

# OECD DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE

...where governments come together to make aid work





OECD

# WHERE GOVERNMENTS COME TOGETHER TO MAKE AID WORK

The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) is a unique forum where donor governments (and multilateral organisations like the World Bank and the United Nations) come together to increase the effectiveness of their aid and coordinate their development efforts. The DAC is:

- Helping to change behaviour in the aid system to achieve the best possible results.
- The definitive source of bilateral statistics on the global aid effort.
- A leading source of good practice in development co-operation.
- A unique and neutral forum to bring governments together.

OECD DAC members have committed themselves to increase aid by US\$ 50 billion by 2010, and to double aid to Africa. Added together, the aid from DAC member governments is more than 90% of the world's total Official Development Assistance.

## How it works

- The OECD is made up of 30 member countries who share a commitment to democratic government and the market economy.
- Its governing body, the Council is represented by Ambassadors from member countries. It is chaired by Angel Gurría, who took up the post of Secretary-General on 1 June 2006.

The DAC is one of the main committees of the OECD, and is represented by 23 members: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, Commission of the European Communities.

- The DAC is serviced by the Development Co-operation Directorate (DCD), one of a dozen directorates in the OECD Secretariat working on substantive themes.
- Headquarters are in Paris and the Directorate employs about 90 staff.
- The DAC has established working parties and networks in which member countries are generally represented by specialists. Their respective mandates reflect ongoing concerns of the committee, like statistics, aid effectiveness, good governance, poverty reduction, evaluation, gender and the environment.
- Statistics and reports on aid and other resource flows to developing countries are published each year, based principally on reporting by DAC member countries.
- Peer reviews of each member's aid programme are carried out once every four to five years.

- Policy guidance is published on a regular basis, and may include a 'recommendation' which is a more formal OECD mechanism to express the political commitment of member countries, for example the 2002 recommendation on the untying of aid to least developed countries.
- The DAC is part of the OECD Development Cluster which includes the Development Centre, the Sahel & West Africa Club and the Centre for Co-operation with Non-Members.
- The Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21) is serviced by a small secretariat hosted by the DAC and was set up in 1999 to promote evidence-based policymaking and monitoring in all countries, especially developing countries.
- OECD DAC guidelines published and promoted globally, helped to secure poverty reduction as a core goal of all aid and development programmes.
- Using country peer reviews and statistics, the DAC monitors commitments made by donors to increase the amount of aid as well as its effectiveness. By critically examining member's efforts, donors hold each other accountable for achieving agreed goals.

#### How it began

- The OECD DAC was established in 1960 as a forum for consultation amongst aid donors.

It emerged as part of the geopolitical upheaval at that time when former colonies became independent countries and needed strong support from industrialised countries. This led to the foundations of the current aid system.

Since its establishment, the DAC has served as a key platform for discussions about aid.

#### Helping to change behaviour

- In 1996 the DAC formulated a watershed statement, 'Shaping the 21st Century: the contribution of Development Cooperation'. This selected a series of development 'goals' which served as the basis for the Millennium Development Goals in 2000.

#### Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness

The pressure is on the international community to increase not only the amount of aid to the poorest countries, but the quality of that aid. In March 2005 a major milestone was reached when over one hundred donors and developing countries endorsed the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. This set up targets and indicators to measure efforts by all countries to make their aid more effective. It focuses on:

- **Ownership:** Developing countries set their own strategies for poverty reduction, improve their institutions and tackle corruption.
- **Alignment:** Donor countries align behind these objectives and use local systems.
- **Harmonisation:** Donor countries coordinate, simplify procedures, and share information to avoid duplication.
- **Results:** Developing countries and donors shift the focus to results, and results get measured.
- **Mutual accountability:** Donors and partners are accountable for Development results.

The OECD DAC played a key role in bringing countries together and negotiating agreement on the targets and indicators so that the Paris Declaration was endorsed.

**Remember these dates**

Each year the DAC announces key statistics on aid flows, in April for preliminary aggregates and December for the final details.

A variety of annual analytical and statistical publications include:

- The Chair's Report (the Development Cooperation Report) released early each year with an analysis of the key issues in aid and development, and a summary of the latest statistics on aid flows around the globe.
- The OECD Journal on Development which keeps policy makers up to date on the latest issues throughout the year.
- Development Aid at a Glance, updated in March.
- Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows to Aid Recipients, updated in January.

**For more information contact:**

[Dac.contact@oecd.org](mailto:Dac.contact@oecd.org)

**Or visit:**

[www.oecd.org/dac](http://www.oecd.org/dac)

[www.sourceoecd.org/developmentreport](http://www.sourceoecd.org/developmentreport)





## PEER REVIEWS

One of the most effective ways the DAC can influence development behaviour is through its unique peer reviews. This is the only forum today that regularly examines government development co-operation systems and offers constructive feedback on how to reform them.

A country's aid systems are reviewed once every four to five years by other members represented in the DAC. Recommendations and suggestions for improvements are made in the final peer review document, which is published in the OECD Journal on Development.

### The main objectives of the peer reviews are:

- To monitor countries' development policies and programmes, and assess their effectiveness against the goals agreed in the DAC, as well as against nationally established objectives.
- To help improve individual and collective aid performance globally.
- To provide comparative reporting and analysis for wider publics in OECD countries.
- To identify good practices, share experience, and encourage co-ordination.

### The peer review process

Each peer review is carried out by an examining team including two country representatives from the DAC and staff from the DAC secretariat. The team does extensive analysis, consults broadly and travels both to the donor's headquarters and to missions in partner countries.

The end product of this six month process is a formal peer review report which is used to conduct a day-long formal review meeting in Paris. The meeting concludes with specific DAC recommendations for improvements.

### Changing behaviour

Most peer reviews cause some form of immediate change, and in some cases the changes can be far-reaching.

### Peer Review helped create a new aid agency in New Zealand

The 2000 Peer Review of New Zealand suggested the need for an examination of how government aid was structured in order to improve core competencies in development. The Minister and Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs subsequently commissioned an independent review which echoed OECD DAC recommendations. In 2001 the government decided to establish NZAID as a semi-autonomous agency, attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but with its own identity and mission.

### For further information visit:

[www.oecd.org/dac/peerreviews](http://www.oecd.org/dac/peerreviews)





## STATISTICS

The DAC collects statistics and information on:

- How much aid donors are giving.
- Which countries receive aid.
- Which sectors (health, agriculture, trade, etc) get the most and which get the least.
- How aid is delivered.

Its Working Party on Statistics brings international aid statisticians together to look at how statistics can respond to the key issues in development.

### DAC statistics are unique

The DAC collects detailed financial and qualitative information on aid flows from its 23 members, from multilateral aid agencies such as the World Bank, the United Nations, and from an increasing number of donors outside the OECD.

All the data collected use standard definitions and categories based on those used by the United Nations to establish international targets for aid flows promoting development.

The OECD DAC is the only reliable source of internationally comparable data on foreign aid.

### Using statistics to change behaviour

The DAC uses its statistics to monitor member country's performances against established targets. The data is used:

- In DAC peer reviews.
- To monitor government commitments to increase aid.
- To establish the volume of aid being monitored under the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

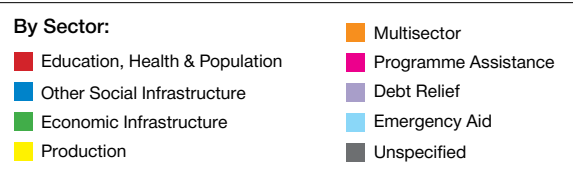
When the G8 countries announced in 2005 that they would double aid to Africa and increase it by US\$50 billion by 2010, they used OECD DAC statistics.

### How to access DAC statistics

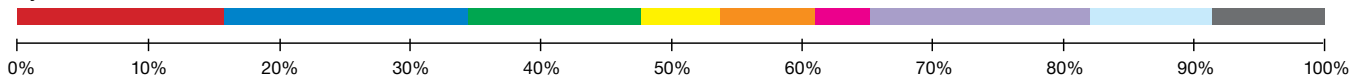
The DAC makes this data available free on its website as well as through a variety of analytical and statistical publications. Numerous national and international agency publications also use the data in their own analyses and presentations.

**Aid at a Glance (updated annually on-line)**

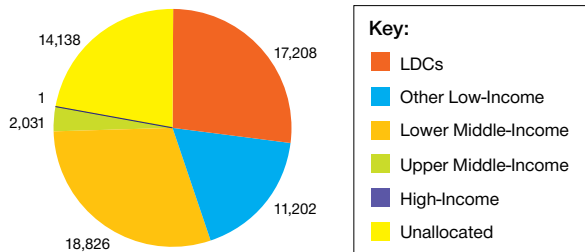
In 2003-04 the top ten recipients of aid were Iraq, Democratic Republic of Congo, China, India, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Egypt, Pakistan, Ghana and Viet Nam. In 2005 total ODA was US\$106 billion. The following charts cover gross bilateral ODA, 2003-2004.



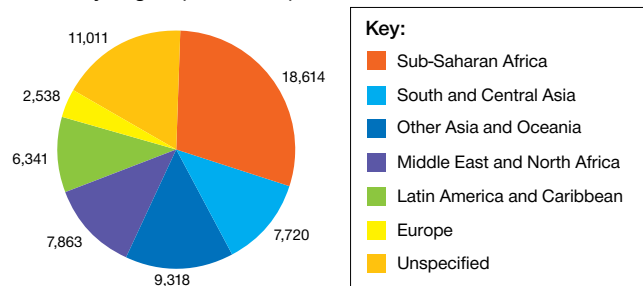
**By Sector**



**By Income Group (US\$ million)**



**By Region (US\$ million)**



For the latest updates to these statistics visit the website:  
[www.oecd.org/dac/stats](http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats).



## AID EFFECTIVENESS

The DAC produces policy guidance on how to improve the effectiveness of aid, and since the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness was signed in 2005, has played a key role in maintaining the pressure to implement the Declaration. It does this by helping to bring OECD and developing countries together on a regular basis. It is also conducting an unprecedented monitoring survey on the quality and rate of implementation so far.

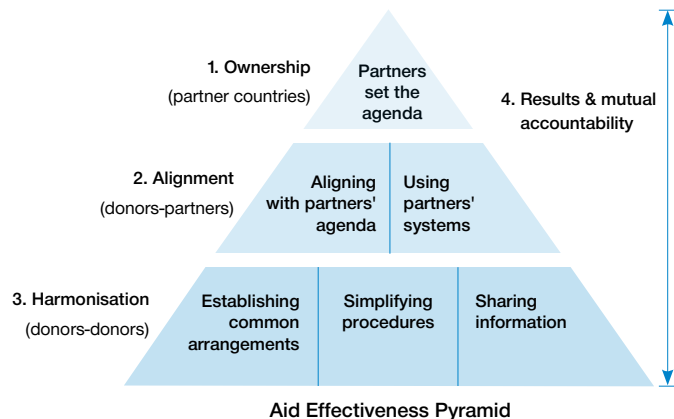
### **Implementing the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness**

The Paris Declaration marked an unprecedented level of resolve to reform aid and make it more effective. It is now being implemented in developing countries through governments' own poverty reduction strategies, and in aid programmes throughout the developing world.

### **A global forum to improve the quality of aid**

The DAC has established the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness, an international partnership of donors and developing countries. This has become the major international forum for development policy makers to get together to improve the effectiveness of aid. The Working Party relies on the expertise of its four specialised Joint Ventures on: Monitoring the Paris Declaration, Managing for Development Results, Public Financial Management, and Procurement.

56 partnership commitments and 12 indicators with targets were agreed around five key principles:



### Monitoring progress

The DAC is measuring the progress of implementation against the 12 indicators agreed in the Paris Declaration. The first round of monitoring was launched in May 2006 and about 40 partner countries volunteered to participate. The subsequent monitoring surveys will be conducted in 2008 and after 2010, the target year for assessing the results of the Paris Declaration.

### Examples of targets agreed in the Paris Declaration:

- Three-quarters of all partner countries will have established strong operational development strategies.
- Half of partner countries' public financial management systems will have improved.
- At least 85 per cent of aid flows will be reported in developing countries national budgets.
- Two-thirds of donors' country analytic work will be undertaken jointly.

For more information visit:

[www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness](http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness)





## ECONOMIC GROWTH & POVERTY REDUCTION

If the benefits of development are to be felt by the poorest communities, poor people need to participate in economic growth. The DAC produces policy guidance on poverty reduction, economic growth and trade, and brings governments and practitioners together to promote pro-poor growth, aid for trade and encourage donors to untie their aid.

### Pro-poor growth

While growth rates have been increasing in several developing countries, the challenge is to ensure that growth accelerates further, is sustained, and is more effective in reducing poverty.

DAC policy guidance helps practitioners understand the links between growth and poverty reduction.

- Markets need to work better for the poor and the poor need to be empowered to participate in policy making.
- Donors should rethink their dwindling support for infrastructure and agriculture, and strengthen links with the private sector.
- Trade and investment are important engines of growth, but their impact on poverty reduction can be improved.

### Global network to reduce poverty

The DAC has established a Network on Poverty Reduction (POVNET). This network includes experts from DAC member countries in several areas, including enterprise development, infrastructure and social development.

Its policy guidance on pro-poor growth is helping to change behaviour, and its Poverty Impact Assessment tool will help donors gauge the impact of their programmes on poverty reduction. The DAC also works closely with the OECD's Trade Committee and Investment Committee.

#### **Aid for trade**

How can low income countries better capture the benefits of trade and make it a driving force for broad-based economic growth and poverty reduction? Developing countries often lack capacities to trade effectively and reap benefits for development.

The DAC is helping to tackle the challenge of how poorer countries can benefit more from trade. As part of the 'aid for trade' agenda, it assesses the effectiveness of trade related assistance, provides guidance on how to strengthen its impact, and has created, jointly with the World Trade Organisation, a database on trade related assistance to guide policy and measure its results.

#### **DAC Recommendation on Untying Aid to the Least Developed Countries**

Discussions on how to improve the effectiveness of aid have often focused on whether aid should be freely available to purchase goods and services, i.e. "untied", or whether it should be restricted to purchasing goods from the country providing the aid.

Tied aid raises the cost of goods and services by between 15% and 30%, and increases the administrative burdens.

In 2001, the OECD DAC reached agreement on a Recommendation to untie aid to the Least Developed Countries. All DAC Members have complied with the Recommendation, and several countries have untied their aid beyond this.

**For further information visit:**

[www.oecd.org/dac/poverty](http://www.oecd.org/dac/poverty)

[www.oecd.org/dac/investment](http://www.oecd.org/dac/investment)

[www.oecd.org/dac/trade](http://www.oecd.org/dac/trade)





## ENVIRONMENT

The DAC focuses on areas where environment and development co-operation meet, and works particularly on defining tools and approaches for integrating environmental considerations into development programmes.

### **Bringing the environment and aid together**

The DAC's Network on Development Co-operation and Environment (ENVIRONET) includes government aid agencies and multilateral agencies like the World Bank and the United Nations. Non-governmental organisations from across the world also contribute.

The Network provides a neutral forum for sharing experiences and monitoring the efforts of members to support the integration of environment and development in poor countries.

### **How environmentally friendly is development?**

How we manage the environment will affect the long-term success of development. Without taking environmental issues into account, today's development successes risk turning into tomorrow's environmental challenges.

Poor people in developing countries rely heavily on natural resources – soil, forests, water and air – and are usually the first to suffer when those resources are damaged. The environment should be a core consideration in all development activities, just as economic and social issues are considered central.

In particular, long-term development projects such as large-scale investments in bridges and roads need to be built to cope with natural disasters and climate change.

#### What does the DAC do?

To help development practitioners integrate environmental considerations into their aid programmes, ENVIRONET developed guidance on “Strategic Environmental Assessment”. This received the 2006 “Institutional Award” by the International Association for Impact Assessment.

ENVIRONET collaborates with the DAC Working Party on Statistics to improve data on aid in support of the implementation of global conventions on climate change, desertification and biological diversity.

#### Leaders in aid and the environment meet for the first time in 15 years

In April 2006, twenty-eight OECD Development and Environment ministers met officially and adopted a Declaration on Integrating Climate Change Adaptation into Development Co-operation and a Framework for Common Action around Shared Goals. The documents commit OECD member countries to collaborate on key issues relating to environment and development. [www.oecd.org/epocdacmin2006](http://www.oecd.org/epocdacmin2006)

**For further information contact:**  
[www.oecd.org/dac/environment](http://www.oecd.org/dac/environment)







## EVALUATING AID

As aid levels increase, the demand to see aid programmes measured and evaluated is also increasing. This becomes more challenging when many donors are working together on the same aid programmes. The need is growing to conduct joint evaluations, but in a way that is useful to each individual country.

Looking at how best to measure the effectiveness of aid is at the core of all DAC work. The Network on Development Evaluation which is a subsidiary body of the OECD DAC exists to:

- Support independent evaluations of OECD member governments development efforts.
- Guide governments on how to evaluate their own aid, and do joint evaluations.

### A global network to evaluate a global challenge

Heads of Evaluation from government aid agencies and international organisations come together in the network to share best practice and collaborate on joint evaluations. They also look at ways to increase the capacity of poorer countries to evaluate their own aid programmes.

### Using evaluation to help change behaviour

Today, donors coordinate their efforts behind the priorities set by developing country governments, making it more important to coordinate their evaluations and save on transaction costs by reducing the overall number of individual evaluations. The Network on Development

Evaluation has developed Guidance for Managing Joint Evaluations, and in doing so has encouraged more collaborative approaches to evaluation.

### A joint evaluation of budget support

OECD donor countries now channel about \$5 billion – some 5% of their aid – directly through the budgets of developing country governments. An independent evaluation of so-called ‘budget support’ between 1994-2004 was hosted by the OECD DAC, and showed that this system of delivering aid is no more vulnerable to corruption than other forms of aid, and if the political will to reduce poverty exists, can:

- Encourage better coordination between donors.
- Strengthen the financial and budget systems of poor countries.
- Improve expenditure on health and education.

But it warned that donors should be prepared to better analyse political risks, and be aware that budget support is not a panacea.



For further information visit:

[www.oecd.org/dac/evaluationnetwork](http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluationnetwork)





## GENDER

With increases in aid and a greater emphasis on the local ownership of aid programmes in developing countries, there is a need for fresh thinking in the area of gender equality. The DAC is a forum to innovate and to help donors find ways to encourage developing countries to place gender equality firmly on their own agendas and encourage women's empowerment.

*“Forget China, India and the internet – economic growth is driven by women.”* (Economist, 15 April 2006)

### A global forum for gender experts

The DAC's Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET) brings together gender equality specialists from development agencies and institutions across the world, and has produced research and analysis on how to integrate gender equality into all aspects of development co-operation.

GENDERNET's survey on **The Approach of DAC Members to Gender Equality in Development Co-operation – Changes Since 1999** which examined the institutional and staffing arrangements of member agencies, revealed that:

- Most agencies have a solid policy on gender equality that combines mainstreaming and targeted interventions;
- No agency has put in place the resource or systems needed to implement their policy fully, and
- There is no “magic bullet to achieve gender equality”

### Fresh thinking

How we deliver aid has changed (for example a move away from project aid like building a school, to programme aid at a sector level like education). This requires new approaches to gender inequality. Donors have recognised that achieving gender equality takes long-term commitment and a mix of approaches, from mainstreaming gender in all aid programmes, to targeted programmes on gender issues. Revised OECD DAC guidelines will reflect changed approaches and the “lessons learned” since 1999.

The OECD's **Creditor Reporting System study – Aid activities in support of gender equality, 1999-2003** - revealed that US\$ 3.1 billion of annual sector specific government aid is focused on gender equality.

- Two-thirds goes to the social sectors (education, health, reproductive health).
- Little is reported in the transport, communications and energy infrastructure sectors even though well-designed infrastructure can benefit women by improving access to markets, schools and health services.
- Donors tend to focus on social sectors rather than seeing women as active players in economic growth.

**For further information visit:**

[www.oecd.org/dac/gender](http://www.oecd.org/dac/gender)





## GOVERNANCE & CONFLICT PREVENTION

There is a growing international consensus to:

- Fight corruption.
- ‘Unlock’ the potential capacity in developing countries to manage their own affairs.
- Help prevent violent conflict and improve security.
- Engage more effectively in ‘fragile’ and conflict-torn states, home to some of the poorest people in the world.

The DAC provides policy guidance and practical tools in all these areas, and gives experts from member countries a forum to exchange experiences. It hosts networks on governance, on conflict and peace, and on fragile states.

### A global network to improve governance

The DAC Network on Governance (GOVNET) brings together representatives from OECD members and international institutions. Its key goal is to improve the way donors support good governance.

#### The OECD fights corruption

Guidance from the GOVNET, including a set of Principles for Donor Action and a Policy Paper on Anti-Corruption, helps donors to coordinate their anti-corruption effort and fosters anti-corruption actions in developing countries. This fits with wider OECD action to fight corruption, such as the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention.

GOVNET's focus is on the fight against corruption, improving accountability, supporting capacity development and integrating human rights into development.

### A global network on conflict prevention, peace building and security

Violent conflict remains a major obstacle to development. It is estimated that the cost to a country of internal conflict is somewhere between US\$4 billion and US\$54 billion, and it is poor people who suffer most from violence. The OECD DAC Network on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation (CPDC) brings together experts in the areas of conflict and security to look at the best ways to help prevent violent conflict and to build peace.

### Security System Reform is central

The ground-breaking 2004 OECD DAC Guidelines on Security System Reform and Governance show how an accountable and efficient security system can be a force for peace and stability. This work is now recognised as the international reference point for security system reform and is having a significant impact on how OECD governments support reform.

**OECD Black Book on Security Reform - moving from policy to practice**

The OECD DAC recognised the need to make a direct impact on field operations, and so translated its security system reform policy into a practical field manual. 'Supporting Security and Justice: A Handbook' provides practical guidance on how to design and implement security system reform programmes.

Applying the DAC Principles for Good International Engagement in **Fragile States** in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Nepal, Somalia, Sudan, Solomon Islands, Yemen and Zimbabwe has catalysed improved co-ordination among donors in these difficult contexts.

**Aid to fragile states**

A third of the world's poor live in countries where the state lacks either the will and the capacity to provide the basic necessities for development and security. But many others are affected by state failure. Research indicates that fragile states have an estimated negative impact of 1.6% on economic growth for neighbours, and this can spill across regions.

People living in 'fragile states' represent:

- One third of those living on less than \$1 per day;
- Half of all children dying before the age of five;
- Over one third of people suffering from HIV/AIDS - proportionally four times higher than elsewhere in the developing world.

The DAC Fragile States Group (FSG) responds to these challenges by working on how to design and implement programmes tailored to fragile states.

**For further information visit:**

[www.oecd.org/dac/conflict](http://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict)  
[www.oecd.org/dac/fragilestates](http://www.oecd.org/dac/fragilestates)  
[www.oecd.org/dac/governance](http://www.oecd.org/dac/governance)





## POLICY COHERENCE

Aid alone cannot reduce poverty. Other policy actions by OECD governments potentially have an even greater impact on poverty reduction, which is why the OECD encourages policy makers in areas like trade and investment for example, to consider trade-offs to reach the international goal to support economic growth in developing countries.

In 2002, government ministers called for the OECD to 'enhance understanding of the development dimensions of member country policies and their impacts on developing countries. Analysis should consider trade-offs and potential synergies across such areas as trade, investment, agriculture etc'.

The DAC oversees this work across the OECD, and identifies bottlenecks that prevent whole-of-government approaches to development.

### **Joining up policies to support poor countries**

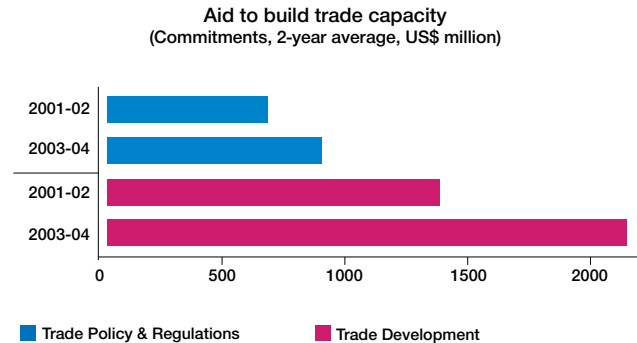
If there is no overall policy framework to prioritise the need for different donor government departments to work together in developing countries, there will be no coherent planning, and limited results.

The DAC has created an analytical framework on how to do policy coherence for development, and this is now tested regularly in DAC peer reviews. The results have been encouraging. In fragile states, for example defence, police, justice officials and others, work increasingly with aid staff to get positive results.

Policy coherence is a “two-way street”, and there is a need to make sure that developing countries can improve capacity (and governance if necessary) to benefit from supportive economic policies in OECD countries. The current emphasis on ‘aid for trade’ explicitly recognises this. Developing countries need to improve their ability to benefit from access to markets, when they get it. At the same time, OECD countries need to look at where their policies negatively impact on poor countries.

Much more remains to be done to improve policy coherence in governments. Areas like trade and agriculture will remain important. But other key sectors cannot be neglected. Migration, infectious and neglected diseases, and the introduction of technology into poor countries, all have an impact on poverty reduction.

Donor assistance to trade capacity building in developing countries increased by 50%.



This information is updated regularly on-line [www.oecd/dac/stats](http://www.oecd/dac/stats).

**For further information contact:**  
[www.oecd.org/development/policycoherence](http://www.oecd.org/development/policycoherence)





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Go to this address: [www.oecd.org/dac](http://www.oecd.org/dac)

Or email us on: [dac.contact@oecd.org](mailto:dac.contact@oecd.org)

**How can I find out more about the Paris Declaration?**

Go to this address: [www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness](http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness)

Or email us on: [dac.contact@oecd.org](mailto:dac.contact@oecd.org)

**Can I access OECD statistics on development cooperation for free?**

Yes you can. The OECD DAC makes its data available free on its website: [www.oecd.org/dac/stats](http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats)

**Where do I go for information on your policy guidance and publications?**

Go to the OECD DAC home page: [www.oecd.org/dac](http://www.oecd.org/dac)

Or contact SourceOECD for information on priced publications from the DAC and across the OECD: [www.sourceoecd.org](http://www.sourceoecd.org)

**Have you got a newsletter?**

Yes we have. It comes out once every two months and covers topical issues in development, from corruption to aid for trade. DACNews is available free at: [www.oecd.org/dac/newsletter](http://www.oecd.org/dac/newsletter)

**Can you tell me about job opportunities at the OECD?**

For the latest opportunities available, go to:

[www.oecd.org/hrm/vacancies](http://www.oecd.org/hrm/vacancies)

**Does the OECD DAC have offices in the field?**

No. We are a Paris based organisation which provides a neutral forum for policy makers and field practitioners from OECD countries and developing countries to come together, agree best practice and hold each other accountable for achieving development results. We publish policy guidance, conduct regular peer reviews of member countries aid systems, and collect statistics and data on aid flows.

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