Uganda	40	50	12			Uganda	65	63	9		Mozambique	56	57	10		
Mozambique	37	46	11			Mozambique	63	61	9		Tanzania	47	49	8		
Ethiopia	33	41	10			Ethiopia	57	55	8		Ethiopia	46	47	8		
Tanzania	27	34	8			Tanzania	52	50	7		Uganda	45	46	8		
Zambia	21	26	6			Zambia	37	35	5		Zambia	28	28	5		
Top 5 recipients	159	197	47	34		Top 5 recipients	274	265	37	30	Top 5 recipients	222	228	39	29	
South Africa	14	17	4			Vietnam	21	20	3		Malawi	24	25	4		
Lesotho	12	16	4			Sudan	20	19	3		Vietnam	18	18	3		
Sudan	7	8	2			South Africa	18	17	2		Sierra Leone	14	15	2		
Kenya	6	7	2			Lesotho	17	17	2		Lesotho	14	14	2		
Afghanistan	5	6	1			Malawi	17	16	2		Congo, Dem. Rep.	12	12	2		
Top 10 recipients	202	251	60	47		Top 10 recipients	368	354	50	45	Top 10 recipients	303	312	53	40	
West Bank & Gaza Strip	5	6	1			Kenya	15	14	2		Somalia	11	11	2		
Timor-Leste	4	5	1			Sierra Leone	14	14	2		Kenya	10	11	2		
Malawi	4	5	1			Congo, Dem. Rep.	13	12	2		Liberia	9	10	2		
Sierra Leone	4	5	1			Zimbabwe	11	10	1		Zimbabwe	9	9	2		
Zimbabwe	4	5	1			Liberia	11	10	1		West Bank & Gaza Strip	9	9	2		
Top 15 recipients	223	276	66	56		Top 15 recipients	431	415	59	54	Top 15 recipients	351	361	62	47	
Angola	4	5	1			Somalia	9	8	1		Afghanistan	8	8	1		
Congo, Dem. Rep.	3	4	1			Timor-Leste	8	8	1		South Africa	8	8	1		
India	3	4	1			West Bank & Gaza Strip	8	8	1		South Sudan	7	8	1		
Pakistan	3	3	1			Afghanistan	7	7	1		Sudan	7	7	1		
Honduras	2	3	1			India	6	6	1		Timor-Leste	5	5	1		
Top 20 recipients	238	294	70	59		Top 20 recipients	468	452	64	59	Top 20 recipients	386	398	68	52	
Total (109 recipients)	277	343	82			Total (114 recipients)	552	531	75		Total (102 recipients)	442	455	78		
Unallocated	62	76	18	20		Unallocated	182	174	25	27	Unallocated	128	132	22	34	
Total bilateral gross	339	418	100	100		Total bilateral gross	733	706	100	100	Total bilateral gross	570	587	100	100	

Table B.5 Bilateral ODA by major purposes
at constant 2011 prices and exchange rates

Ireland	2001-2005 average		2006-10 average		2011-12 average		2011-12 Total DAC per cent
	2011 USD million	Per cent	2011 USD million	Per cent	2011 USD million	Per cent	
Social infrastructure & services	256	64	391	57	297	52	41
Education	64	16	84	12	54	9	8
of which: basic education	11	3	36	5	20	3	2
Health	89	22	93	14	71	13	5
of which: basic health	25	6	48	7	34	6	4
Population & reproductive health	6	2	42	6	21	4	7
Water supply & sanitation	19	5	18	3	9	2	5
Government & civil society	56	14	114	17	91	16	13
of which: Conflict, peace & security	0	0	12	2	9	2	2
Other social infrastructure & services	22	5	39	6	50	9	2
Economic infrastructure & services	9	2	8	1	7	1	16
Transport & storage	7	2	3	0	-	-	7
Communications	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Energy	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Banking & financial services	1	0	3	0	2	0	2
Business & other services	0	0	2	0	5	1	1
Production sectors	24	6	49	7	54	10	8
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	22	5	44	6	52	9	5
Industry, mining & construction	2	0	4	1	1	0	2
Trade & tourism	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
Multisector	13	3	28	4	24	4	10
Commodity and programme aid	26	7	39	6	47	8	3
Action relating to debt	4	1	0	0	-	-	3
Humanitarian aid	38	10	131	19	99	18	8
Administrative costs of donors	30	7	41	6	38	7	6
Refugees in donor countries	1	0	1	0	0	0	4
Total bilateral allocable	401	100	688	100	568	100	100
<i>For reference:</i>							
Total bilateral	418	67	706	67	587	66	73
of which: Unallocated	17	3	18	2	19	2	1
Total multilateral	203	33	344	33	300	34	27
Total ODA	621	100	1 050	100	886	100	100

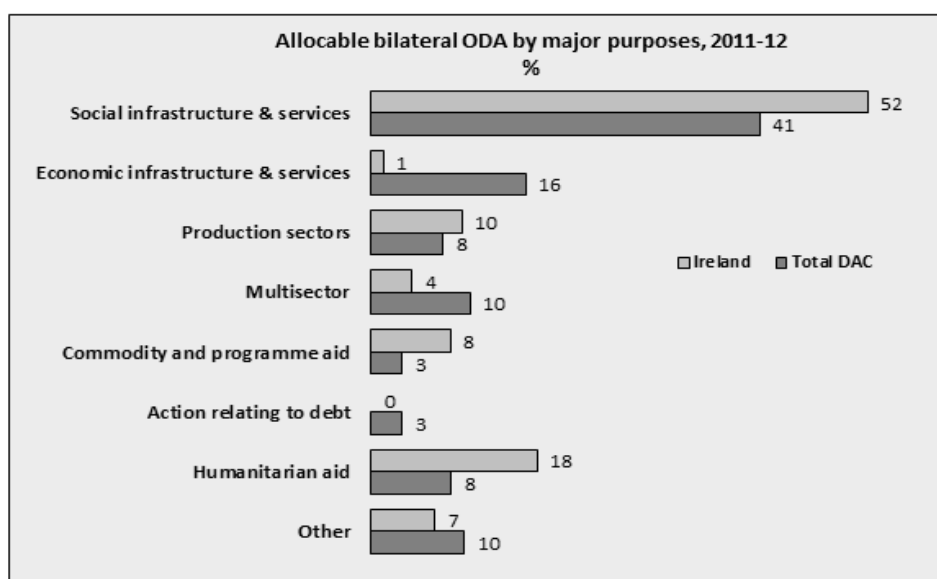


Table B.6 Comparative aid performance

Net disbursements

	Official development assistance			Grant element of ODA (commitments) 2012 % (a)	Share of multilateral aid 2012				ODA to LDCs Bilateral and through multilateral agencies 2012	
	2012		2006-07 to 2011-12 Average annual % change in real terms		% of ODA		% of GNI		% of ODA	% of GNI
	USD million	% of GNI			(b)	(c)	(b)	(c)		
Australia	5 403	0.36	6.9	99.8	15.6		0.06		30.3	0.11
Austria	1 106	0.28	-9.6	100.0	51.6	26.7	0.14	0.07	22.0	0.06
Belgium	2 315	0.47	3.0	99.7	38.1	18.7	0.18	0.09	30.4	0.14
Canada	5 650	0.32	3.2	100.0	28.3		0.09		34.4	0.11
Czech Republic	220	0.12	2.9	100.0	69.8	16.2	0.08	0.02	26.7	0.03
Denmark	2 693	0.83	0.5	100.0	28.6	19.7	0.24	0.16	37.3	0.31
Finland	1 320	0.53	5.9	100.0	39.5	25.3	0.21	0.13	33.7	0.18
France	12 028	0.45	2.0	79.5	34.1	16.7	0.15	0.08	21.1	0.10
Germany	12 939	0.37	2.1	88.4	33.7	14.9	0.13	0.06	28.4	0.11
Greece	327	0.13	-6.4	100.0	67.2	4.9	0.09	0.01	15.3	0.02
Iceland	26	0.22	-5.8	100.0	18.8		0.04		45.1	0.10
Ireland	808	0.47	-3.6	100.0	33.7	17.9	0.16	0.08	51.7	0.24
Italy	2 737	0.14	-3.5	99.4	77.2	21.8	0.11	0.03	25.6	0.04
Japan	10 605	0.17	-3.6	88.5	39.6		0.07		43.8	0.08
Korea	1 597	0.14	21.5	94.2	25.9		0.04		36.2	0.05
Luxembourg	399	1.00	0.2	100.0	30.7	22.8	0.31	0.23	36.5	0.37
Netherlands	5 523	0.71	-1.2	100.0	30.2	19.2	0.21	0.14	21.1	0.15
New Zealand	449	0.28	2.7	100.0	19.5		0.05		32.0	0.09
Norway	4 753	0.93	1.9	100.0	25.9		0.24		29.1	0.27
Poland	421	0.09	3.1	..	73.5	5.8	0.07	0.01	18.5	0.02
Portugal	581	0.28	6.7	84.6	31.6	5.1	0.09	0.01	30.4	0.09
Slovak Republic	80	0.09	1.5	100.0	76.2	8.3	0.07	0.01	19.3	0.02
Spain	2 037	0.16	-8.5	100.0	51.6	4.6	0.08	0.01	23.7	0.04
Sweden	5 240	0.97	2.3	100.0	30.6	24.0	0.30	0.23	29.4	0.29
Switzerland	3 045	0.47	5.4	100.0	19.7		0.09		23.3	0.11
United Kingdom	13 892	0.56	5.7	100.0	37.3	24.0	0.21	0.13	33.2	0.19
United States	30 687	0.19	4.4	100.0	17.0		0.03		37.2	0.07
Total DAC	126 881	0.29	1.9	94.6	30.2	0.09			31.9	0.09
Memo: Average country effort		0.40								

Notes:

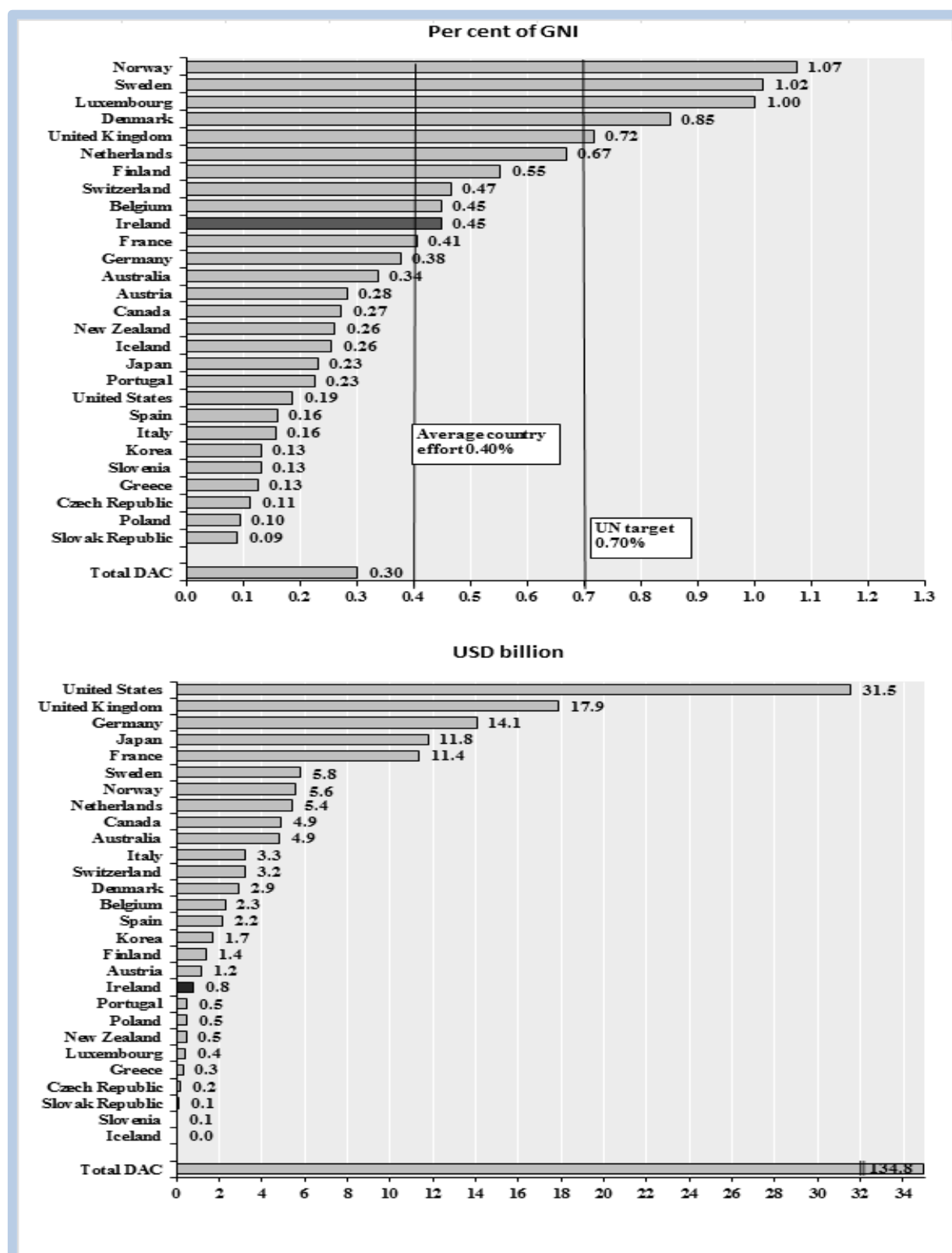
a. Excluding debt reorganisation.

b. Including EU institutions.

c. Excluding EU institutions.

.. Data not available.

Figure B.1 Net ODA from DAC countries in 2013 (preliminary figures)



Annex C: Field visit to Malawi

As part of the peer review of Ireland, a team of examiners and the OECD secretariat visited Malawi in February 2014. The team met with the Ambassador, Irish development co-operation professionals, partner country civil servants, other bilateral and multilateral partners, and representatives of Irish and partner country civil society organisations, the private sector, and district authorities.

Towards a comprehensive Irish development effort

Ireland's development programme addresses global public goods

Malawi is a low income, fragile state, with high levels of poverty. Its economic situation remains fragile. It is a relatively young democracy and is plagued by policy insecurity and patchy implementation, with successive new political leaders often undertaking policy U-turns (World Bank, 2013). Relations between donors and the government at the time of the field visit for the peer review of Ireland were strained due to a high-level corruption scandal within the public service in 2013 – the "cashgate" incident. This exposed serious weaknesses in governance and public finance management. Donors had suspended budget support on the basis of an IMF agreed action plan.

Ireland has a long history of engagement with Malawi; in the beginning through support to Irish missionaries in Malawi. Then, in 2002 with the food security crisis, humanitarian assistance was channelled through Irish and international aid agencies. In 2006, Ireland decided to establish an embassy in Malawi and the bilateral programme started in November 2007. The programme supports households in becoming food secure and helps build their resilience to the adverse effects of climate change.

Food security in Malawi is a critical issue; the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) forecast for 2013-14 was that an estimated 1.85 million people (nearly 10% of the population) are at risk of severe food insecurity (Government of Malawi, 2013). The need for agricultural transformation is vital to reducing poverty, and Ireland is providing critical support through its participation in the agricultural sector-wide approach and other activities to increase productivity and diversification of the sector.

In addition, in Malawi high population density, poverty and the impact of climate change have led to significant degradation of the environment. The energy consumption patterns of its growing population, in particular, are resulting in the destruction of Malawi's forest cover due, for example, to the collection of firewood. Ireland is addressing these issues by promoting conservation agriculture and through its cook stove project.

Scope to do more to use aid catalytically and to ensure greater coherence of Irish policies for development

Ireland is beginning to use its aid in Malawi as a catalyst to support additional private finance, but it recognises it could do more. For example, it is supporting government efforts to build a more enabling environment for investment and trade in Malawi. It has been actively engaged in the development of Malawi's National Export Strategy and has provided direct technical support to the Ministry of Industry and Trade and the Malawi Investment and Trade Centre.

The embassy, which has started planning for a new Country Strategy Paper in 2015, is looking into how it can best scale up its work on the catalytic role of aid in a way that is complementary to other donors. This is a sensible approach given Ireland's relatively small

size and its limited capacity.

There is also scope for the embassy to capitalise on the research commissioned by Ireland on the impact of the EU's Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), which highlights some concerns around their impact on sugar exporting countries like Malawi (Chapter 1).

Ireland is taking initial steps on beyond aid issues

Ireland's embassy in Malawi has reflected on how it can do more to implement the Government's Africa Strategy, *Ireland and Africa – our Partnership with a Changing Continent* (DFAT, 2011). The embassy's business plan includes some activities to meet Ireland's objectives in Malawi beyond development, noting that Malawi is heavily dependent upon official development assistance. The main challenge is to identify where Ireland can add value (Irish Aid, 2014). While being realistic about the potential for promoting two-way trade and Irish economic interests in Malawi compared with the potential in South Africa, for example, the embassy supported the participation of the Malawi Investment and Trade Centre at the Africa-Ireland Economic Forum in 2013. It also assists Irish companies to seek opportunities in Malawi.

At the time of the peer review visit, no other Irish government department was operating in Malawi. The embassy is keen to engage with other parts of the Irish government to deliver its development assistance when relevant. It is currently discussing a programme of capacity building co-operation between Malawi and Irish police.

Ireland's policies, strategies and aid allocations

Ireland aligns strongly to Malawi's development priorities

Ireland's Country Strategy for Malawi (2010-14), which focuses on Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 1 "to ensure households are better nourished, food secure and less vulnerable to poverty", aligns closely to the first objective of the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy 2011-2016, which prioritises agriculture and food security.

Three key outcomes are envisaged in Ireland's country strategy paper: 1) increased food productivity and crop diversification adapted to climate change; 2) improved nutrition and social supports to enhance the resilience of households; and 3) improved governance and service delivery, with a focus on household food security and resilience. There is a strong focus on nutrition for mothers and children and on increasing the resilience of Malawi's poorest households, notably in disaster prone districts.

Malawian partners welcomed the Irish government's invitation to its Hunger, Nutrition and Climate Justice Conference in April 2013 in Dublin. Since then, Malawi has been accepted as a member of the G8 New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition. The Irish embassy also contributed to the preparation of the Country Co-operation Framework for this New Alliance, in which Irish Aid's support for agriculture and food security and nutrition is reflected.

ODA accounts for about 40% of Malawi's public finances

Providers of development assistance play an extremely important role in Malawi, with assistance making up 40% of the government budget and 80% of its development budget. Malawi received USD 1.17 billion in ODA in 2012, a rise from previous years. In 2012 the largest bilateral donor was the United Kingdom, followed by the United States, Norway, Japan and Germany, Canada and Ireland.

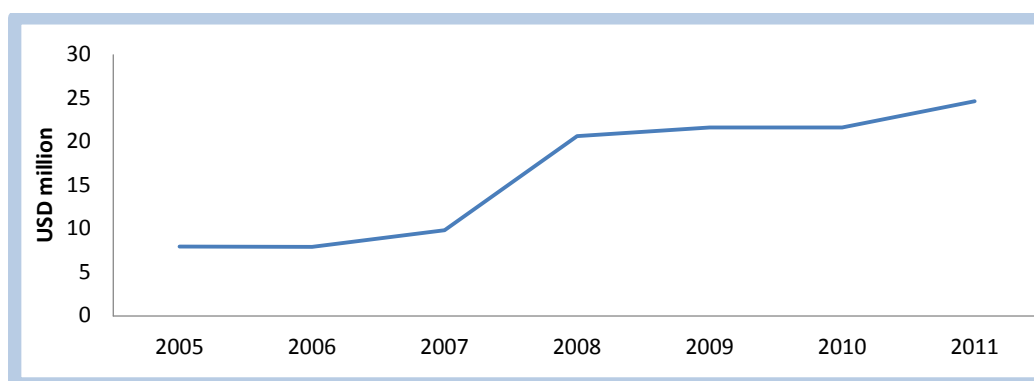
By 2012 Ireland was the seventh largest bilateral donor to Malawi, allocating USD 24 million, or 2% of total net ODA to Malawi.

In terms of sectors, the social sector (in particular health) has received the largest amount of total ODA over the last five years. Overall, 65% of ODA in Malawi is delivered as project type interventions; 23% of aid in 2012 was delivered as budget support (sector and general). The major providers of budget support, which was suspended in 2014 following the cashgate scandal, were the EU, the World Bank, the United Kingdom, Germany and Norway.

Ireland's ODA to Malawi has increased significantly, from USD 9.4 million in 2007 to USD 24 million in 2012 (Figure C.1). The budget envelope for the country strategy paper, which is less than total Irish ODA to Malawi, increased from EUR 8.4 million in 2010 to EUR 12.3 million in 2012. In 2012 an additional EUR 5 million flowed from Ireland to Malawi via headquarters-managed civil society funding.

In 2012, 35% of Ireland's aid to Malawi was allocated to agriculture, 14% to health, 13% to emergency response and disaster preparedness, and 12% to social infrastructure and services. According to DAC data, Ireland is in eight sectors in Malawi and in three of them among the top 90% of allocations.

Figure C.1 Ireland's bilateral aid flows to Malawi, 2005-11, USD million, constant prices USD 2011



Source: DAC Statistics.

CSOs and multilateral organisations are key strategic partners for delivering Ireland's ODA in Malawi

The majority of Ireland's assistance in 2012 was channelled through the NGO sector (USD 9.6 million), followed by USD 6 million to the public sector and USD 5.1 million through the multilateral sector (multi-bi). A strong feature of Ireland's support to NGOs is the large share provided as core funding. Ireland has also helped to establish an alliance of CSOs focusing on nutrition and, along with the United Kingdom and Norway, the Tiltonse Fund, which provides support to national and international CSOs to promote accountability and good governance. The Fund has approved over 40 grants distributing GBP 6.7 million from 2011 to May 2014.

The Irish embassy meets regularly and informally with Irish NGOs which are based in Malawi and receive programme funding via the Irish Aid headquarters. The organisations welcome the openness of the embassy, but there was a clear demand for more formal and regular strategic consultation with the embassy, notably on respective plans and activities in Malawi with a view to strengthening synergies.

Ireland engages strategically with multilateral organisations in Malawi. This ensures good synergies with its bilateral programme. It also supports the core work of multilateral partners. By giving feedback to headquarters on the performance of multilateral partners it contributes to quality dialogue based on evidence from the ground.

Slow overall progress in meeting aid effectiveness principles in Malawi

The Malawian government has put in place a number of mechanisms and procedures to assist it and its development partners to meet their international aid effectiveness commitments. However, while there is good government dialogue with partners at high level, many mechanisms at sectoral level are not functioning fully and progress to date in achieving the international aid effectiveness commitments remains slow. Medium-term predictability remains a problem for Malawi, hindering planning. According to the OECD/UNDP 2014 Global Monitoring Report, medium-term predictability remains problematic for the country, with the government having data for only 6% of its aid flows up until 2016 (OECD/UNDP, 2014). In addition, only 49% of aid scheduled for the government sector in Malawi was recorded on budget in 2012. The Malawian government is in the process of finalising a Development Co-operation Strategy for the next four years. This will hopefully improve the effectiveness of its aid inflows by defining better what the government and development partners need to do to implement the Paris and Busan principles.

Box C.1 Donor Co-ordination Mechanisms in Malawi

Government of Malawi has well functioning mechanisms for enabling high-level policy dialogues, with regular meetings with Heads of Missions and Heads of Co-operation. These mechanisms are highly valued by the government and its development partners. There is also a well established joint donor budget support group, the Common Approach to Budget Support, that has a jointly agreed performance assessment framework in place. The EU, Germany, Norway, the United Kingdom, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the World Bank are all members of the group. Ireland is an active observer, although it has never provided budget support. These mechanisms have enabled open dialogue to be maintained, even during challenging moments like the recent “cashgate” incident which uncovered endemic corruption and theft in the public sector and has led to the budget support group suspending their support pending government implementation of a set of jointly agreed performance indicators.

At the sectoral level, working groups have been established since 2006 to enable a better division of labour. However, they vary widely in their functionality, with many not working at all; in the case of the health sector there are 39 working groups on health, hindering rather than helping co-ordination. The EU has announced that it will gradually move towards joint programming and a better division of labour among EU members, but this will take time. In terms of aid data flows, the government has launched an Aid Management Platform (<http://malawiaid.finance.gov.mw/>) which aims to increase the quality and predictability of ODA information for budget planning. While Ireland has fully submitted its data to the government, many donors are still only providing partial data and data quality remains a challenge.

Source: Interviews held by Peer Review team in Malawi.

Organisation and management

Good co-ordination and planning; empowered local staff

The embassy’s business plan responds to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade’s *Statement of Strategy* setting out clear objectives and goals. There is a clear division of labour among staff and regular team meetings to assess progress made in meeting objectives and to refine work plans. The embassy’s locally recruited staff manage programmes and effectively represent Ireland in policy and technical dialogue. They are a key strength of Ireland’s development co-operation in Malawi.

Human resource management is a challenge

Ireland's development co-operation in Malawi faces numerous human resources challenges. These include:

- staff capacity to deliver the programmes can be strained as a result of a high turnover of staff and difficulties in getting all posts filled. For example, the position of Development Specialist which has been vacant since 2011;
- the embassy, which is not consulted for staffing decisions made by headquarters (e.g. recruitment and rotation of diplomats), is not in a position to help ensure that its needs for specific competencies are met; and
- there is a sense among locally-recruited staff that the human resource management policy and approach for locally-recruited Irish Aid staff could be clarified and explain why different rules may apply to staff working in the partner countries.

Partnerships, results and accountability

A flexible and predictable partner

Since 2007, when Malawi became a key partner country, Ireland has firmly established itself as a trusted partner that punches above its weight. Partners in the Malawian government, and bilateral, multilateral and civil society organisations, consistently stated that Ireland adds value as an honest broker and is a flexible, pragmatic and innovative partner.

The Irish embassy is able to adjust its programmes and instruments in light of changing contexts. Ireland, for example, was praised by its partners for its ability to find additional funds quickly to help replenish strategic grain reserves in 2012-13 in the face of country-wide food shortages. However, stricter and more detailed budgeting requirements from headquarters could undermine this flexibility. Ireland should ensure that it maintains the good balance it has achieved between aid predictability with some budgetary flexibility, which is strength of its programme which needs to be sensitive to the reality of programming in the field.

Ireland is dedicated to delivering effective development aid

Ireland's Country Strategy Paper for Malawi firmly embeds the international aid effectiveness principles as the key way in which it will deliver on its goals. It does this through its active support and leadership in relevant co-ordination platforms and joint funding mechanisms (it is an observer to the donor budget support group and was chair of the donor group on nutrition); its emphasis on linking its local and national work; and its provision of timely information on its aid flows. Good examples of how Ireland works at the national and local levels are the National Social Support Policy and the Irish Aid supported Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP). Ireland participates in joint programming and contributes to a multi-donor trust fund for the Agricultural Sector Wide Programme (ASWAp) with six other donors and the Public Finance and Economic Management Reform Programme. It funds and sits on the board of the Tilitonse joint donor-civil society basket fund.

Ireland uses a mix of aid modalities in Malawi. In 2012 the majority of Irish assistance was provided via pooled and core funding, most of which went to NGOs, but which also went to the government and multilaterals (USD 15.7 million in total in 2012). Project type interventions made up a further USD 6.7 million.

A valued approach to working with local actors, but a need to consolidate the number of partners

Ireland invests in long-term partnerships by providing predictable and multi-annual funding and engaging in building partners' capacity. It is also valued for supporting partners in delivering longer-term results. For example, Ireland has supported a project with the International Potato Center in Malawi that required long-term investment in research to enable it to establish high quality potato seeds that can be produced sustainably in Malawi for smallholder farmers. Strategic targeting of the fellowship programme and support for dedicated thematic staff in partner organisations are proving to be useful approaches for building capacity. Capitalising on the synergies between its partnerships and supporting research for innovation allows Ireland to increase its impact.

However, Ireland is aware that it needs to consolidate its partnerships and focus on fewer of them in light of resources and staff capacity. The embassy is committed to reducing the number of its partners from over 36 to 19 in coming years to achieve this – exiting from some partnerships and consolidating others (Irish Aid, 2012).

Cross-cutting issues are mainstreamed

Irish Aid in Malawi addresses the four cross-cutting issues both intrinsically (e.g. nutrition of people with HIV/AIDs, mothers and children) and explicitly, especially in relation to environmental sustainability and climate change through its focus on resilience and conservation farming. The embassy's 2012 report on its approach to mainstreaming policy priority issues in Malawi is a good example of how lessons are reviewed and shared.

A joint visit to Malawi of the gender, environment and HIV/AIDS headquarters specialists facilitated a comprehensive response to mainstreaming in the Country Strategy Paper. However, as in most DAC countries, staff with responsibility for the cross-cutting issues (focal points) can find it hard to keep on top of issues while also managing programmes. Moreover, they may not always be sufficiently senior to lead and incentivise change.

Box C.2 Identifying priorities through the lens of vulnerability

Ireland's solid understanding of the needs and key vulnerabilities of the Malawian population translates into an integrated programme that focuses on building the resilience of poor people. Its Country Strategy Paper for Malawi was developed around a vulnerabilities framework, so that it is both sensitive and responsive to the interconnections among the four cross-cutting issues of gender equality, environment, governance and HIV/AIDs and how these affect the determinants of vulnerability in Malawi. As a result, Irish Aid in Malawi is committed to mainstreaming these issues in the context of addressing the multiple dimensions of vulnerability and building resilience.

Source: Interviews held by Peer Review team in Malawi.

A strong results focus in country strategies and programmes

Ireland's results-based management approaches translate into operations at the country level, as seen in the results framework for the Country Strategy Paper and the annual report on the programme. In particular, significant effort has been invested in identifying relevant baselines for measuring progress and in identifying indicators and targets jointly with partners. Setting outcome indicators remains work in progress.

Partners appreciate Ireland's approach to joint monitoring. There is still scope to standardise tools for monitoring and reporting, including on cross-cutting issues.

Evaluation and research findings should be disseminated

While embassy staff and Ireland's partners in Malawi are familiar with the findings of evaluation and research, these are not shared systematically beyond the programme or published on the Irish Aid website. As observed in Dublin, DFAT's information management system is not fit for purpose. The manual and non-standardised approach to collecting and sharing information and knowledge is time-consuming, which hinders institutional learning.

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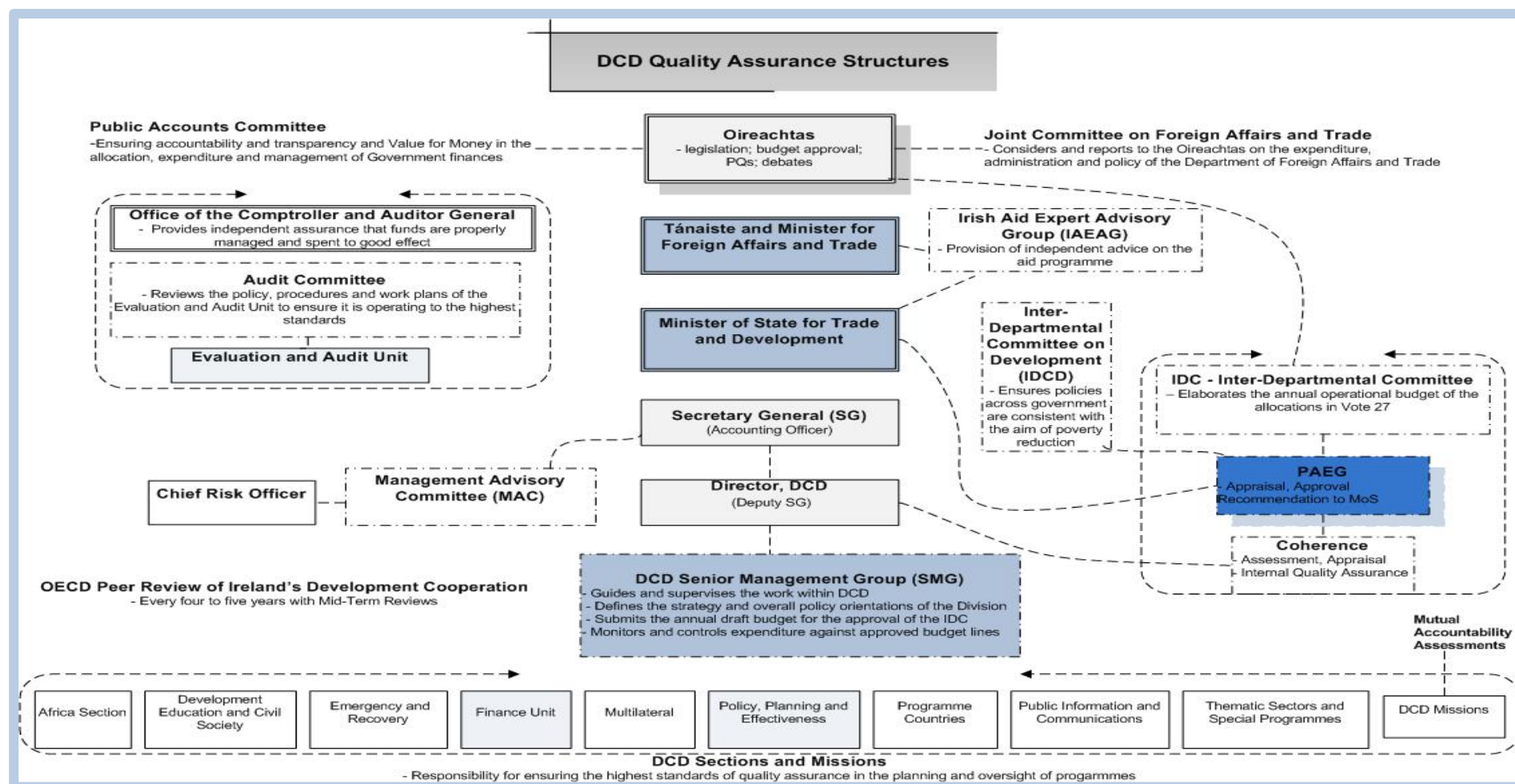
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Annex D: Ireland's Development Co-operation System



ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The OECD is a unique forum where governments work together to address the economic, social and environmental challenges of globalisation. The OECD is also at the forefront of efforts to understand and to help governments respond to new developments and concerns, such as corporate governance, the information economy and the challenges of an ageing population. The Organisation provides a setting where governments can compare policy experiences, seek answers to common problems, identify good practice and work to co-ordinate domestic and international policies.

The OECD member countries are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. The European Union takes part in the work of the OECD.

OECD Publishing disseminates widely the results of the Organisation's statistics gathering and research on economic, social and environmental issues, as well as the conventions, guidelines and standards agreed by its members.

DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE

To achieve its aims, the OECD has set up a number of specialised committees. One of these is the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), whose mandate is to promote development co-operation and other policies so as to contribute to sustainable development – including pro-poor economic growth, poverty reduction and the improvement of living standards in developing countries – and to a future in which no country will depend on aid. To this end, the DAC has grouped the world's main donors, defining and monitoring global standards in key areas of development.

The members of the DAC are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, the European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The DAC issues guidelines and reference documents in the DAC Guidelines and Reference Series to inform and assist members in the conduct of their development co-operation programmes.