Germany’s agriculture ODA

Fighting hunger and malnutrition are top German priorities

Germany spent US$1.2 billion in official development assistance (ODA) to agriculture in 2016 (latest year for which full data is available), making it the second-largest government donor within the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD). This corresponds to 5% of its total ODA, which is below the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) average of 7%, and ranks Germany 26th in relative terms. Funding to the sector has increased since 2014 and reached its highest level in 2016.

Agriculture is one of the strategic priorities of Development Minister Gerd Müller, who in 2014 launched ‘One World No Hunger’, a Special Initiative on food and nutrition security as well as rural development. The Special Initiative is carried forward under the current legislative period (2017 to 2021). The initiative focuses on the following priorities: food and nutrition security, famine prevention and resilience-building, innovation in the agricultural and food sectors, structural transformation in rural areas, natural resource protection, and secure access to land. The Special Initiative is being implemented through official and non-governmental development cooperation, as well as through multilateral partners.

Support to smallholder farmers is a strategic priority, and Germany places a special focus on women in this context. This support aims to make agriculture more productive and sustainable, and to improve adaptation to climate change, fostering innovation along the agricultural value chain. Small-scale farmers are being supported to move from subsistence farming to producing a marketable surplus. Fair and secure tenure and land-use rights, as well as resilience against famine, are other focus areas of the initiative. This approach is reiterated in the ‘Marshall Plan with Africa’ developed under Development Minister Müller. In May 2019, Müller hosted a meeting of the Global Commission on Adaptation, where he pledged to support 60 million smallholder farmers, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, to become climate-resilient by 2030.

In 2016, Germany channeled US$413 million of its total agriculture ODA multilaterally, this was 33% of total ODA, below the DAC average of 45%. Germany disbursed its multilateral funding mainly as mandatory (‘assessed’) contributions to the EU (58% of its multilateral ODA to agriculture) and to the World Bank’s International Development Association (IDA; 19%). The International Fund for Agricultural Development was the third largest recipient (8%). In addition, Germany supports the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP; US$64 million in 2017) and the Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers (CGIAR; US$30 million in 2017). In 2020, Germany will host GAFSP’s replenishment conference. Contributions to these organizations are included in Germany’s bilateral ODA to agriculture, as the OECD does not consider these to be core contributions to multilateral organizations working on agriculture.

Germany channeled 67% of its agriculture ODA (or US$822 million) through bilateral cooperation in 2016, which is above the OECD DAC average of 55%. Bilateral agriculture ODA increased by 10% in 2017 (the latest year for which bilateral data is available), up to US$905 million. Funding focused mainly on agricultural policy and administrative management (23%), rural development (19%), and agricultural development (18%). Rural development and food and nutrition security are currently priority sectors of German bilateral cooperation.

BMZ is responsible for agriculture policy broadly, including Special Initiative ‘One World - No Hunger’; the BMEL represents Germany at FAO

BMZ leads on developing strategies for development cooperation policies. It works closely with the Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture (BMEL), which represents Germany at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Priority countries for rural development and food and nutrition security

- Benin
- Bolivia
- Burkina Faso
- Cambodia
- Côte d’Ivoire
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Ethiopia
- Ghana
- Kenya
- Laos
- Niger
- South Sudan
- Togo
and drives cooperation with the organization (BMZ leads on the relationship with WFP and IFAD). Within BMZ, the directorate on ‘Food, Rural Development; Natural Resources’ is responsible for developing strategies on agriculture. The directorate evolved from the special unit ‘One World - No Hunger’ in the spring of 2016. The head of the directorate is at the same time the commissioner for this Special Initiative.