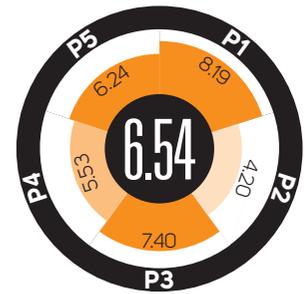


IRELAND

HRI 2011 Ranking
4th

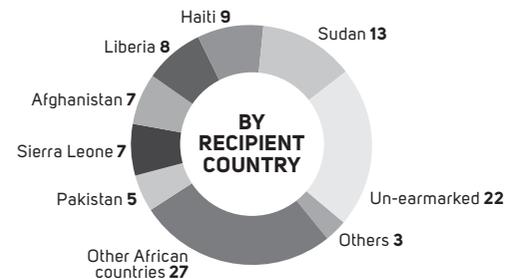
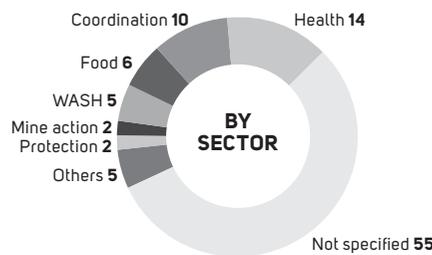
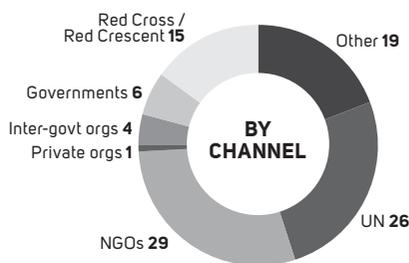


Group **3**
ASPIRING ACTORS

OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE **0.53%**
of GNI

HUMANITARIAN AID **15.3%**
of ODA
US \$31
Per person

HUMANITARIAN AID DISTRIBUTION (%)



GENDER RATING

POLICY

FUNDING

FIELD PERCEPTION

STRENGTHS

Pillar	Type	Indicator	Score	% above OECD/DAC average
5	QT	Funding accountability initiatives	10.00	+143.1%
3	QT	Funding UN and RC/RC appeals	8.30	+104.0%
3	QT	Funding NGOs	8.93	+97.0%
3	QT	Un-earmarked funding	9.49	+83.2%
5	QT	Participating in accountability initiatives	7.92	+76.9%

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Pillar	Type	Indicator	Score	% below OECD/DAC average
2	QT	Funding international risk mitigation	2.61	-45.4%
4	QL	Advocacy towards local authorities	3.13	-43.8%
4	QL	Advocacy for protection of civilians	3.30	-40.7%
3	QL	Donor capacity and expertise	3.81	-39.1%
2	QL	Strengthening local capacity	4.04	-30.1%

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Ireland ranked 4th in the HRI 2011, dropping two positions from 2010. Based on the patterns of its scores, Ireland is classified as a Group 3 donor, "Aspiring Actors". Donors in this group tend to have more limited capacity to engage with the humanitarian system at the field level, but often aspire to take on a greater role in the sector. They generally focus on a few core strengths, such as in the area of prevention, preparedness and risk reduction, or on specific geographic regions. Other donors in the group include Australia, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg and Spain.

Overall, Ireland scored above the OECD/DAC and Group 3 averages. Ireland scored above the OECD/DAC and Group 3

averages in all pillars, with the exception of Pillar 2, where it was below both averages.

Ireland did best compared to its OECD/DAC peers in indicators on *Funding accountability, initiatives, Funding UN and RC/RC appeals, Funding NGOs, Un-earmarked funding* and *Participating in accountability initiatives* – all quantitative indicators. Its scores were relatively the lowest in *Funding international risk mitigation, Advocacy towards local authorities, Advocacy for protection of civilians, Donor capacity and expertise* and *Strengthening local capacity*. Overall, Ireland performed better in quantitative indicators than in the qualitative, survey-based indicators.

AID DISTRIBUTION

In 2010, Ireland's Official Development Assistance (ODA) decreased substantially in absolute terms, although similar drops in its Gross National Income (GNI) left Ireland's ODA/GNI ratio relatively stable. In 2010, ODA comprised 0.53% of Ireland's GNI compared to 0.54% in 2009. Humanitarian assistance represented 15.3% of Ireland's ODA in 2010, or 0.078% of its GNI.

According to data reported to the United Nations (UN) Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' (OCHA) Financial Tracking Service (FTS) (2011), Ireland

channelled 29.5% of its humanitarian assistance to non-governmental organisations (NGOs), 26.4% to UN agencies, 14.5% to the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and 5.9% bilaterally to affected governments. In 2010, Ireland supported 28 crises: 16 in Africa, 10 in Asia, one in the Americas and one in Europe. The top recipient countries of Irish humanitarian aid in 2010 were Sudan, Haiti and Liberia. In 2010, Irish Aid focused its sector-specific funding primarily on health, coordination and food sectors.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Irish Aid, which falls under the Development Cooperation Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs, manages Ireland's humanitarian assistance. Ireland's 2009 Humanitarian Relief Policy is its main humanitarian policy, and is fully coherent with the strategies for development cooperation outlined in the 2006 *White Paper*. In June 2011, the Minister of State for Trade and Development announced an upcoming review of the *White Paper*, which will set out clear priorities for the future direction of the Irish Aid programme. Additionally, Irish Aid has produced sector-specific strategies and policy papers,

particularly with regards to mainstreaming issues such as gender and the environment.

Two important funding channels utilised by Irish Aid are the Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Fund (EHAF), and the Emergency Preparedness and Post-Emergency Recovery Fund (EPPR). These are complemented by the Rapid Response Initiative, which partly functions to provide funding for emergency capacity building. Irish Aid's Multi-Annual Programme Scheme (MAPS) provides multi-year funding to five partner organisations. Irish Aid has a field presence in 16 core countries, primarily in Sub-Saharan Africa.

HOW DOES IRELAND'S POLICY ADDRESS GHD CONCEPTS?

GENDER

Irish Aid developed a *Gender Equality Policy* in 2004, updating it in 2010 (Irish Aid 2004 and Irish Aid 2010). A large part of the policy focuses on gender mainstreaming, which is also reflected in the 2009 *Humanitarian Relief Policy*. Ireland recognises that men and women have different needs in crises (Irish Aid 2004). To this effect, Irish Aid requires that partner organisations have a clear understanding of gender specific needs in emergencies and that their programmes are in line with the goal, objectives and strategy outlined in Irish Aid's *Gender Equality Policy*. Irish Aid also stresses its commitment to a rights-based approach, and specifically pledges to address gender based violence (GBV) (Irish Aid 2009).

PILLAR 1

RESPONDING TO NEEDS

Ireland's *Humanitarian Relief Policy* (Irish Aid 2009) states that it respects and promotes the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence, and will provide assistance on the basis of need. It further emphasises the importance that the scale of response should be commensurate with the scale of need, with a special reference to forgotten emergencies. In addition, Ireland recognises that vulnerable groups within a society often have special needs, which is catered to accordingly (Irish Aid 2009). Irish Aid prides itself in responding to various disasters in a timely and appropriate manner (Irish Aid 2011a). It has endeavoured to increase its ability to respond quickly to emergencies through the creation of the Rapid Response Initiative and support for the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

PILLAR 2

PREVENTION, RISK REDUCTION AND RECOVERY

Ireland's various policy documents emphasise the importance of a proper transition from relief to development, as well as support for local capacity, prevention, preparedness, and risk reduction initiatives. In relation to the environment for example, a mainstreaming strategy is set out in the *Environment Policy for Sustainable Development* (Irish Aid 2007). According to Ireland's humanitarian policy, disaster risk reduction (DRR), linking relief to rehabilitation and development (LRRD) and prevention/preparedness are all part of a broader humanitarian effort which take into account longer term objectives and address the core vulnerabilities of communities which are affected or prone to acute crises. Ireland considers that this can be achieved in part by building local capacities. Finally, Ireland's humanitarian policy mentions that relief assistance should build on existing local capacities and ensure the participation of the affected population (Irish Aid 2009).

PILLAR 3

WORKING WITH HUMANITARIAN PARTNERS

Ireland's policy highlights the need to provide flexible, predictable assistance and support the work of the organisations comprising the humanitarian system (Irish Aid 2009). It does not appear to specifically favour Irish NGOs over others, except for the long term funding scheme available for Irish NGOs (Irish Aid 2011b). Ireland provides core funding to UN agencies and contributes to multi-donor pooled funds with the aim of providing flexible aid (Government of Ireland 2006). Ireland recognises the lead role that the UN plays in coordination and expresses its support for the reform of the humanitarian system, including the role of Humanitarian Coordinators and the cluster approach (Irish Aid 2009). In an effort to provide predictable funding, Ireland created the Multi-Annual Programme Scheme (MAPS), which provides predictable, multi-year funding to five partner organisations.

PILLAR 4

PROTECTION AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

Ireland's policy in relation to protection, access and international law is slightly less elaborated than other areas, although it does mention the importance of these issues. With regards to protection, Ireland's *Humanitarian Relief Policy* recognises this as a humanitarian need, specifically for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. This is also true with regards to respecting and promoting the implementation of international humanitarian law (IHL), refugee law and human rights law. Furthermore, Ireland recognises the leading role of the International Committee of the Red Cross to promote IHL (Irish Aid 2009). In relation to security and human rights, Ireland's policy states that the Department of Foreign Affairs will use appropriate channels at the country level and inter-governmentally through the UN and other bodies to inform programming and advocate as needed (Irish Aid 2009).

PILLAR 5

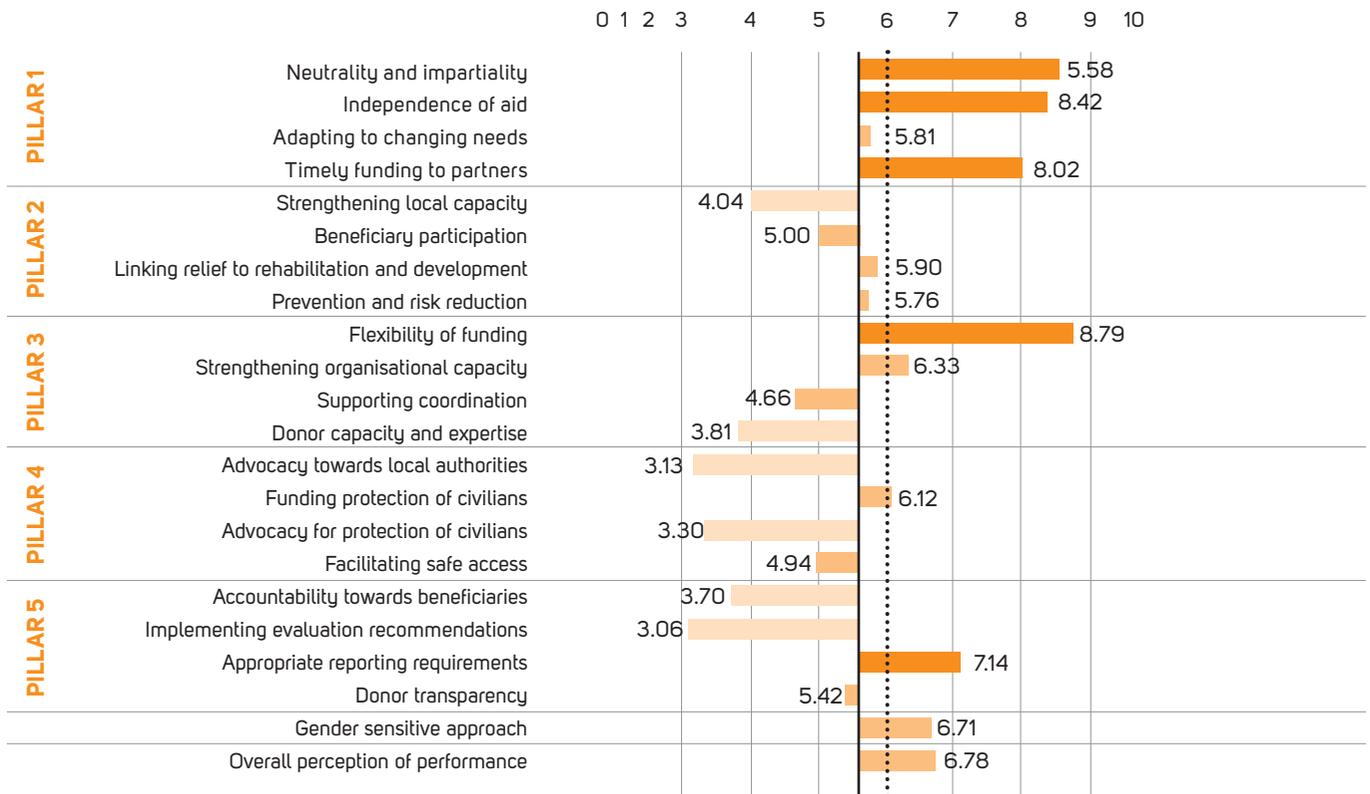
LEARNING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Ireland's policy stresses the importance of transparency, learning and accountability. It specifically mentions promoting and supporting the *Principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship* (GHD), Sphere standards, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee standards and guidelines and the *Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief* (Irish Aid 2009). Issues of transparency and accountability are mainly addressed through the promotion of good governance. The White Paper includes public ownership and transparency as one of its guiding principles. Ireland states the importance of "accountability to both the Irish taxpayer and aid recipients," (Irish Aid 2009). Driven by the need to enhance programme effectiveness through continued learning, Ireland focuses on the evaluation of its performance as a donor, as well as that of its partners. Ireland also refers to its GHD domestic implementation plan to assess its own performance (Irish Aid 2009).

FIELD PARTNERS' PERCEPTIONS

IRELAND'S FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES

Collected questionnaires: 18



SOURCE: DARA

Ireland's average score 5.60 ← → OECD/DAC average score 6.05

Colours represent performance compared to donor's average performance rating:

■ Good
 ■ Mid-range
 ■ Could improve

HOW IS IRELAND PERCEIVED BY ITS PARTNERS?

GENDER

Ireland's field partners seem to consider gender an important priority for the country. According to one organisation, incorporating gender sensitive approaches in programmes "is a must for Irish Aid." Another organisation commented that "Irish Aid requests gender disaggregated data," adding that Ireland supported a GBV programme.

PILLAR 1

RESPONDING TO NEEDS

Organisations receiving funding from Irish Aid were generally positive in relation to their commitment to Pillar 1. One agency described Ireland as an "extremely good donor that isn't interested in politics." Partners consider Ireland an engaged donor that is "interested in reviewing annual

reports and regular communication with the field.” In terms of timeliness, most organisations appreciated the speed of disbursement, although a few dissented, stating that “Ireland always arrives a bit late, but at least wants to cover gaps and answer our requests.”

PILLAR 2

PREVENTION, RISK REDUCTION AND RECOVERY

Ireland’s field partners were more critical regarding its support for local capacity and beneficiary participation. One organisation stated that Irish Aid does not require it, as “they are more interested in delivering humanitarian aid.” Similarly, in relation to beneficiary participation in humanitarian aid, it was claimed that “they encourage it, but don’t insist.” Feedback was much more positive regarding Ireland’s support for prevention, preparedness and risk reduction: “Irish Aid is very strong in this, while the others [other donors] do not care that much.”

PILLAR 3

WORKING WITH HUMANITARIAN PARTNERS

In Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners), partner organisations praised Ireland for the flexibility of its funding. One organisation stated: “We have a longstanding relation with them based on trust. They assume what we do is right as the grants are not earmarked.” Another added: “We have a long-term framework agreement with Irish Aid, so we can use the money as we need it.” In relation to supporting the organisational capacity of its partners, Ireland outperformed its peers, though one interviewee claimed: “This is included in development, but not in humanitarian aid.” The responses on Irish Aid’s focus on coordination differed depending on the country. One organisation asserted that it was a firm requirement: “We have to find out what other organisations are doing and participate in clusters. Irish Aid headquarters coordinates with other donors.” In a different country the response was decidedly more negative: “Coordination about donors is a lot of talk, but not that much acting.”

PILLAR 4

PROTECTION AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

Ireland received some of its lowest qualitative scores in Pillar 4 (Protection and international law). Partner organisations rated Ireland especially low for *Advocacy towards local authorities* and *Advocacy for protection of civilians*. In comparison, Ireland did somewhat better for its funding of protection, though it still received one of the lowest scores of the OECD/DAC donors for this indicator.

PILLAR 5

LEARNING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

In Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability), Ireland received two of its lowest scores for *Accountability towards beneficiaries* and *Implementing evaluation recommendations*. One interviewee affirmed that “downward accountability is not a funding requirement or at best a weak one.”

There were some organisations that were more positive regarding lesson learning however: “they evaluate our projects and encourage changes for the next time,” reported one organisation, and “very involved and care about lessons learnt,” noted another. Ireland’s partners seem to consider its reporting requirements appropriate. Responses on its transparency were mixed however: “There is transparency about funding but not about decision making.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

● MATCH SUPPORT FOR PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS AND RISK REDUCTION WITH CORRESPONDING FUNDING

Ireland’s partners report that the country is highly supportive of integrating prevention, preparedness and risk reduction measures in their humanitarian programmes. In fact, Ireland received the best score of the OECD/DAC donors for this qualitative indicator. However, its scores were very low for the quantitative indicators on funding for prevention, preparedness and reconstruction, and international risk mitigation mechanisms. Ireland allocated 0.31% of its ODA to fund international risk mitigation mechanisms while its OECD/DAC peers averaged 0.77%. Ireland’s funding for prevention and reconstruction is only 10.0% of its humanitarian assistance, while overall OECD/DAC donors dedicated an average of 18.6%. The data seems to indicate that Ireland places importance on these issues with its field partners, but is weaker in providing corresponding financial support.

● EXPLORE OPTIONS LIKE INFORMATION-SHARING TO ENHANCE DECISION-MAKING

Ireland’s partners were critical of its capacity and expertise to make appropriate decisions. In fact, Ireland received the lowest score of the OECD/DAC donors⁵ for this indicator, a substantial drop from its score in the HRI 2010. Cutbacks in Irish Aid seem to have taken their toll on its capacity and expertise, according to Irish Aid’s partners. Given these circumstances, Irish Aid should partner with other donors and field organisations to share information and ensure information from the field is properly informing decision-making.

● ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE WITH FIELD PARTNERS TO PARTICIPATE IN ADVOCACY AS APPROPRIATE

Ireland could improve its advocacy for protection and advocacy towards local authorities. It will need to engage

closely with its field partners to discuss the most appropriate way to do so in each situation.

● REINFORCE REQUIREMENT FOR DOWNWARD ACCOUNTABILITY

Ireland could reinforce more strongly its requirement for accountability to aid recipients, as field partners indicate that Irish Aid does not place sufficient emphasis on this.

● ENCOURAGE LEARNING FROM THE PAST

Ireland has substantial room for improvement in *Implementing evaluation recommendations*. It should redouble its efforts to work with its partners integrate lessons from the past into future programmes.



Please see www.daraint.org for a complete list of references.