

Concern
Worldwide

Pre-budget
Submission
2021

IRELAND'S EXEMPLARY RECORD OF LEAVING NO-ONE BEHIND



“Ireland has built a distinguished track record of responding to global development challenges like poverty, hunger and insecurity.

Today, our ODA (Official Development Assistance) programme is widely regarded as one of the highest quality development programmes in the world. Through its support for international development, Irish citizens have been instrumental in helping some of the poorest and most vulnerable people in the world to find new hope, and to build better lives for themselves and their families.

In good times and in bad, we have succeeded in maintaining and growing our official development assistance.”

Leo Varadkar, A Better World: Ireland’s Development Policy, 2018

The OECD DAC (Development Assistance Committee) has long recognised Ireland as one of the best performing donors when it comes to directing its development aid to the world’s neediest countries.

In May 2020, OECD DAC published its **latest peer review of Irish Aid**. The report determined that Ireland’s development initiatives were **“strong, with many areas of excellence”**, and that Ireland **“walks the talk” in prioritising the furthest behind and is “a leading advocate for multilateralism.”**

Cover Photo: Euphemia Inina (42) waters her market garden at her home in Mabayi, Cibitoke. As part of the Graduation Programme all participants are given seeds and training on how to grow food in their gardens. Burundi
Photo: Abbie Trayler-Smith / Concern Worldwide

Irish Official Development Assistance (ODA) is Essential

Unprecedented Need: Poverty, Hunger, Conflict and Climate Events

We are at a time of unprecedented global need. According to the **UNOCHA 2020 Global Humanitarian Overview** (HNO), a record **168 million people already required humanitarian assistance** across 53 countries at the beginning of this year. By June 2020, needs had increased exponentially – primarily due to COVID-19 – requiring \$10.3 billion and span crises in over 63 countries. These needs span health, food and nutrition, shelter, WASH, education and protection.

Over \$40 billion is now needed to address the spectrum of needs, but so far only only \$11.25 billion USD – or 28% of total requirements – has been funded, leaving a gap of 72%. By August 2020, needs have increased exponentially - primarily due to COVID-19 - and 421 million people are now in need of humanitarian assistance, across 63 countries.

COVID-19 has pushed people to breaking point across the world, but it has been particularly devastating for people who were already struggling, those whose food security was already precarious and those without the safety net of social protection. The pandemic now threatens to roll back the development gains so hard-won by the most vulnerable communities across the globe. This is expected to worsen as more countries experience economic recession.

A key recommendation of the DAC Peer Review was for Ireland **“develop and implement a comprehensive plan that identifies how to grow spending, and communicate the value of international development to the parliament and public... in order increase its ODA budget and meet its international commitment of 0.7% of GNI by 2030.”**

OECD DAC commended Ireland’s partnerships with civil society as particularly strong and characterised by quality funding and regular, open dialogue.

“A good range of tools – diplomatic, development and humanitarian – ensure that Ireland, also drawing on its own history, can design an appropriate response to individual fragile contexts. Its very flexible funding models, especially for humanitarian assistance, could provide useful inspiration for other DAC donors.”

Poverty

The World Bank estimates that **10% of the world's population** – 736 million people are living in extreme poverty, below the \$1.90 international poverty line.

COVID-19 is projected to push more than 70 million additional people into extreme poverty, and hundreds of millions more into unemployment and poverty. *(UN Special Rapporteur on Poverty)*

Already in 2020, the pandemic has pushed almost **37 million people below the US \$1.90 a day** extreme poverty line. *(Gates Foundation 2020)*

COVID-19 will **widen the poverty gap between women and men** reversing decades of progress to eradicate extreme poverty.

COVID-19 is also having a detrimental impact on levels of **gender-based violence**. Six months of lockdowns could result in an additional 31 million cases of gender-based violence. The pandemic is also expected to cause significant delays in programmes to end female genital mutilation and child marriage, resulting in an estimated 2 million more cases of FGM over the next decade than would otherwise have occurred and an estimated 13 million more child marriages. *(UNFPA 2020)*

Concern programmes have seen a spike in reported cases of GBV during lockdown periods.

Protection and GBV services are historically critically underfunded (it is estimated that less than 1% of funding to UN humanitarian plans supports GBV prevention and response activities) and must be prioritised as numbers requiring specialist services continue to increase.

Five years since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, notable progress had been made in some areas, such as improving maternal and child health, expanding access to electricity and increasing women's representation in government. Yet even these advances were offset elsewhere by growing food insecurity, deterioration of the natural environment, and persistent and pervasive inequalities.

Now, in only a short period of time, the COVID-19 pandemic has unleashed an unprecedented crisis, causing further disruption to SDG progress, with the world's poorest and most vulnerable affected the most. *(Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020)*

Hunger

Conflict, climate and economic collapse have left 135 million people in 55 countries experiencing acute hunger, according to the latest **Global Report on Food Crises**, the highest in four years.

8.9% of the world's population are currently hungry, yet the world's **farmers produce enough food to feed 10 billion people**. Africa is disproportionately affected per population, and by 2030 it is projected that the number of hungry people in Africa will rise to 433 million, of which 412 million will be in sub-Saharan countries.

Most of the world's worst food crises are all unfolding in countries plagued by both **conflict and climate shocks** including Yemen, DRC, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Syria, Sudan, and Northern Nigeria.

Throughout 2020, East Africa was at the epicentre of the **worst desert locust infestation in 70 years** with Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Uganda among the affected countries, as crops and livelihoods were devastated.

Globally, **over 3 billion people globally cannot afford a healthy diet**, the cost of which is higher than the international poverty line. *(SOFI 2019)* In 2020, **144 million children** (21.6%) under the age of five are **stunted** and **47 million** (6.9%) are **wasted**. It is estimated that **10,000 more children could die from malnutrition every month in 2020 due to COVID-19**. *(UNICEF 2020)* Malnutrition in all its forms costs the global economy as much as **USD 3.5 trillion**.

Conflict

Conflict is the single greatest driver of humanitarian crises today, and the biggest threat to progress towards a more prosperous, stable and sustainable future humanitarian crises. Global levels of ongoing conflict has increased steadily since 2008. *(Global Peace Index 2020)* The world is now considerably less peaceful than it was a decade ago. *(Global Peace Index 2020)*

Conflict and climate events, along with economic turbulence, are now recognised as current key drivers of hunger, and in 2019, **conflict pushed 77 million people into hunger**.

54

active state-based conflicts

67

non-state conflicts

31

31 anti-civilian conflicts

Climate

Climate change poses significant geopolitical and socio-economic consequences around the world, contributing to poverty, mass displacement, environmental degradation, and the further weakening of fragile states. Climate change is an increasingly important contributor to displacement and migration, both within nations and across international borders. *(OHCHR)*

The World Bank predicts that by 2050, climate change may force 143 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa, South East Asia and Latin America to migrate within their countries and that by 2030, climate change could force more than 100 million people into extreme poverty.

By 2050, the number of people at risk of floods will increase from its current level of 1.2 billion to 1.6 billion. In the early to mid-2010s, 1.9 billion people, or 27% of the global population, lived in potential severely water-scarce areas. In 2050, this number will increase to 2.7 to 3.2 billion people. *(United Nations 2020)*

2019 was the second warmest year on record (for over 140 years). Record climate events pushed 34 million into hunger and displaced millions more.

However, the impacts of these climate challenges are not inevitable. **Crises can be averted and lives saved with better targeting and adequate financing** to effectively manage and reduce the risk of climate-related disasters and enable people to cope with multiple shocks and stresses.

Irish Official Development Assistance (ODA) Works

Concern Worldwide: Alleviating Poverty and Hunger

In 2019, Concern supported **28.6 million people** in 24 countries including 82 emergencies in 21 countries, reaching 3.9 million people directly and over 7.5 million people indirectly.

Responding to emergencies is a critical part of our work, but disaster risk reduction, prevention, tackling poverty and reducing vulnerability are also core components of our work across our 24 countries of operation. A consistent focus of our work is around livelihoods and agriculture, health and nutrition, and education.

What a partnership with Irish Aid means for Concern:

Flexible Aid - enable us to adjust, adapt our programme to use ODA in the best way to deliver effective, impactful solutions in highly volatile situations;

Needs-based support - focused on reaching the furthest behind ensures that Concern can reach populations in countries like Chad and CAR where the needs are greatest;

Responsive support - enables Concern to respond to emergencies, providing immediate life saving assistance to populations in crisis;

Long-term support - enables us to work with communities, giving assurance and confidence over multiple years;

Partnership - enables Concern in our overseas programmes work in partnership with other national and international NGOs and at home forges a direct link between the Irish public and the communities we work with;

Influence - partnership and learning from programme experience and evidence to advocate for policy change at national and global level.

2019



Emergencies:

In 2019, Concern responded to 82 emergencies in 21 countries, reaching 3.9 million people directly and over 7.5 million people indirectly.

A deteriorating security situation in **Afghanistan** combined with recurring natural disasters and a severe drought resulted in a surge in the numbers of internally displaced people in the northeast of the country. Concern supported almost 19,000 conflict and disaster-affected people throughout Badakhshan and Takhar with cash payments, household items and emergency shelter.

Following the **Beirut Explosion in August 2020**, Concern's teams rallied to provide logistical and capacity support to local Lebanese volunteer groups in their response to the thousands impacted by the blast.

Livelihoods and Agriculture:

Our integrated urban programme in **Bangladesh** works with just under 41,000 extremely poor people living in slums, squatter settlements and on the pavement to improve their health and opportunities to earn a living. In 2019, over 1,470 households were supported in running small businesses, including business skills training and cash grants.

Our work on **Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA)**, has now reached 569,000 smallholder farmers across 19 countries, tripling crop yields in some cases and reducing labour time, especially for women.

2020



Patrick, Malawi

Concern first visited Patrick, left, just after Cyclone Idai wreaked havoc on Monyo village, close to the Malawi/ Mozambique border. Patrick and his new wife spent three months away from their home after the destructive storm and had to rely solely on fishing following the devastation. After Cyclone Idai, Patrick received a cash transfer from Concern of 23,000 kwacha (around €29) to help him rebuild. He also received maize seeds which he was able to plant straight away, which led to a decent harvest. Through Concern's cash transfers, Patrick also bought two goats and some chickens, which have been a good source of income. He plans to sell some of his chickens to help provide food and basic necessities for his family, including a new baby girl. Patrick still lives in fear of another storm, as his area is vulnerable to floodwaters. But he does get some peace of mind from the fact that, now, he gets weather and early warning alerts from local Village Civil Protection Community groups, telling him to move to higher ground when needed. Patrick hopes to be able to send his daughter to school one day and has aspirations to open a grocery shop, as well as maintaining his farm.

Left photo: Recently married Patrick Ghembo of Monyo Village, Malawi, standing in his field, destroyed by the floods. Patrick is a farmer of maize and rice. He and his wife must rely solely on fishing until he can plant again. They will stay at the displacement camp until the floods have fully subsided. Malawi Photo: Gavin Douglas/ Concern Worldwide

Right Photo: Patrick Ghembo of Monyo Village 12 months after we first met him in Nsanje. Cyclone Idai destroyed his farm and forced him and his wife to higher ground. With the help of Concern, he is back planting on his land again. He is even able to higher local farmers to help him. Malawi Photo: Gavin Douglas/Concern Worldwide



Ethiopia

Ethiopia is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change and over the last fifteen years, has experienced five severe droughts, which have all required significant humanitarian interventions and which have critically impacted the food and nutrition security and livelihoods of large portions of the population. More recently, Ethiopia is facing alarming food shortages following swarms of locusts across their land.

Concern's five-year integrated programme - REGRADE - targets more than 10,000 households and promotes active community participation through a package of complementary interventions including land reclamation, watershed management and climate smart agriculture for livelihoods.

Mestawat Sorsa, above, joined Concern REGRADE in late 2017 and has since then started a grain milling business, acquired a donkey, a cow, and a sheep, and carried out major improvements to the family home, including new windows, doors, and furniture. She plans to buy an ox.

Health and Nutrition:

In West Darfur, Sudan, we continued to support and strengthen the health systems in two areas to provide improved health and nutrition services to almost 66,000 conflict-affected people. We repaired and expanded two nutrition centres and rehabilitated a further 11 health centres. In conjunction with the Ministry of Health, we procured and provided essential supplies and equipment to ensure communities had access to basic health services throughout the year. Over 32,649 patients were treated at the health centres in 2019, and a further 5,812 women received antenatal services. We also continued to build the capacity of the state and local health authorities, paying monthly incentives and providing technical assistance and training to staff from the ministry and local health authorities.

Top photo: Mestawat Sorsa joined the Concern REGRADE program in late 2017 and has since then started a grain milling business, acquired a donkey, a cow, and a sheep, and carried out major improvements to the family home, including new windows, doors, and furniture. She plans to buy an ox. Ethiopia Photo: Kieran McConville / Concern Worldwide

Bottom photo: Concern Worldwide staff members pictured with beneficiaries after attending a workshop on making soap and liquid soap in Cite Soleil slum, a district of Port-au-Prince, Haiti Photo: Dieu Nalio Chery/ Concern Worldwide



Education:

Many Syrian refugee children living in Turkey have now missed over four years of school. In Sanliurfa district, where Concern works, many school-aged children do not attend for a variety of reasons including the need to help earn money for the family and low literacy rates. Additionally, many are suffering from trauma, anxiety and stress. Our emergency education programme enabled over 1,703 vulnerable children to access school by providing cash assistance to parents and materials, such as school uniforms, glasses and hearing aids, so children could succeed in the classroom. Some 456 teachers and school counsellors were trained to identify and communicate effectively with children suffering from trauma.

Integrated Programming:

Our programme to reduce under-five mortality and disease rates in Liberia benefited over 16,000 people with livelihoods, nutrition, WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) and gender equality activities. To improve the nutrition and health of mothers and children under five, over 2,625 mothers were supported with seeds and tools to establish kitchen gardens. We also set up 51 mother groups, adding to the 91 previously established, with a total membership over 3,525 mothers/ caregivers. Members learned about the importance of good nutrition and were encouraged to bring the husbands to the training sessions so they learned together and shared their understanding of recommended changes.

Afghanistan

In a rural village in Northern Afghanistan, villagers are busy constructing a watershed that will help prevent future flooding. Due to Covid19 (and about 30% of villagers returning from Iran, where they previously worked), activities have been adjusted - while about 40-50 people worked every day, it is now only 15 and everyone is keeping a distance, washing hands, while working. Project supported by IrishAid. Here, Asef, 45, works on the watershed.

Photo: Stefanzie Glinski / Concern Worldwide



Photo: In a rural village in Northern Afghanistan, villagers are busy constructing a watershed that will help prevent future flooding. Due to Covid-19 (and about 30 percent of villagers returning from Iran, where they previously worked), activities have been adjusted - while about 40-50 people worked every day, it is now only 15 and everyone is keeping a distance, washing hands, while working. Project supported by Irish Aid. Here, Asef*, 45, works on the watershed. Afghanistan Photo: Stefanie Glinski / Concern Worldwide
*name changed to protect the identity of individuals

“ Our partnership with Irish Aid, as well as other major donors, is critical to our reach and impact. This, together with the extraordinary generosity of the public, in particular across Ireland, enabled us to reach 28.6 million people last year. We never take that support and trust for granted.

With Ireland's continued support, Concern will:

- **continue to work in fragile and conflict-affected states where needs are greatest;**
- **work in partnership with affected communities, local organizations and NGOs to deliver real and effective change;**
- **hold ourselves accountable to the people we serve, our donors and supporters;**
- **continue to deepen the partnership with Irish aid to *leave no-one behind*.”**

Dominic MacSorley, Concern CEO

Concern Proposals

1

Maintain the budget for ODA to respond to existing and growing needs

2

Recognise the exponential increase in humanitarian need precipitated by COVID-19, and allocate additional funding accordingly

3

Work to ensure that the Irish Government budgetary support to Irish organisations like Concern is adequate and proportionate to the amounts allocated to multi-lateral mechanisms

4

Ensure that funding for climate adaptation programmes and responses are adequately supported and proportionate to climate mitigation funding

5

Review the 2009 Commission on Taxation Report recommendations and engage non-governmental organisations in the design of successful approaches that promote philanthropy and legacy giving

6

Support Ireland's role on the United Nations Security Council to promote peace, and to prevent and end conflicts that destroy progress and devastate lives

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