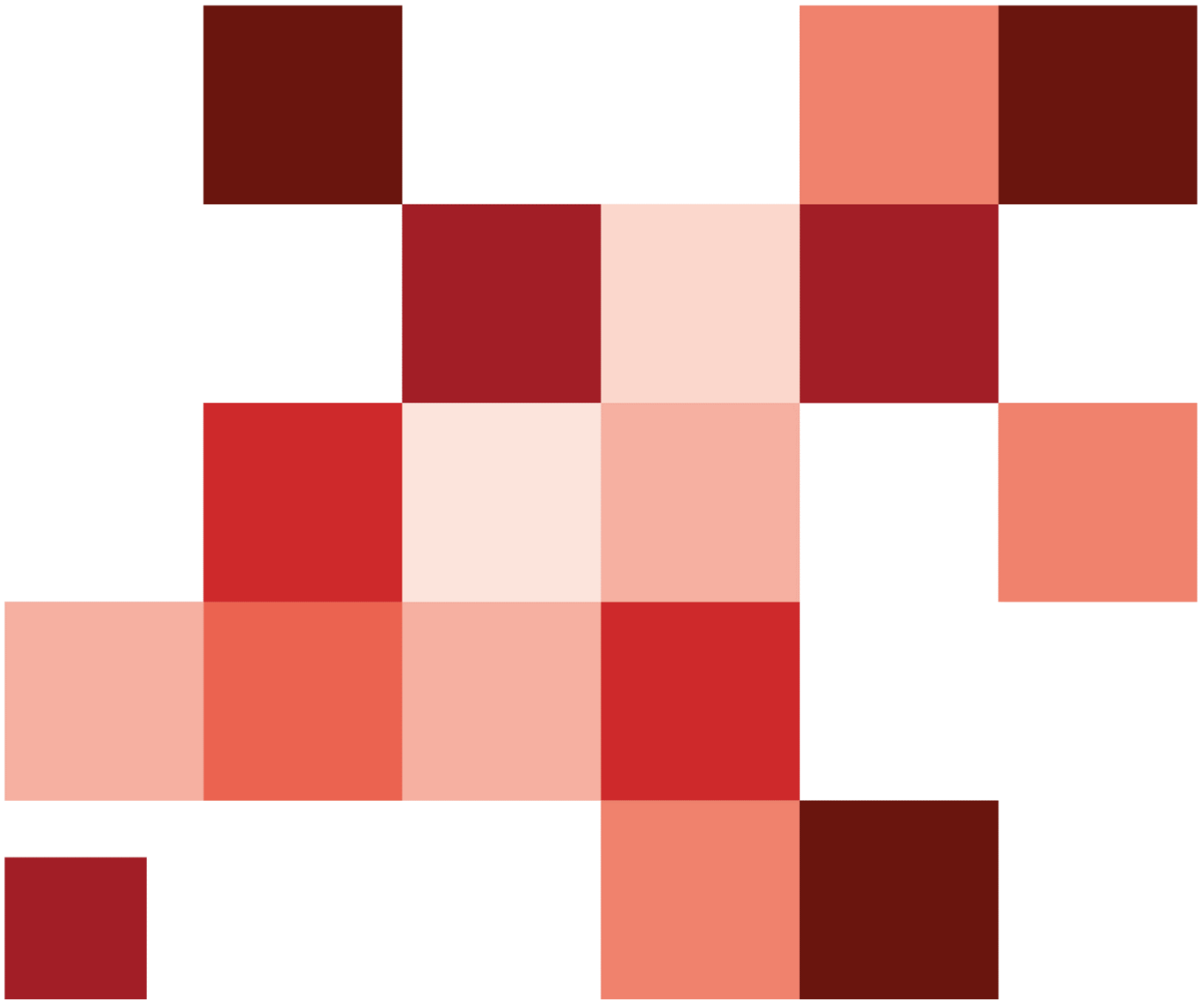


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On behalf of



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UK leadership on gender equality globally

Update to quantitative
analysis

Report

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Gender Equality Policy Marker (the ‘gender marker’).....	4
Women’s rights organisations (WROs).....	7
Gender-based violence (GBV).....	11
Violence against women and girls (VAWG).....	11
Assessing gender-related purpose codes together	16
Reproductive health care and family planning (RHFP)	17
Update on 2019–2021 figures.....	21
Country updates: biggest falls between 2019 and 2021	22
Tentative insights from IATI	24
IATI data suggests an increase in bilateral aid with a gender equality focus from FCDO	24
Transaction data	24
Budget data.....	25
What does this imply about 2022 gender-focused ODA?.....	25
Change in gender-focused aid from FCDO by region	26
Humanitarian settings	29
Impact of the UK’s recent gender strategy.....	30
Appendices	33
Appendix 1: Methodology	33
Appendix 2: Keyword list.....	35
Major overall.....	35
Minor overall.....	35

Introduction

This analysis provides an update to the 2022 [‘UK leadership on gender equality globally’](#) report that provided a robust, quantitative evidence base to show how the UK government’s official development assistance (ODA) disbursements have supported gender equality in the past decade, and how this can be built on in the future¹. This analysis from CARE and Development Initiatives covers the following areas: (1) the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Gender Equality Policy Marker (the ‘gender marker’) which cuts across sectors, together with specific sectoral areas important for (2) women’s rights organisations (WROs), (3) gender-based violence (GBV), (4) women’s economic justice and (5) reproductive health and family planning (RHFP).

Gender equality is a cross-cutting area and therefore must be viewed holistically across all sectors and geographies. In 2008, the gender marker was introduced to help quantify, mainstream and track aid in support of gender equality and women’s rights. The marker asks donors to indicate whether individual projects are ‘principally’ or ‘significantly’ targeted (or ‘non-targeted’) to the purpose of gender equality. The marker can be applied to aid allocations across a variety of sectors and geographies. Projects classed as ‘principal’ are those where gender equality is the main objective of the project, and fundamental to its design and expected results. Projects marked as ‘significant’ are those where gender equality is an important and deliberate objective. ODA disbursements are used as the indicator for the UK’s commitment towards gender equality globally. This analysis uses the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s Development Assistance Committee’s (OECD DAC) data for the period 2014–2021 (2021 being the latest year with comprehensive DAC data) and International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) data for 2022 – although the latter remains incomplete and care should be taken in interpreting analysis of that data. We combine analysis of the gender marker and specific sectors with a keyword search methodology to quantify the UK’s support to gender equality in its programming over the last decade.

¹ The data analysis was concluded in June 2023

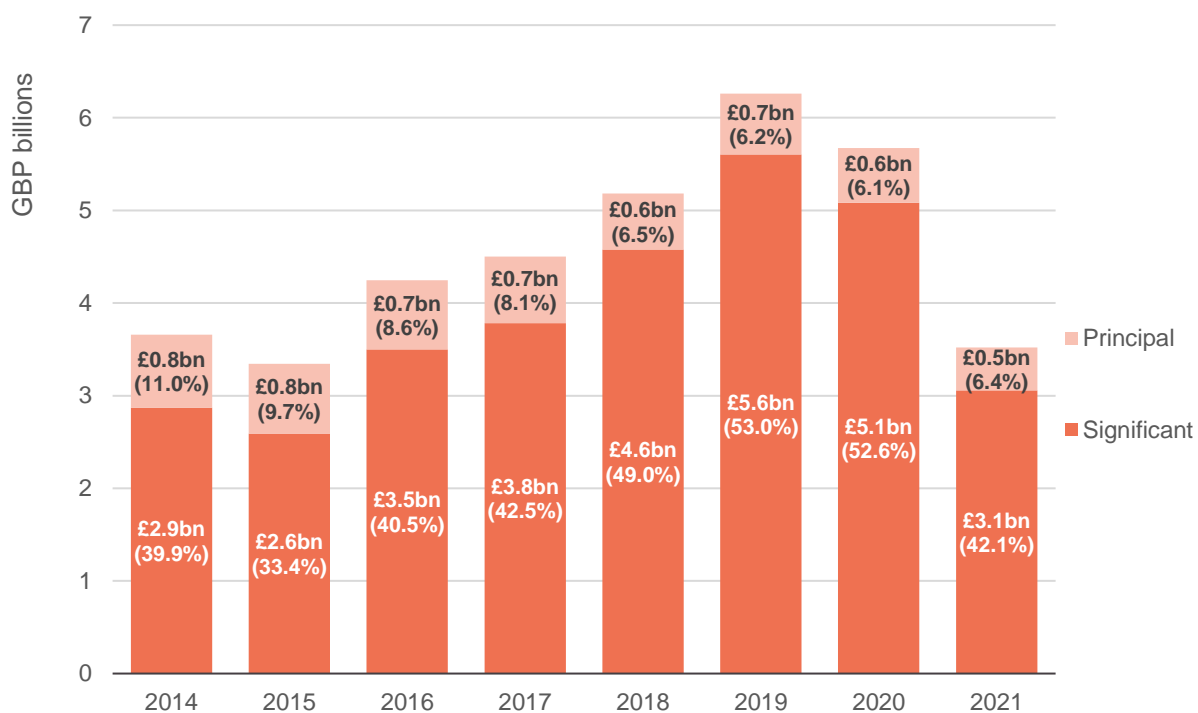
Gender Equality Policy Marker (the ‘gender marker’)

Despite issues of comparability between data from different donors due to the marker’s self-reported nature, there is a strong level of consistency across individual donors’ data year on year. The UK consistently marks projects against the gender marker and has screened at least 80% of its aid projects against the marker since 2014 (a similar magnitude to other major DAC donors). This allows us to gain insight into the UK’s prioritisation when tackling gender inequality.

Inevitably, there are projects that are missed in the marking process, such as relevant projects not screened or projects that have been marked inaccurately. To create a fuller picture, we also use a keyword search that captures projects with the specific aim of tackling gender inequality.

Figure 1: UK ODA significantly targeting gender equality nearly halved between 2019 and 2021, and principal spend fell by 30%

Volume (and proportions) of gender-relevant UK ODA, principal and significant, 2014–2021



Source: Development Initiatives (DI) based on OECD DAC CRS and DI keyword search methodology.
 Notes: Current prices. Data refers to UK bilateral ODA with principal and significant aims of supporting gender equality, either marked with the gender marker or identified using keyword-search methodology.

Between 2014 and 2019, the UK steadily increased the amount of bilateral aid that had a significant focus on gender equality (both in volume and proportional terms), but this trend has since reversed. Aid with a significant gender equality focus fell by 45% between 2019 and 2021. This was partly a consequence of the fall in the overall aid budget of 31% over this period, but additionally the proportion of this budget that had a gender focus also fell, from 53.0% to 42.1%.

UK aid with a principal gender focus also fell by 30% between 2019 and 2021, from £659 million to £462 million, roughly in line with the decrease in total UK bilateral aid over this period.

About the gender marker

The funding the UK has reported to the gender marker indicates the spending on projects that have a gender relevance, but it does not give an indication of prioritisation. The cross-cutting nature of markers such as the gender marker mean

they can be applied to many projects without any other sector or priority losing out as a result, since multiple markers can be applied to an individual project. This is different from DAC CRS sector reporting, where any given project can be allocated to only one sector. Furthermore, the marker lacks some granular detail making it more difficult to go beyond aggregate findings. For example, it provides no information about which aspects of gender inequality the marked project is tackling.

One further tool when considering funding prioritisation is reviewing spend to the two purpose codes specifically relevant to tackling gender inequality: (1) aid in support of women's rights organisations and movements, and government institutions; and (2) ending violence against women and girls. Projects under the former are automatically marked as principally targeted towards gender equality by the gender marker, and we consider projects under the latter to be significantly targeted towards gender equality. Since each project can only have one purpose code, the application of the code establishes a level of prioritisation.

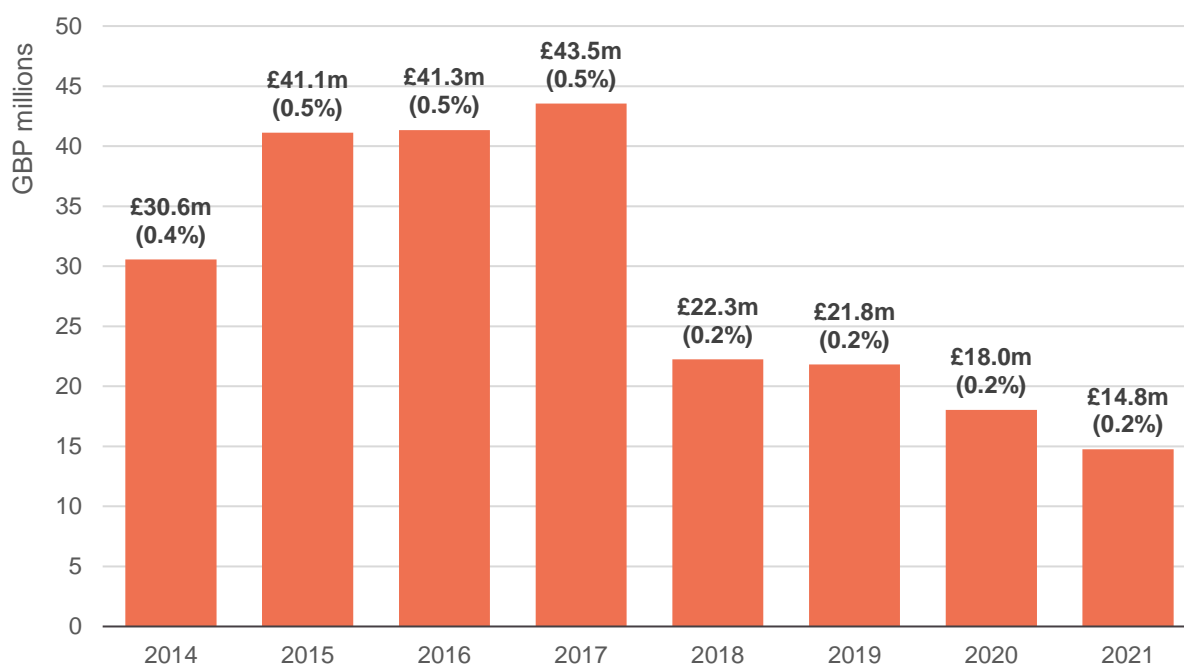
A downside to this latter approach is that although reporting only allows one sector per project, in practice some projects address several sectors. This means that volumes in each sector can be influenced by how donors choose to report. For this reason, we also group some similar sectors together.

Women's rights organisations (WROs)

Absolute volumes of UK bilateral aid to women's rights organisations, movements and government institutions continued to fall in both 2020 and in 2021, when total aid fell to £14.8 million. This represents a 32% decrease since 2019. While this was roughly in line with the overall cut to bilateral aid over this period, there was a slight fall in proportional terms (from 0.21% to 0.2%).

Figure 2: UK ODA to women's rights organisations continued to decrease, and in 2021 was 66% lower than its peak in 2017

Volumes (and proportions) of UK ODA to women's rights organisations, 2014–2021



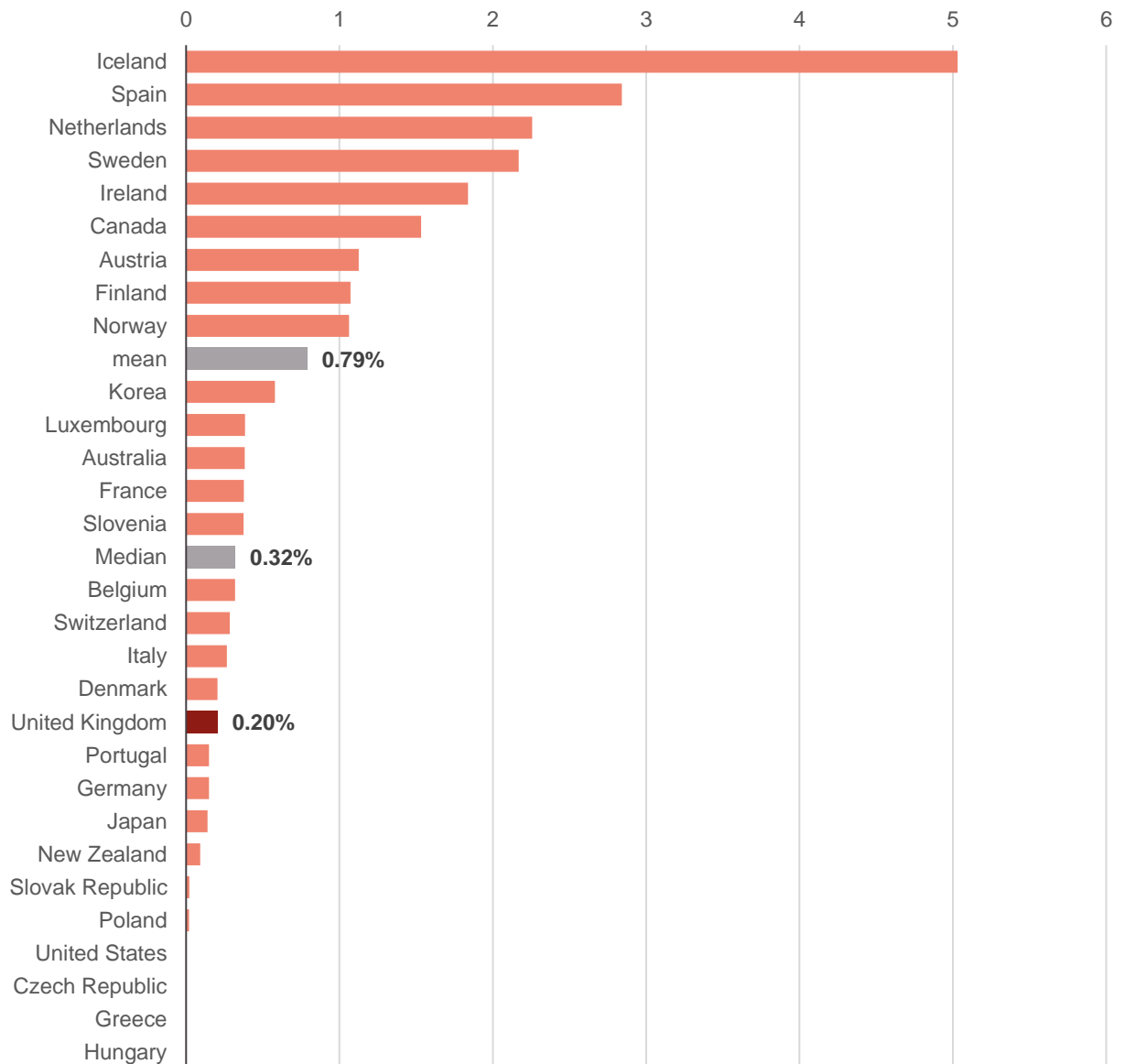
Source: OECD DAC CRS.

Notes: Current prices. Data refers to UK bilateral ODA to the 'Women's rights organisations and movements, and government institutions' purpose code (15170).

Despite this significant fall, the UK remains among the top 10 largest contributors of aid to WROs by volume, dropping only one position (from eighth to ninth) between 2019 and 2021, with Japan overtaking the UK in 2020. However, in proportional terms, the UK fell further, from 16th to 19th. This continued its steady fall since 2016 when it gave the ninth largest proportion of bilateral official development assistance (ODA) to WROs. However, the decrease between 2017 and 2018 was matched by an increase in development

finance aimed at eliminating violence against women and girls, and may reflect a change in the use of purpose codes (see below).

Figure 3a: The UK, in terms of budget proportion, contributed less than the DAC donor average towards women’s rights organisations in 2019
Proportion of total bilateral ODA, %

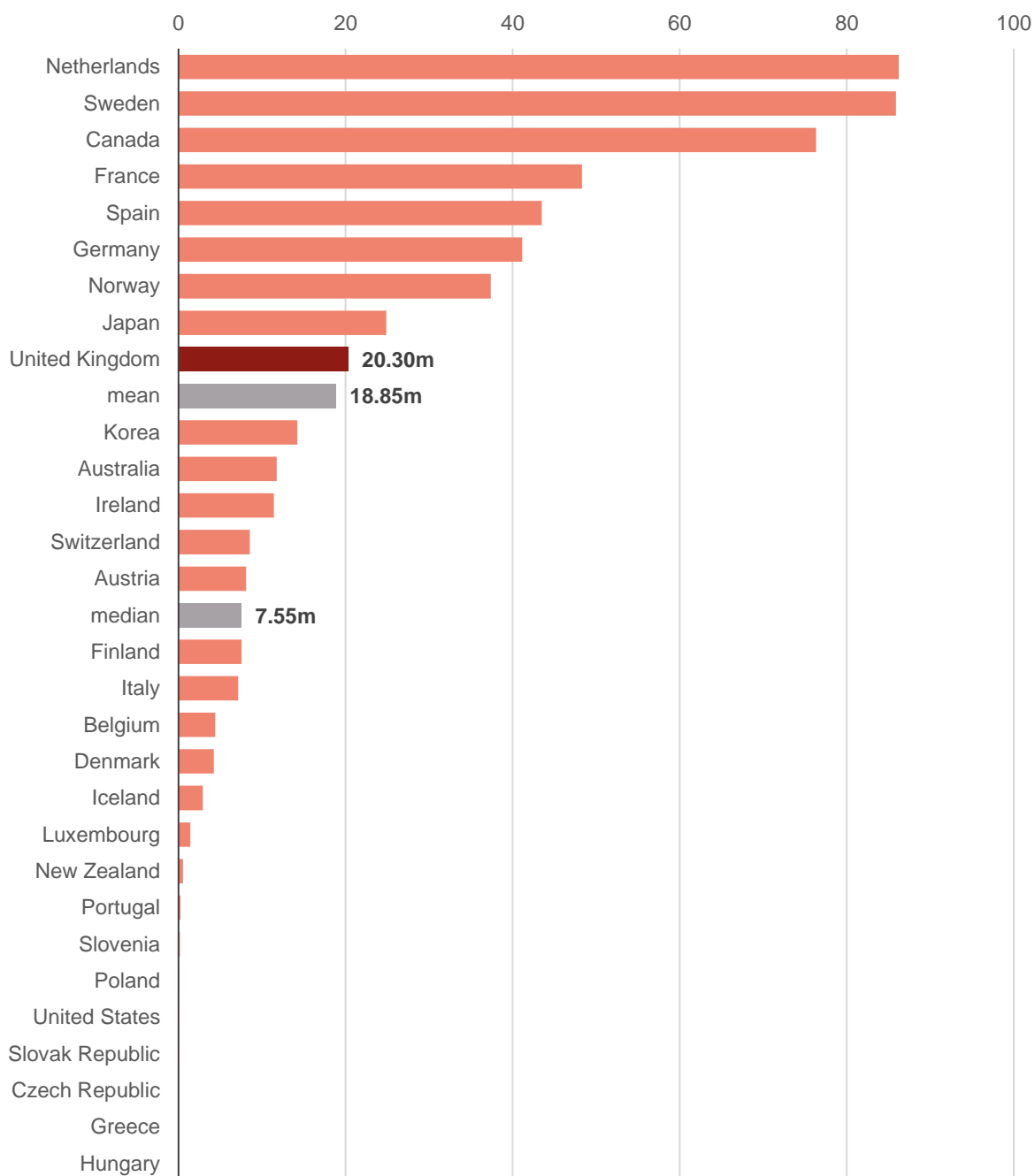


Source: OECD DAC CRS.

Notes: Current prices. Data refers to bilateral ODA to the 'Women's rights organisations and movements, and government institutions' purpose code (15170).

Figure 3b: The UK slipped from the eighth to the ninth largest donor towards women's rights organisations between 2019 and 2021

Volume of bilateral ODA, US\$ millions

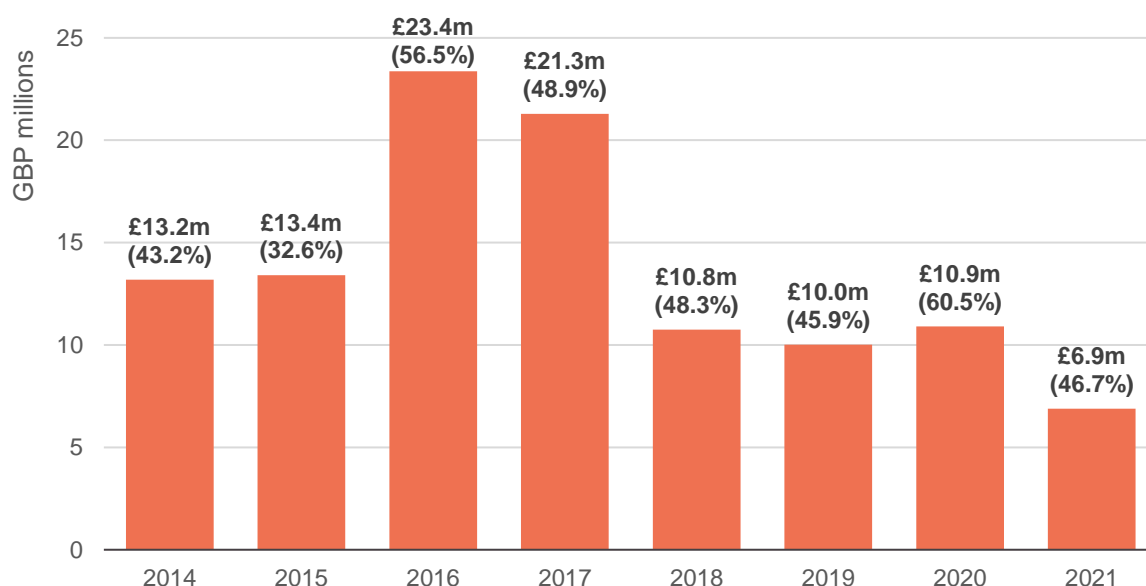


Source: OECD DAC CRS.

Notes: Current prices. Data refers to UK bilateral ODA to the 'Women's rights organisations and movements, and government institutions' purpose code (15170).

Local WROs and women-led organisations (WLOs) can play a critically important role in crisis response, but their efforts often lack political and financial support. However, there was also a drop in the UK’s funding to WROs in crisis contexts: from £10.0 million to £6.9 million between 2019 and 2021 (a fall of 31.2%). This was a slightly smaller fall in percentage terms, meaning that the share of aid spent on WROs in crisis contexts increased slightly relative to 2019, to 46.7% (although it is a fall relative to 2020 when the share peaked at 60%). This follows an increase in the share in 2020 to 60.5%: aid to WROs in crisis contexts was slower to fall than aid to WROs in other countries.

Figure 4: UK ODA to women’s rights organisations in crisis countries decreased from £10.0 million in 2019 to £6.9 million in 2021, despite increasing in 2020
 Volumes of UK bilateral ODA to women’s rights organisations in crisis countries (and share of total aid to such organisations)



Source: OECD DAC CRS and Global Humanitarian Assistance (GHA) Report.

Notes: Current prices. Data refers to UK bilateral ODA to the 'Women’s rights organisations and movements, and government institutions' purpose code (15170) and recipient countries in crisis, defined as having a humanitarian appeal in the year in question.

Gender-based violence (GBV)

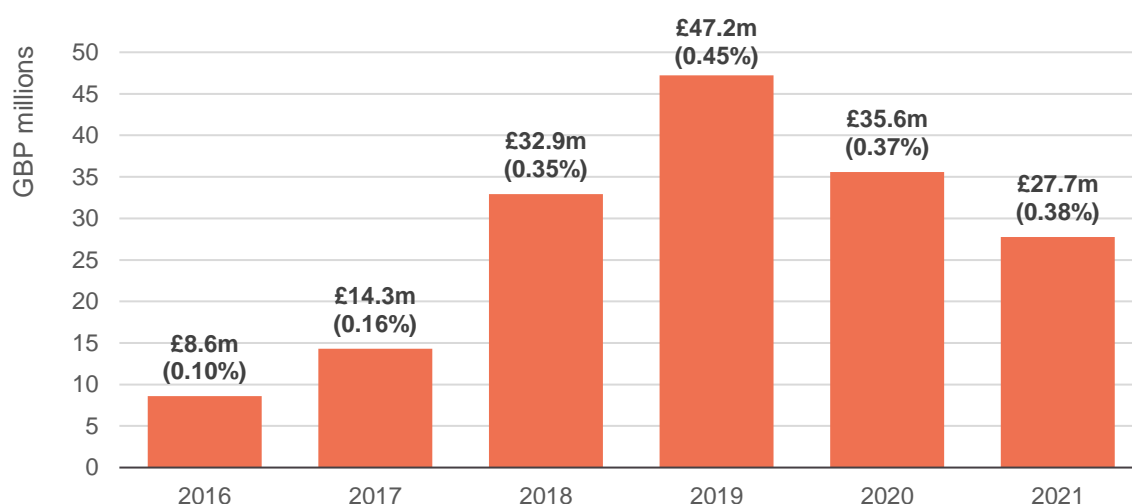
The UK has funded many projects with an aim to tackle gender-based violence (GBV), including the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI) and What Works to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls ('What Works'). It also increased funding to support ending violence against women and girls (VAWG) between 2016 (when the code was introduced) and 2019. However, this category has since seen more-than-proportional cuts, with funding in 2021 41% lower than in 2019.

Violence against women and girls (VAWG)

UK development finance given for the purpose of eliminating violence against women and girls (VAWG) fell sharply between 2019 and 2021, from £47.2 million to £27.7 million, a decrease of 41%. This was considerably higher than the fall in total UK ODA over this period, which means that spending on VAWG as a proportion of the UK's bilateral aid budget fell from 0.45% to 0.38% between 2019 and 2021. This is in stark contrast with the preceding years, in which development finance for VAWG increased substantially, from £8.6 million (0.1%) to £47.2 million (0.4%) between 2016 and 2019. However, this increase was matched by a decrease in development finance for WROs and may reflect a change in the use of purpose codes (see below).

Figure 5: UK ODA towards ending violence against women and girls decreased by 41%, more than the cut to overall aid spend

Volumes (and proportions) of UK ODA towards ending violence against women and girls, 2016–2021



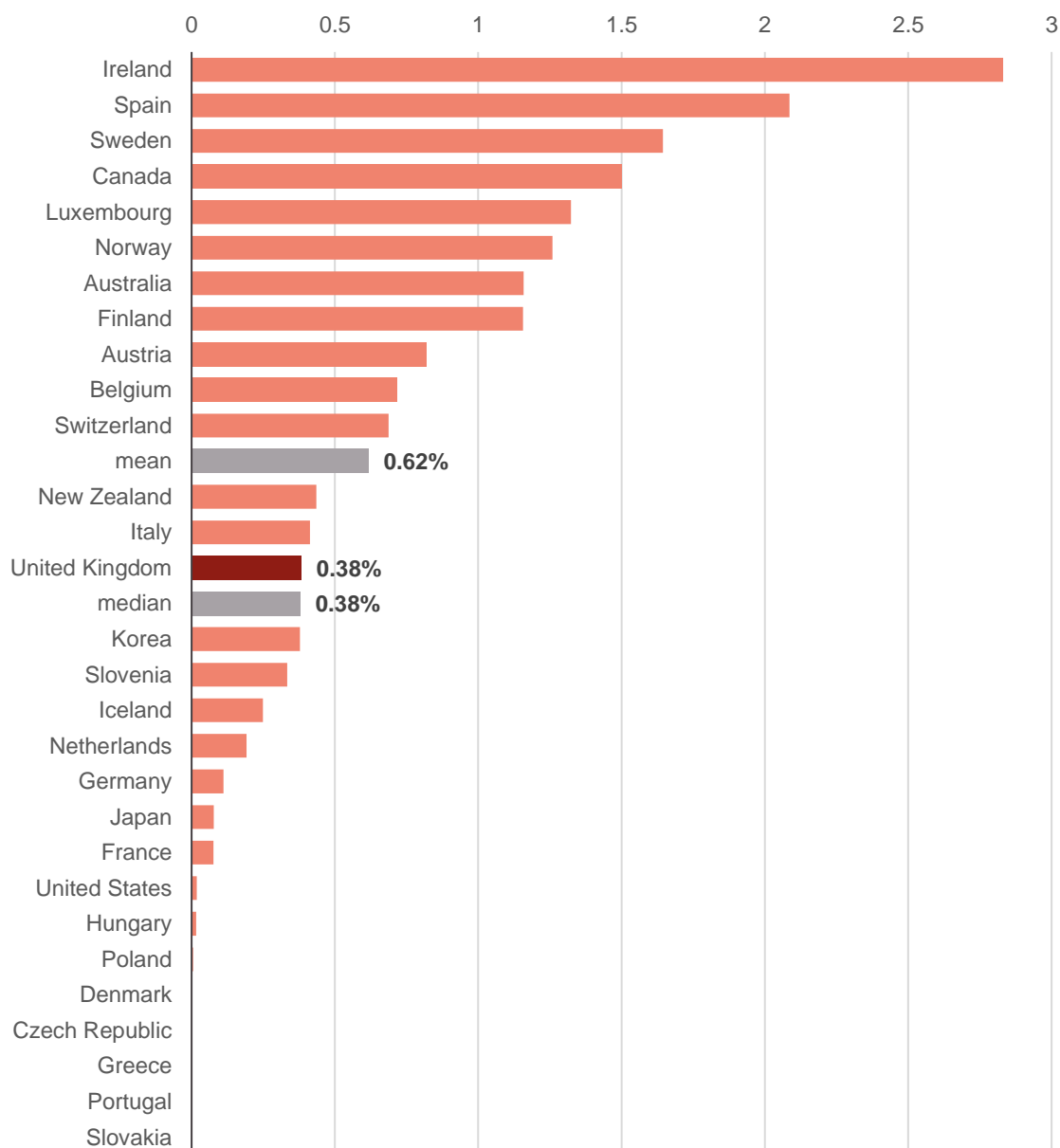
Source: OECD DAC CRS.

Notes: Current prices. Data refers to UK bilateral ODA to the 'Ending violence against women and girls' purpose code (15180).

This absolute fall meant that the UK lost its position as a global leader in funding VAWG. While it gave more than any other DAC country in 2018 and 2019, by 2021 it had fallen to fourth place behind Canada, Sweden and Norway. In proportional terms however, it fell by a single place, from 13th to 14th.

Figure 6a: The UK spent a slightly smaller percentage of bilateral aid on ending violence against women and girls than the DAC average in 2021

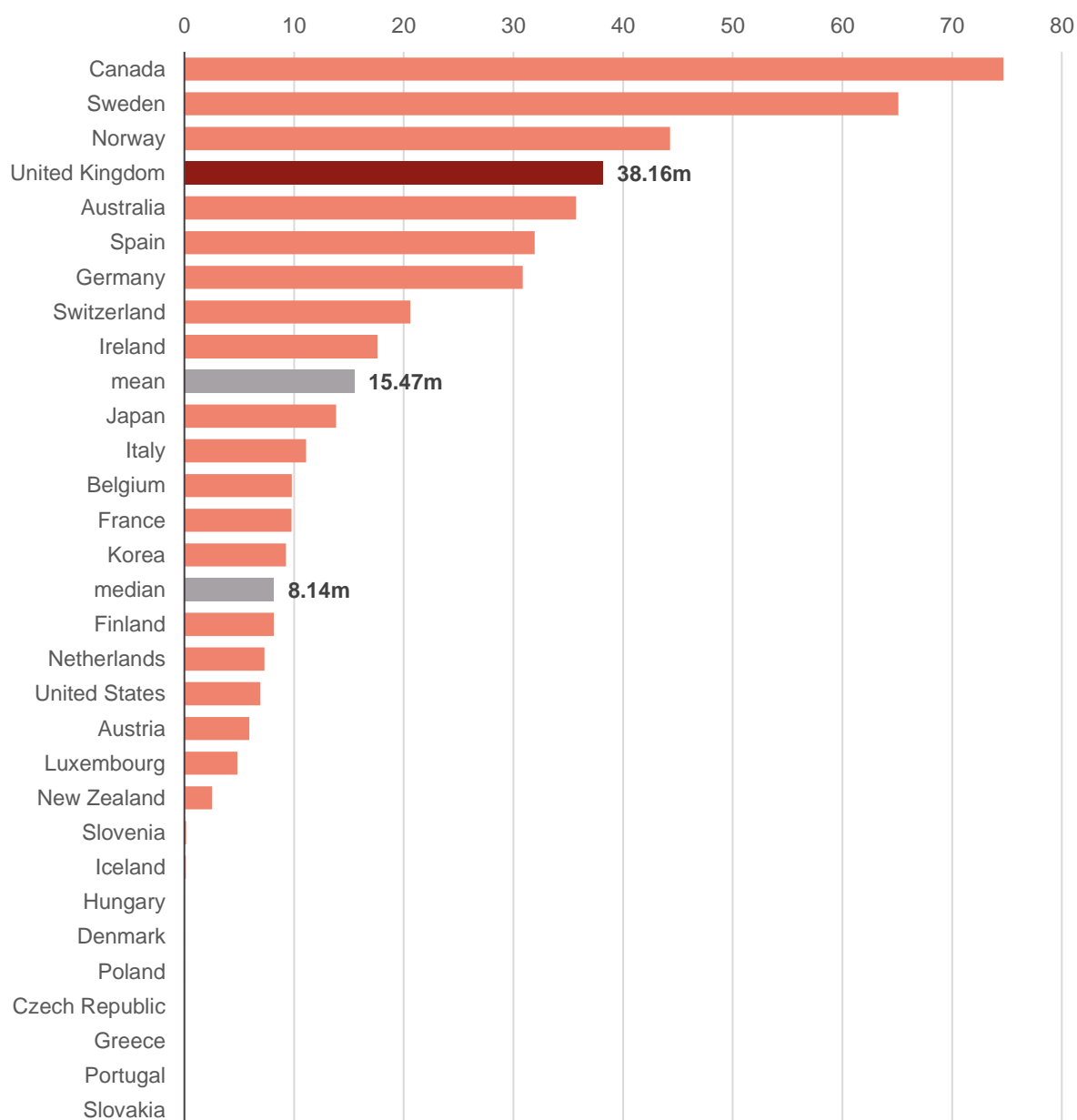
Proportion of total bilateral ODA, %



Source: OECD DAC CRS.

Notes: Current prices. Data refers to bilateral ODA to the 'Ending violence against women and girls' purpose code (15180).

Figure 6b: The UK went from being the largest DAC provider of financing towards ending violence against women and girls in 2019 to being the fourth largest in 2021
 Volumes of bilateral ODA, US\$ millions



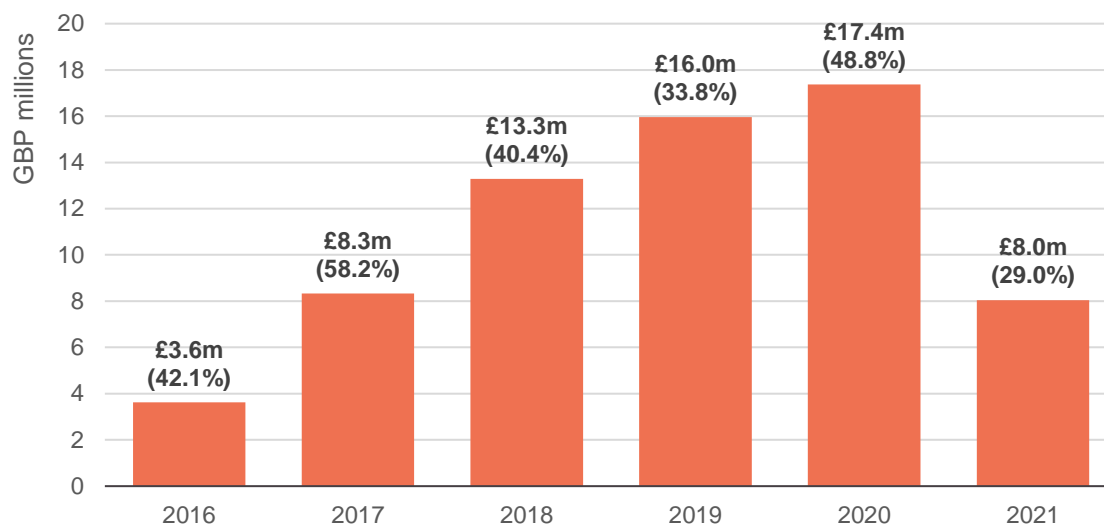
Source: OECD DAC CRS

Notes: Current prices. Data refers to bilateral ODA to the 'Ending violence against women and girls' purpose code (15180).

The UK has increased the magnitude of spending on programmes that aim to end violence against women and girls in countries in humanitarian crisis: a £6.0 million increase between 2017 and 2019. However, the proportion of its VAWG ODA spent this way dropped from 69.4% to 33.8% during the same period.

Figure 7: UK ODA towards ending violence against women and girls in crisis countries fell by 50% between 2019 and 2021

Volumes of UK bilateral ODA towards ending violence against women and girls in crisis countries (and share of such aid to all countries), 2016–2021



Source: OECD DAC CRS and Global Humanitarian Assistance (GHA) Report.

Notes: Current prices. Data refers to UK bilateral ODA to the 'Ending violence against women and girls' purpose code (15180) and recipient countries in crisis, defined as having a humanitarian appeal in the year in question.

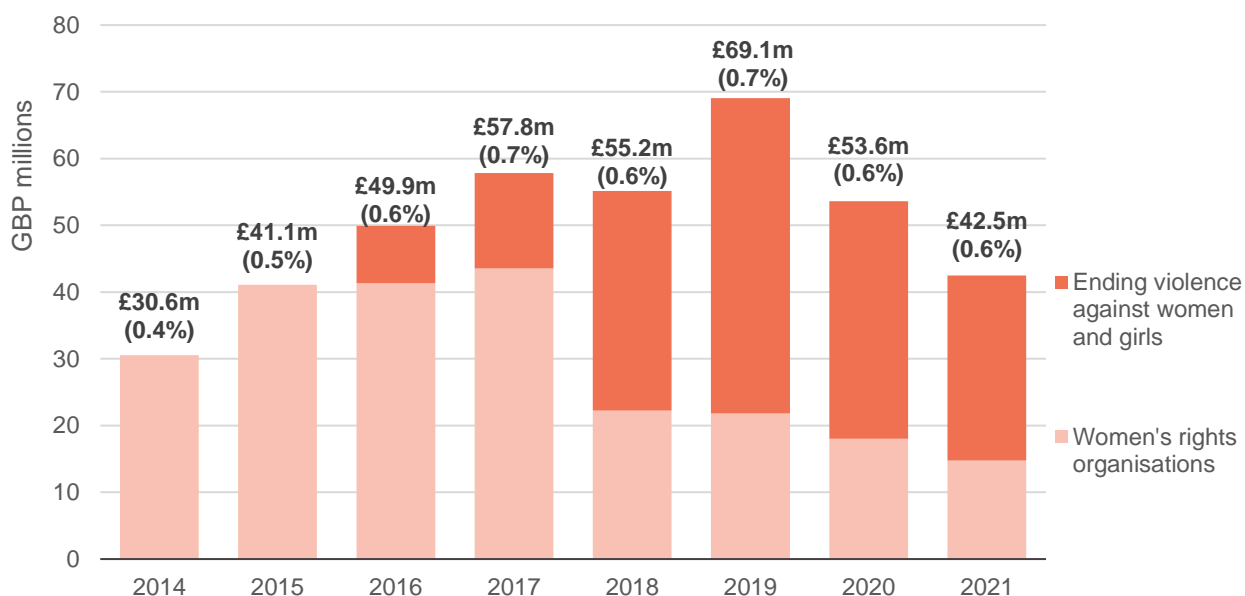
Assessing gender-related purpose codes together

One drawback of using Creditor Reporting System (CRS) data is that there can be significant overlap between the activities different purpose codes cover. For example, some organisations might simultaneously try to prevent violence against women and girls *and* promote the rights of women. The provision of aid to such organisations could therefore be counted under either activity. This means that the way these activities are described could change over time. This is especially the case when new purpose codes are introduced, such as the introduction of the gender-based violence purpose code in 2016. For this reason, we consider both activities together here.

In the case of the UK, the sudden fall in bilateral aid to women's rights organisations occurred at the same time as a sharp increase in aid aimed at preventing violence against women and girls. This suggests that the way in which some types of activities are recorded may have changed. Taking these two activities together, there was little change between 2017 and 2018: bilateral aid fell slightly from £57.8 million to £55.2 million. After 2019, the overall fall in aid to both activities was 38.5%, higher than the overall fall in UK ODA.

Figure 8: UK bilateral ODA to WRO and VAWG combined fell by 38.5% between 2019 and 2021

Volumes (and proportions) of UK ODA towards women's rights organisations and ending violence against women and girls, 2016–2021



Source: OECD DAC CRS.

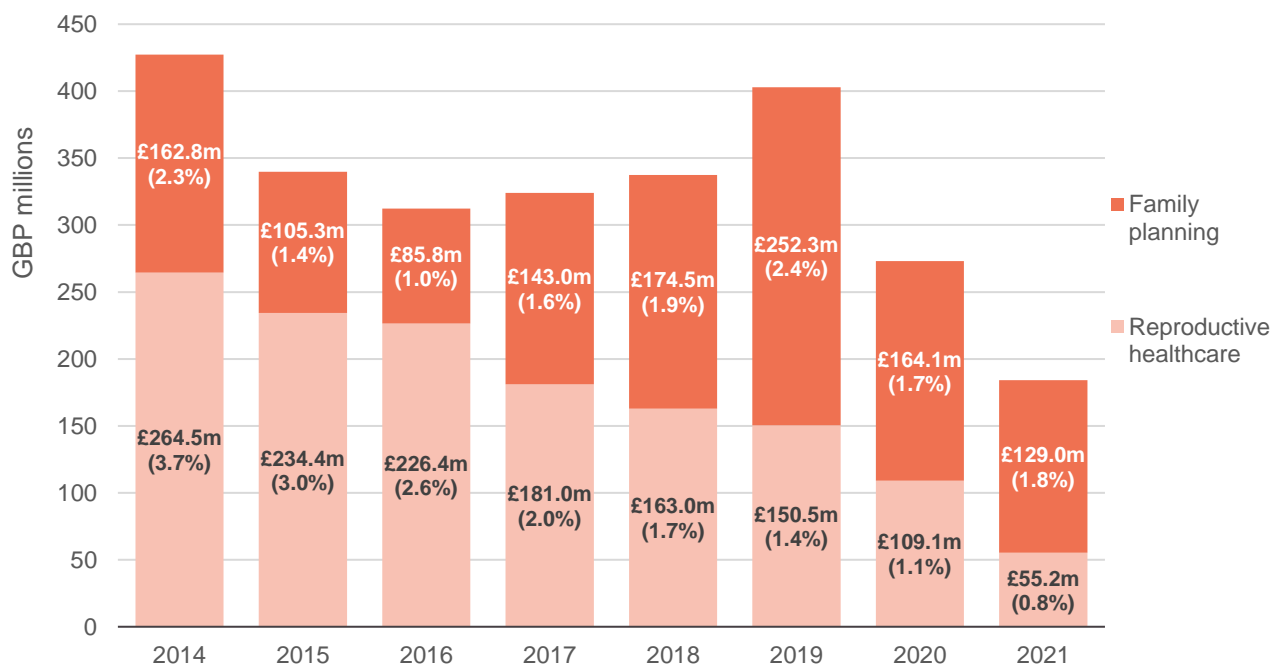
Notes: Current prices. Data refers to UK bilateral ODA to the 'Women's rights organisations and movements, and government institutions' purpose code (15170), and the 'Ending violence against women and girls' purpose code (15180).

Reproductive health care and family planning (RHFP)

Funding to RHFP is reported to the OECD DAC through two different purpose codes (13020 'Reproductive health care' and 13030 'Family planning').

Bilateral aid spend on reproductive healthcare (RHC) has fallen consistently over the last seven years, but since 2019 the fall has been dramatic: between 2019 and 2021, the amount of aid spent on RHC fell by nearly two-thirds, from £151 million to £55 million. This latter value is only a fifth of the amount the UK spent on this category in 2014 (£265 million).

Figure 9: UK bilateral ODA to reproductive health fell by over two-thirds between 2019 and 2021, and bilateral ODA for family planning by more than a half
 Volumes and proportions of UK ODA to reproductive health and family planning

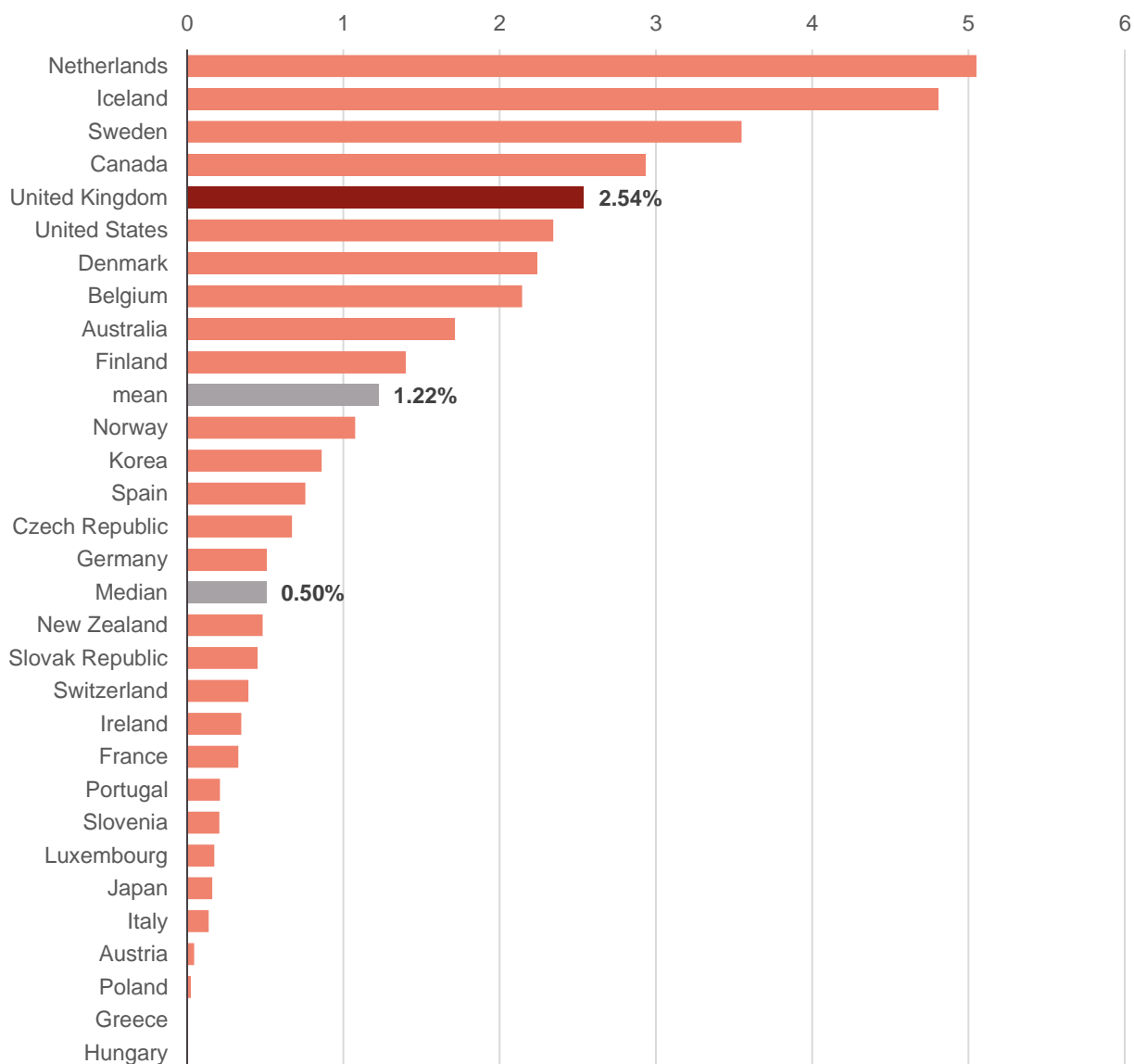


Source: OECD DAC CRS.

Notes: Current prices. Data refers to UK bilateral ODA to the purpose codes 'Reproductive health care' (13020) and 'Family planning' (13030).

Despite the continuous fall since 2014, the UK remains one of the largest funders of reproductive healthcare and family planning, second only to the US, as in previous years. The UK provided just over one tenth of total DAC bilateral funding for the sector in 2021. In proportional terms however, the UK has slipped from the second largest donor in 2019 to the fifth largest, behind the Netherlands, Iceland, Sweden and Canada.

Figure 10a: The UK fell from being the second largest provider of bilateral aid to reproductive healthcare and family planning in 2019, to the fifth largest in 2021
 Proportion of total bilateral ODA, %

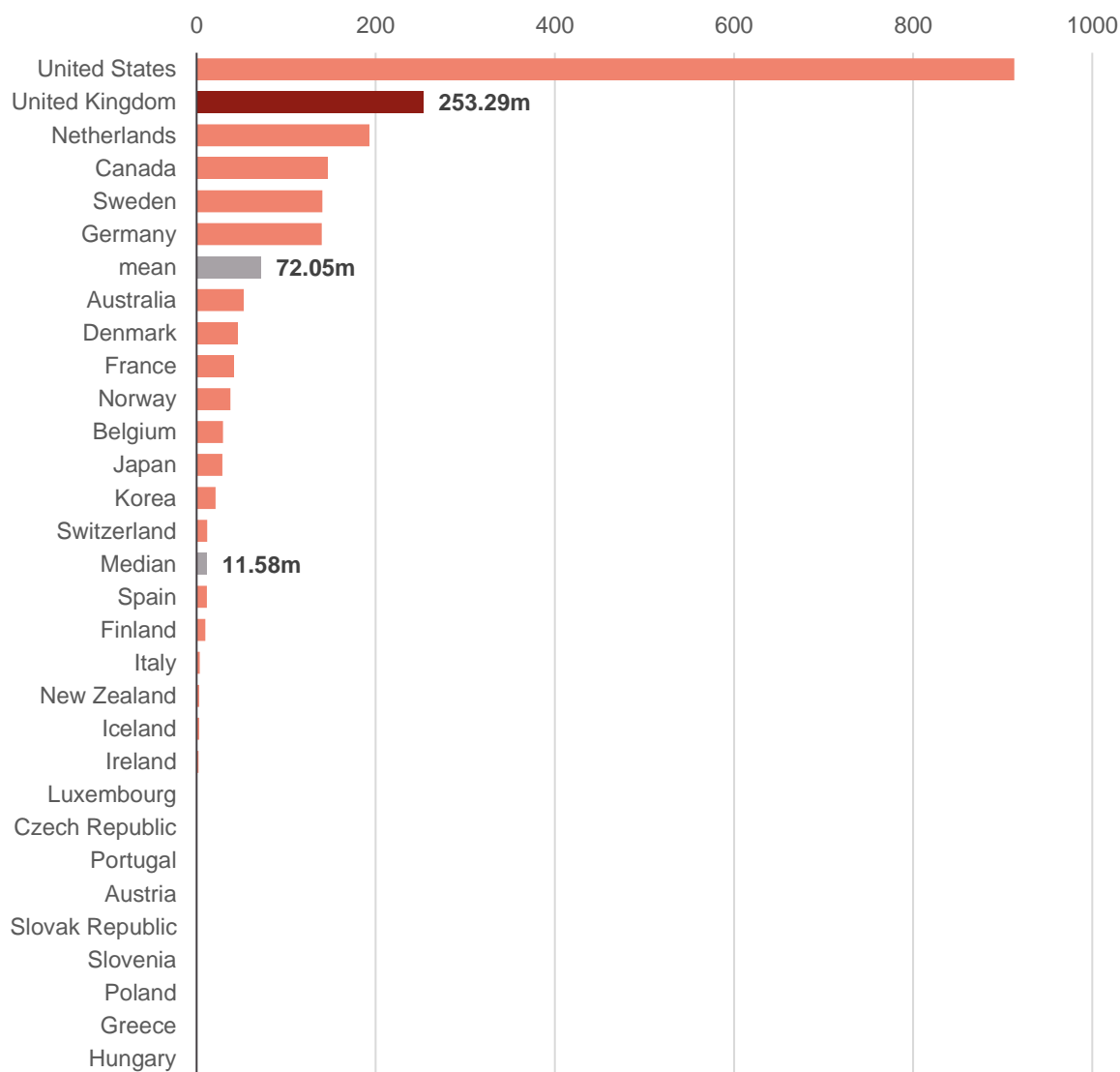


Source: OECD DAC CRS.

Notes: Current prices. Data refers to bilateral ODA to the purpose codes 'Reproductive health care' (13020) and 'Family planning' (13030).

Figure 10b: The UK remains the second largest provider of bilateral aid to reproductive healthcare and family planning in 2021

Volume of bilateral ODA, US\$ million



Source: OECD DAC CRS.

Notes: Current prices. Data refers to bilateral ODA to the purpose codes 'Reproductive health care' (13020) and 'Family planning' (13030).

Update on 2019–2021 figures

IATI provides an up-to-date but preliminary figure for total gender-relevant aid spending. Since last year's report, two more years of DAC data have been published that provide a more comprehensive assessment. This section uses this data to update the £1.9 billion figure quoted in last year's report. However, one caveat is that while IATI allows for any aid project to be assigned a gender marker, in DAC data this is only possible for bilateral data. Therefore, for multilateral data with a gender focus, the most recent IATI will be used even for the 2019–2021 period.

According to the CRS data and the keyword methodology used above, UK bilateral ODA with either a principal or significant gender relevance decreased by £2.7 billion. This was offset by a sharp increase in gender-focused multilateral aid: IATI data on FCDO's multilateral spend suggests that the percentage of gender-relevant multilateral projects increased from 30% to 62%. If the increase in the share was equal for total multilateral spend, then this would imply a £1.5 billion increase in the gender-relevant multilateral aid spend. Combined with the bilateral change, this means a fall in gender-relevant ODA of £1.2 billion between 2019 and 2021.

However, there are reasons to doubt whether the change in multilateral spending with a gender focus is genuine. The change is driven largely by contributions to the International Development Association (IDA): contributions given as part of the 19th replenishment round were assigned a significant gender marker, whereas contributions as part of the 18th replenishment round were not. While it is possible that IDA became more gender focused between 2019 and 2021, the business cases for both the 18th and 19th IDA replenishments both discuss at length how IDA contributions fit with the UK's gender strategy. Therefore, it is not obvious why one should receive a significant marker and the other not. The difference this makes depends on whether the significant marker is removed from the 19th replenishment contributions or added to the 18th replenishment contributions. Opting for the latter means that the increase in gender-relevant multilateral spend between 2019–2021 falls to £620 million, and that the overall fall in UK gender-relevant ODA was £2.1 billion between 2019–2021.

Table 1: Estimates of total gender-focused UK aid spend, 2019 and 2021, GBP billions

Method	2019	2021	Difference
Just Bilateral	6.26 (59%)	3.52 (49%)	-2.74
Total, as reported	7.70 (50%)	6.46 (54%)	-1.24
Total, adjusted multilateral	8.58 (56%)	6.46 (54%)	-2.12

Source: OECD DAC CRS and IATI.

Notes: Current prices. Data refers to gross disbursements that have been identified as having either a principal or significant gender objective using either the gender markers or DI's keyword methodology.

Another issue with including multilateral spending in the estimates is that by definition, the UK does not control the extent to which multilateral organisations focus on gender/integrate it into their programmes. It can use gender focus as one criteria for determining contributions to multilaterals, but only as one among many others.

Country updates: biggest falls between 2019 and 2021

The new data published since the last report allows us to obtain a more accurate picture of which countries saw the biggest fall in gender-focused aid between 2019 and 2021. This new data is from all departments, not just FCDO, although FCDO accounts for the vast majority in most cases as other ODA from other departments is more likely to have a regional focus, rather than a country-specific one.

Table 2: Change in bilateral gender-focused aid by country, 2019 and 2021, GBP millions

Country	2019	2021	Difference
Bangladesh	255.2	79.4	-176
Ethiopia	263.1	105.2	-158
Pakistan	218.8	104.2	-115
South Sudan	194.7	84.4	-110
Nigeria	208.3	107.4	-101
Yemen	181.2	86.4	-95
Somalia	152.4	85.9	-67
Jordan	117.7	55.2	-62
Syria	120.1	57.8	-62
Kenya	114.3	52.7	-62

Source: OECD DAC CRS.

Notes: Current prices. Data refers to gross disbursements that have been identified as having either a principal or significant gender objective using either the gender markers or DI's keyword methodology.

As reported last year, the three countries to record the largest decline in gender-focused ODA were Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Pakistan, with declines of £176 million, £158 million and £115 million respectively. However, the new data suggests that South Sudan was fourth, recording a decline of £110 million. Notably, no country saw an increase of more than £1 million.

Tentative insights from IATI

IATI data suggests an increase in bilateral aid with a gender equality focus from FCDO

In the past, DFID and FCDO have been among the most reliable agencies for uploading timely data on aid transactions to IATI. However, in the past year, the merger between FCO and DFID has necessitated a change in accounting systems which has led to delays in reporting to IATI. As of May 2023, FCDO transaction data for 2022 is still incomplete. Provisional statistics on international development data state that total ODA spend from FCDO in 2022 was £7.6 billion. However in IATI, only £4.6 billion is recorded in transactions, with no transactions recorded for 2023. Conversely, IATI transaction data for the previous year was fairly complete by this point in time last year (2021).

This means that using IATI data to assess the latest trends is less reliable in 2022 than in previous years. Furthermore, while FCDO is the department with the best track record in reporting to IATI, its budget has fallen steadily since 2015, and preliminary data in 2022 suggests that it accounted for only 59.8% of total ODA. Because of this uncertainty, we examine two separate sources: transaction data – which represents actual spend but is incomplete – and budget data, which roughly equals the preliminary estimate of FCDO ODA spend in 2022, but only reflects intentions.

Transaction data

- Incomplete data for FCDO in 2022 suggests an increase in the percentage of bilateral projects that are marked as having a significant gender equality objective: from 54% in 2021 to 64% in 2022. Similarly, the percentage of projects marked as having a principal objective also appears to have increased, from 5% to 7%.
- When the markers are supplemented with the keyword methodology employed above, the share of FCDO's bilateral ODA with a significant gender focus increased from 54% to 62%² between 2021 and 2022, and the share with a principal gender focus increased from 7% to 11%.
- Care should be taken in interpreting these figures. As well as being highly incomplete, there are also differences in how the marker is used between the CRS and IATI. In IATI, the marker is applied at the activity level, whereas in the CRS markers are often applied at the sub-activity level. For example, the project '[Building Resilience and adapting to climate change in Malawi](#)' has a significant gender marker in IATI, but in 2021 only 65% of disbursements related to this project were given a

² The reason that ODA with a significant gender focus is *lower* when the keyword methodology is used is that some projects that have a significant gender marker are judged as having a principal objective.

significant marker in the CRS. Nevertheless, the data indicates that slightly more projects had a gender focus in 2022 than in 2021.

Budget data

- Another way of assessing change since 2021 is to examine the activity budgets listed in IATI. The total FCDO budget for 2022 in IATI is listed as £7.637 billion, close to the preliminary figure for total FCDO ODA spend in 2022 (£7.636 billion). While actual spend may ultimately deviate from these budget figures, they nevertheless provide another indication of likely trends in 2022.
- These figures also indicate that the share of gender-marked ODA has increased, albeit more modestly than the (incomplete) transaction figures indicate. The share of the budget for FCDO activities with a significant marker in 2022 was 63.7%, compared to 59.2% in 2021. Similarly, the share of the budget for activities with a principal marker increased from 6.6% to 7.5%.
- When the markers are supplemented with the keyword methodology employed above, the budget data suggests that the share of FCDO's bilateral ODA with a significant gender focus increased from 59% to 62%, and the share with a principal focus increased from 9% to 11%.

In contrast to previous years, FCDO's bilateral spend increased slightly in 2022 according to preliminary data, from £4.56 billion to £4.59 billion. Given that both budget and transaction data (albeit imperfect) indicate an increase in the share of FCDO bilateral spend with a gender equality objective, it is likely that the volume of such aid will therefore increase in 2022. However, there is considerably uncertainty surrounding these numbers.

What does this imply about 2022 gender-focused ODA?

The previous report found that between 2019 and 2021, cuts to the UK aid budget meant that there was a £1.9 billion fall in aid with a gender focus. Although the data are highly incomplete, meaning some caution is warranted, this section attempts to produce a comparable number.

- The transaction data referred to above found that the share of FCDO's bilateral aid budget with a gender focus increased from 63% in 2021 (according to CRS data) to 73% in 2022 (according to incomplete IATI data). Given FCDO's bilateral budget each year, **this implies an increase in gender-focused bilateral aid from FCDO from £2.84 billion to £3.35 billion, a £516 million increase.**
- For non-FCDO bilateral data, ordinarily, a reasonable assumption would be that the gender-focused share remains equal, as there is no data currently available. However, we know that the large increase in non-FCDO ODA has come primarily from hosting Ukrainian refugees in the UK. We do not yet know how this will be tagged, but it seems reasonable to assume that this spending will not have a gender focus, as schemes for admitting Ukrainians do not distinguish between genders. Therefore, we assume that the increase in in-donor refugee costs between 2021 and 2022 will not have a gender focus. For the remaining non-FCDO bilateral aid, we

assume that the gender-focused share remains the same (at 24%). After making these adjustments, **the amount of gender-focused bilateral aid from other departments fell from £628 million to £527 million, a £101 million decrease.**

- For multilateral data, only data for FCDO through IATI is available as the CRS data does not include core multilateral contributions. We assume that the gender-focused share of multilateral contributions is same for FCDO/non FCDO. In contrast to bilateral aid, the share of gender-focused multilateral aid fell between 2021 and 2022 according to (incomplete) IATI data, from 62% to 55%. **This implies a fall in gender-focused multilateral aid from £2.65 billion to £1.83 billion, a £822 million decrease.**

Combining these estimates, **currently available data suggests that UK aid with a gender focus decreased by around £400 million between 2021 and 2022.** While bilateral aid with a gender focus increased by around £415 million, multilateral aid with a gender focus decreased by around £822 million.

However, there are reasons to place less weight on the multilateral data. By definition, the UK cedes control of any core multilateral contributions and therefore the gender focus of projects funded in this way are beyond their control. Furthermore, multilateral contributions are more likely to be affected by individual projects (such as the rebadging of IDA contributions from no gender focus to a significant focus between IDA18 and IDA19), and therefore changes could be less down to policy and more down to specific circumstances. This is seen in how each series varies: the standard deviation in the share of bilateral aid with a gender focus is 3.8, and the range is 11 percentage points. For multilateral aid, the figures are 20.1 and 46 percentage points respectively.

In conclusion, for aid that the UK directly controls, there was a slight increase in gender-focused bilateral aid, but not enough to offset previous cuts. When multilateral aid is included, there appears to have been a further decline.

These figures imply that gender-focused UK aid fell from 54% to 45% as a share of total aid. Focusing on just bilateral aid – over which UK has direct control – the fall was from 48% to 41%. If in-donor refugee costs relating to Ukraine are excluded, bilateral aid increased from 48% to 57%.

Change in gender-focused aid from FCDO by region

The currently available data on 2022 aid is not sufficiently complete to allow for a country-by-country breakdown of changes in gender-focused aid, as the remaining aid not currently recorded on IATI is likely to substantially change the picture in individual countries. However, at an aggregate level, changes are less likely to have an impact. Furthermore, the UK has published preliminary data on FCDO's bilateral spend by region which can be used to estimate the change in gender-focused spend. Below, we calculate the percentage of aid currently recorded in IATI which has a gender focus and apply these figures to the preliminary FCDO data.

- Africa, for which 75% of transactions for 2022 have been recorded on IATI, appears to have recorded a small decline in gender-focused bilateral ODA from FCDO.

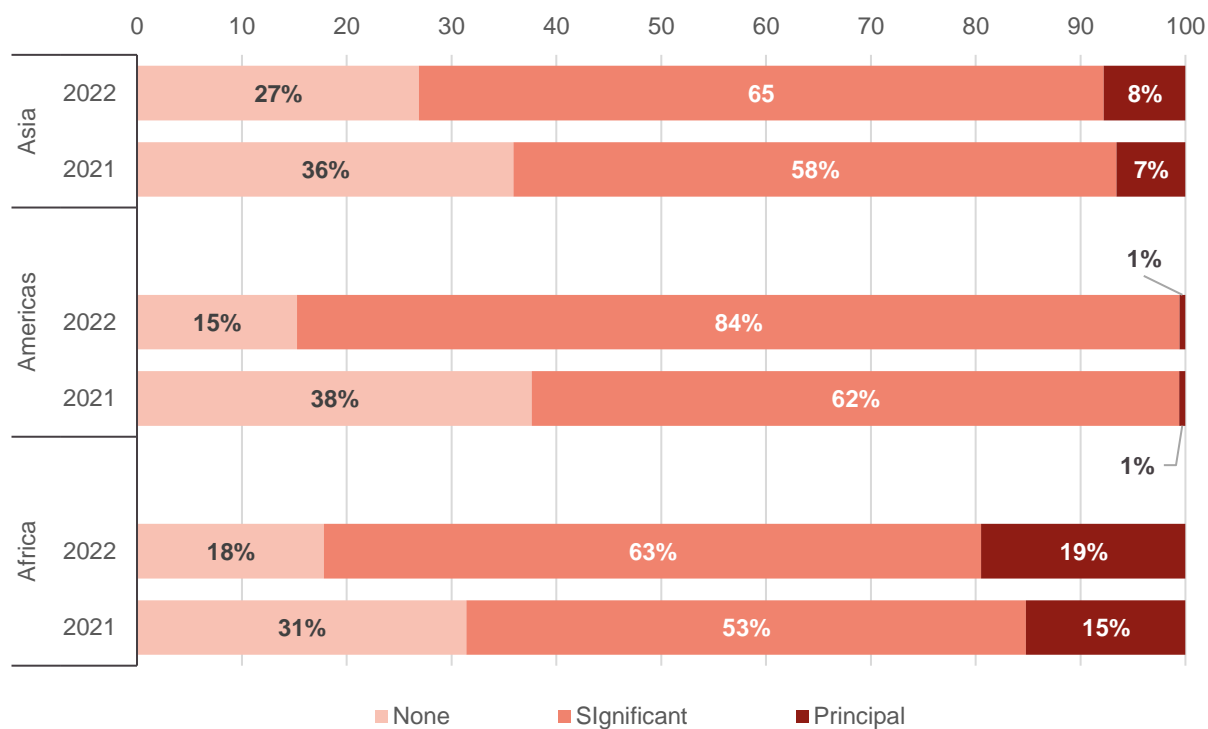
Although such aid to Africa decreased by around 20%, the share of currently declared transactions to IATI with a gender focus is 82% (62.7% significant and 19.5% principal). If this holds when the data is updated, there will be a 4% fall in gender-marked ODA to Africa from FCDO.

- Bilateral aid to Asia from FCDO has followed a similar trend. While there was a 12% fall in bilateral aid, the share that was gender focused appears to have increased from 64% to 73% (65% significant and 8% principal), together implying a 1% decrease in gender-focused aid. While 91% of transactions have been uploaded, the small difference means that the results could still change when the data is updated.
- In contrast, the data currently suggests that gender-focused aid received by the Americas nearly doubled. Total bilateral aid from FCDO to the Americas increased by 39%, and the share with a gender focus increased from 62% to 85%, although nearly all of this had merely a significant focus. Additionally, given that around 88% of aid to the Americas has been uploaded, we can be sure that there will be an increase regardless of the share of gender-focused aid among projects yet to be updated.
- For the Pacific, no gender-focused bilateral aid was recorded from FCDO in 2021, and this is also true of 2022 so far. However, this region only received £9 million in total in 2022.

The picture in Europe is complicated by Ukraine. There has been a fourfold increase in aid to Europe as a result of the Russian invasion, but this is not currently reflected in IATI: currently, IATI is only showing aid to Europe worth £10 million in total. Therefore, there is not currently enough information to say the extent to which such aid is gender focused. Furthermore, there appears not to have been any gender-marked aid received by Pacific countries in either year, but this region only receives a few million GBP each year.

Figure 11: The largest regions each recorded an increase in the share of gender-focused ODA but not enough to offset declines in absolute amounts of aid

Percentage of bilateral FCDO aid received by gender focus



Source: IATI and FCDO Statistics on International Development, preliminary figures.

Notes: Current prices. Data refers to bilateral ODA from FCDO with principal and significant aims of supporting gender equality, either marked with the gender marker or identified using keyword-search methodology.

Humanitarian settings

In order to track volumes of humanitarian aid in response to women and girls' needs in crisis settings, Development Initiatives used data from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' Financial Tracking Service (UN OCHA FTS). The analysis employs the same list of keywords used for the above analysis and combines this with information on how much humanitarian aid goes to the 'protection – gender-based violence' cluster. The preliminary results of this analysis in relation to UK humanitarian assistance are presented below. However, FTS is a live tracker of funding and is frequently updated, so figures are subject to change.

UN OCHA's FTS platform tracks data in real time and focuses on humanitarian assistance flows only. UK humanitarian aid volumes reported to the FTS totalled around £1.4 billion in 2022, an increase of roughly 29% relative to 2021 when it was £1.1 billion, but still far below its level in prior years.

According to the most recent FTS data, UK humanitarian aid provided for the GBV cluster increased from £9.1 million in 2019 to £11.8 million in 2020 and £13.4 million in 2021. However, 2022 saw a decrease of around 10% to £12.1 million, despite the increase in overall humanitarian finance that year. However, when projects that contain gender-relevant keywords in the descriptions are also included, the trend in 2022 was more positive. Humanitarian aid given either for the GBV cluster or containing keywords increased from £13.0 million in 2020 to £20.3 million in 2021, and again to £37.0 million in 2022 (an increase of 81.8% between 2021 and 2022).

In 2022, Ukraine was by far the biggest recipient of humanitarian aid with a gender focus, receiving £16.0 million, or 40% of the total gender-relevant humanitarian aid that year. This is despite receiving only 8% of total humanitarian aid from the UK in 2022. The second largest recipient was Afghanistan, which received £9.5 million, or 26% of the total. The next three largest recipients were South Sudan, Bangladesh and Somalia, each of which received around £3 million in gender-focused humanitarian aid.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has likely had an impact on the aid that other crises have received from the UK, but this is hard to quantify given the absence of the counterfactual. [Analysis from DI](#) last year suggested that relative to need, total humanitarian finance was much lower than average in 2022 when Ukraine is excluded. The UK specifically treats its aid target as a ceiling, meaning that any aid received by Ukraine would inevitably have been spent elsewhere, possibly as humanitarian aid. However, FTS data does suggest that humanitarian aid from the UK for other crises has increased in 2022, from £1.07 billion to £1.24 billion. While the increase could have been higher if not for the Ukrainian conflict, the impact was certainly not as large as the cut to the aid budget from 0.7% to 0.5% of GNI a year earlier.

Impact of the UK's recent gender strategy

The UK recently published a new strategy on '[International Women and Girls](#)' which contained a number of quantitative announcements on how the UK's aid budget would target gender equality. This section briefly explores the impact of these announcements.

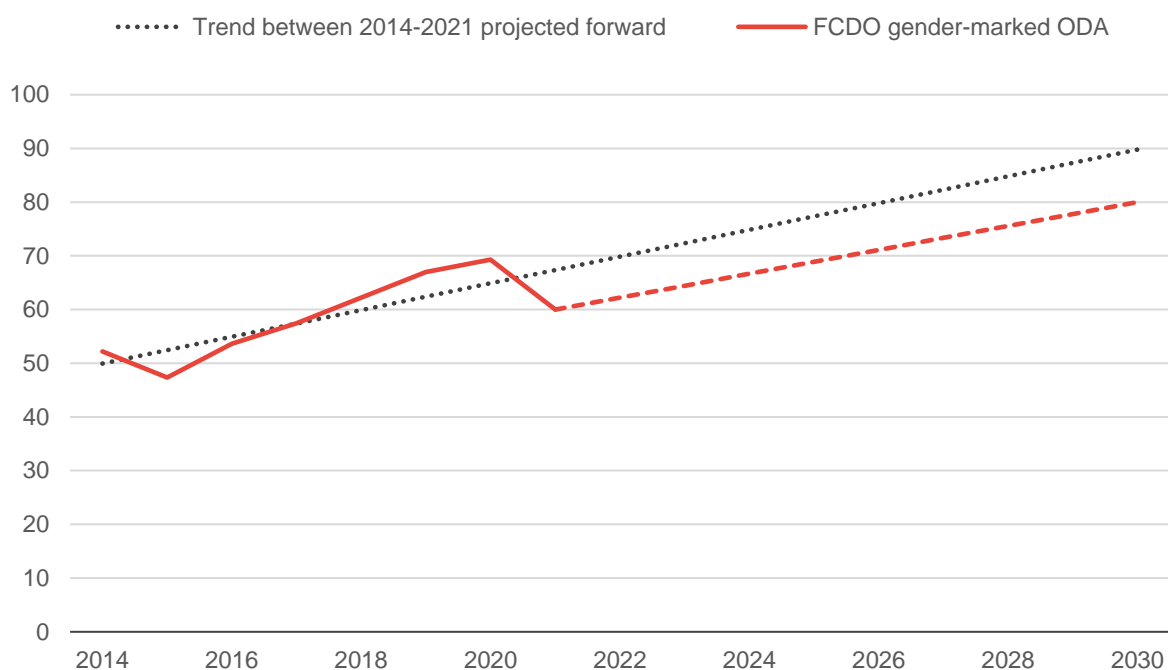
Overall commitment on gender equality focus

The UK government recently made the commitment that by 2030, 80% of FCDO's bilateral programmes would include a gender equality focus. This would entail an increase of around 20 percentage points relative to FCDO's share in 2021 (of 60%). Preliminary data from IATI suggests that around 70% of FCDO's bilateral aid was gender marked in 2022. However, there are two points that offer important contextual information:

- FCDO's bilateral aid has accounted for a declining share of the total aid budget over the past decade. Whereas in 2014, aid from DFID and FCO combined was 87% of the total bilateral budget, by 2021 this had fallen to 63%. Therefore, while FCDO-specific commitments are welcome, what happens in relation to aid from other departments is increasingly important. However, the strategy also noted that the share of International Climate Finance marked would increase, some of which comes from other departments.
- If the share of FCDO's gender-marked bilateral aid increases in line with the (linear) trend between 2014 and 2021, this would indicate that nearly 90% of FCDO's bilateral aid will be gender marked by 2030.
- The [commitment only specified](#) that 80% of FCDO's programmes would include a focus on gender-equality, not the extent to which programmes have a principal or significant focus. In practice, there is a risk that the target is met in part by loosening the definition of 'gender focus', rather than through any real behavioural change.

Figure 12: UK target for 80% of FCDO's bilateral aid to be gender marked by 2030 implies a 10 percentage point increase relative to the peak in 2020

FCDO bilateral ODA assigned a gender marker, 2014–2021, and projected trend



Source: OECD CRS, UK announcement on new International Women and Girls strategy.

Notes: Current prices. Data refers to bilateral ODA from FCDO with principal and significant aims of supporting gender equality, either marked with the gender marker or identified using our keyword-search methodology

Women's integrated sexual health

The announcement also entailed up to £200 million in funding for women's integrated sexual health. The likely timeframe for spending this was not specified, but assuming that it will be spent within the timeframe of the new strategy, this implies an average annual spend of £25 million between 2023 and 2030 (inclusive). Relative to the amount spent in 2021 on reproductive health and family planning, this would entail an increase of around 14%.

Women's Rights Organisations

The announcement also entailed a new programme of £38 million supporting women's rights organisations (WRO), to be disbursed over five years and implying average annual additional spending of £7.6 million. This is an increase of 51% relative to spending under the WRO purpose code in 2021. However, if other DAC countries maintain the same level of spending as in 2021, then this increase would only raise the UK's position from the ninth largest provider of aid to WROs to the eight largest – its position in 2019. It would

still be behind Netherlands, Sweden, Canada, France, Spain, Germany, Norway and Japan, despite being a larger donor than all but three of these countries.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Methodology

Approach using OECD DAC Creditor Reporting System (CRS) and International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) data

Identification of projects relevant to gender equality

1. Project titles and short descriptions of the OECD DAC CRS entries and project titles only of the IATI entries were searched using principal terms to identify projects with 'principal' objectives relevant to gender equality. ([Appendix 2](#) below lists the search terms used).
2. Long descriptions of the OECD DAC CRS entries and project descriptions and transaction descriptions of the IATI entries were then searched for using the same principal terms. Projects captured in the search were marked as 'significant' on the assumption that gender equality was one objective of a wider programme.
3. A secondary search using significant terms was carried out on the project titles, short descriptions and long descriptions of all OECD DAC CRS entries and project titles, and the project descriptions and transaction descriptions of all IATI entries not already marked as 'principal' or 'significant'. These terms aimed to capture a pool of projects for which gender equality was part of a wider programme.
4. Projects marked by the UK as having a 'principal' or 'significant' objective of gender equality were then marked with their respective scoring.
5. All projects in the sector of 'Women's rights organisations and movements, and government institutions' (Purpose code: 15170) were marked as 'principal'; this is in line with the guidance in the gender marker handbook. All projects with the purpose of 'Ending violence against women and girls (VAWG)' (Purpose code: 15180) were marked as 'significant', unless already marked as 'principal' in the above steps. This approach for the second purpose code was taken because since the code's introduction on the CRS in 2016, there have been significant amounts of funding recorded for projects as part of a wider programme of work or cross-cutting areas, where a clear separation of VAWG activities might not be possible due to reporting gaps and inconsistencies.

For evaluating aid to crisis countries, this was defined as countries that have a UN-coordinated appeal, as of the year of analysis.

For evaluating the gender focus of humanitarian spend from the UN Financial Tracking Service (FTS) data, we apply the same list of major keywords to the FTS description field. We also classify any humanitarian aid given as part of 'Protection – Gender-based Violence Global Cluster' as gender focused.

Adjustments made to reflect incomplete IATI data

In contrast to previous years, IATI data for FCDO's 2022 ODA spend is highly incomplete as of June 2023. This has meant that additional assumptions were needed to assess how gender-focused ODA could have changed in 2022. We primarily focus on transaction data that has been recorded on IATI by FCDO.

For share of FCDO's bilateral aid in 2022 with a gender focus, we assume that the percentage of transactions currently reported to IATI with a gender focus is the same for FCDO's entire bilateral budget, which would mean we could apply that percentage to FCDO's total bilateral ODA spend as reported by the UK's provisional Statistics on International Development.

For the UK's multilateral spending in 2022, we assume that the percentage of gender-focused ODA in multilateral transactions currently reported by FCDO to IATI is the same as for the entire multilateral budget, and so apply that percentage to the UK's multilateral ODA spend currently reported by the UK's provisional Statistics on International Development.

For the share of bilateral aid from other departments with a gender focus in 2022, we assume that the share remains unchanged relative to 2021 (the latest year for which we have data from CRS). However, aid from other departments has been significantly impacted by the increase in in-donor refugee costs. Given that this increase has primarily been driven by acceptance of Ukrainian refugees under schemes that have not claimed any gender focus, we assume that the increase in in-donor refugee costs has no gender-focus. We therefore subtract this difference from bilateral aid from other government departments before applying the percentage.

Appendix 2: Keyword list

All keyword matches were conducted in lower-case. The keyword approach uses a method known as 'regular expressions' to match partial and dynamic phrases in the keyword list. For example, the keyword string 'finan' will match all instances of the words: 'finance', 'financing' and 'financial'. Special symbols are also used in regular expressions: for example, a period ('.') is a wildcard that matches any single character in its place. Other symbols include the use of curly brackets, which define the length of a wildcard: '{0,1}' matches any one or zero characters in its place, and the use of '\\b' to represent the boundary of a word, be that a punctuation or space character.

Major overall

"girl.*education|education.*girl",
"inclusive.*education|education.*inclusive",
"gender.*education|education.*gender",
"equitable.*education|education.*equitable",
"equality.*education|education.*equality",
"abuse",
"arranged marriage",
"birth control",
"contracepti",
"bisexual",
"bride price",
"child marriage",
"coercive sterili.{0,1}ation",
"forced sterili.{0,1}ation",
"involuntary sterili.{0,1}ation",
"domestic violence",
"condom", "femicide",
"\\bfemale empowerment\\b",
"\\bfemale genital mutilation\\b",
"\\bfemale genital cutting\\b",
"\\bfemale circumcision\\b",
"FGM",
"feminism",
"gender.{0,1}based violence",
"gender.{0,1}blind",
"gender discrimination",
"GBV",
"LGBT",
"lesbian",
"\\bgay\\b",
"homosexual",
"gynaecolog",
"harass",
"heteronormativ",
"masculin",
"matern",
"misogyn",
"non.{0,1}binary",
"obstetric",
"patriarchy",
"menstruat",

"rape",
"sexism",
"sexual assault",
"sexual violence",
"reproductive health",
"sexual health",
"SRH",
"tampon",
"women.*trafficking|trafficking.*women",
"female.*trafficking|trafficking.*female",
"girl.*trafficking|trafficking.*girl",
"transsexual", "transgender",
"paid.{0,1}care",
"widow",
"women.{0,3}empowerment",
"women.{0,1}s.{0,1}rights",
"domestic.{0,1}work",
"p.{0,1}s.{0,1}v.{0,1}i",
"preventing.{0,1}sexual.{0,1}violence",
"sexual.{0,1}violence",
"prevention.{0,1}of.{0,1}sexual.{0,1}violence",
,
"sexual.{0,1}assault",
"rape",
"stigma in conflict",
"justice for survivors",
"perpetrator.{0,2}to account"

Minor overall

"female",
"girl",
"wom.{0,1}n"

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