

KEY QUESTIONS

the big six

3

Who are the main actors in UK's development cooperation?

DFID leads on strategy setting and funding decisions for the UK's development policy

The UK currently has a minority government headed by the Conservative Party under Prime Minister Theresa May and supported by the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) of Northern Ireland. The prime minister can exercise significant influence over development policy, for example through funding commitments for international initiatives, though the degree of involvement varies in practice. The **Department for International Development (DFID)** leads on strategy setting and funding decisions for the UK's development policy. DFID has been headed by the Secretary of State for International Development, Penny Mordaunt, since November 2017. She replaced Priti Patel, who resigned over undisclosed meetings she attended in Israel. DFID's Executive Management Committee, chaired by the Permanent Secretary for International Development, Matthew Rycroft, since January 2018, oversees implementation and is accountable for ensuring that DFID departments deliver results consistent with ministerial priorities. DFID has about 2,700 employees and implements programs in 28 priority countries through various regional programs (for more details, see question six: 'How is ODA spent?').

Parliament: The UK Parliament is composed of the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Within the House of Commons, 'select committees' review the work of ministerial departments. The International Development Committee scrutinizes DFID's policies and spending and monitors organizations that receive DFID funding. All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) are influential in policymaking, bringing together members of Parliament, the private sector, and civil society organizations (CSOs) on key policy issues, including on international development (e.g., the APPG on the UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development).

Other government departments: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office provides funding particularly in the areas of conflict-reduction, human rights, and climate change. The Ministry of Defense supports DFID's work in fragile states and regions. Together, government departments other than DFID managed 26% of the UK's ODA in 2016. This share is expected to further increase to about 30% by 2020.

Civil society: CSOs in the UK play a strong role in implementing development funding and shaping the agenda. They frequently engage with the government through formal and informal consultation processes. BOND, the UK's membership body for development CSOs, has 450 members and has been key in maintaining the UK's strong commitment to development. DFID provides funding to CSOs, both through its country offices and as direct funding through DFID headquarters. According to OECD data, CSOs implement 19% of DFID's bilateral programs, above the 16% average among countries in the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

Academia, think tanks, and the media: Academic institutions and think tanks play a significant role in the UK's development policy. British medical journals (e.g., 'The Lancet', 'The BMJ', 'PloS Medicine') place a strong emphasis on global health issues. The online version of the newspaper 'The Guardian' has a designated section on development topics.

THE UK'S DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION SYSTEM

