



Terms of Reference: Statistical review of ODA reporting of in-donor refugee costs – 2018

National Statistics context

UK Official Development Assistance (ODA) and ODA as a percentage of Gross National Income (the ODA:GNI ratio) are part of DFID's National Statistics. National Statistics designation means DFID has a statutory duty to follow the best practice guidance set out in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#). National Statistics (NS) compliance is monitored by the [Office for Statistics Regulation](#), who set the standards for the production of official statistics and requires producers to assure themselves that their statistics are robust and reliable to justify the NS brand.

Background

DFID is responsible for compiling total UK ODA, which is an internationally agreed measure of [official financial flows](#) from the UK to developing countries overseas for international development. The ODA directives were updated in 1988 to confirm that temporary sustenance to refugees in donor countries is reportable as ODA for the first 12 months of stay. However, there has been variation in how donors report due to lack of clarity on how to apply the directives and different challenges in calculating eligible costs in each country's system. This area has therefore been subject to much discussion at the DAC for several years. In 2017 the DAC agreed clarifications to these directives to improve consistency, comparability and transparency of how in-donor refugee costs are reported (see attached).

The methodology and data for ODA eligible in-donor refugee costs were last reviewed in 2014 and focussed on Home Office support to asylum seekers. The range of support provided under these directives has become more varied; in 2016 refugee costs were reported by Department of Health, Department for Education, the Home Office, Department for Work and Pensions, HM Revenue and Customs and DFID.

While much of the UK's ODA reporting is derived from financial transaction data, a small share relies on estimates. This includes estimates of certain types of support received by asylum seekers and refugees within their first 12 months of being in the UK, namely: shelter, subsistence support, health and education costs. The bases of the estimates are the S95 applications¹ and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC) numbers². The spend figures are then calculated by applying appropriate unit costs for the services provided to the number of beneficiaries.

Scope

The aim of this work is to: (i) review the estimation methodologies in light of the DAC's agreed clarifications to the reporting directives and (ii) consider any refinements to the methodology or more appropriate data sources.

In particular the review will look to:

- Build on the 2014 review to ensure the UK methodology covers the full range of support reported under the DAC directives and ensure alignment with recent clarifications;
- Review the appropriateness of the unit costs, flow data and methodologies being applied in each contributor's estimates;
- Review home country coverage of refugee applications in the UK to ensure it complies with the ODA definition, taking into account data quality;
- Examine the age data being used for the UASC ODA estimate;
- Investigate sources of data that would allow estimates of in-donor refugee costs separately for Scotland and Wales to allow for their education and health costs to be reflected.

¹ **Section 95 support:** Support may be provided under Section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 to destitute asylum seekers until their asylum claim is finally determined. S95 support can be provided as both accommodation and subsistence, or accommodation or subsistence only.

² An **Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Child (UASC)** is defined in the Immigration Rules as a person who is under 18 years of age when the asylum application is submitted, is applying for asylum in their own right; and is separated from both parents and is not being cared for by an adult who in law or by custom has responsibility to do so.

Review process and governance

The review will be led by statisticians in DFID's Finance and Performance Department (FPD), who are responsible for reporting UK ODA statistics. It will also involve statisticians, ODA reporters or policy officials in the Home Office, DfE, DH, HMRC and DWP who are the data providers. Any recommendations arising from this review will be considered by DFID's Chief Statistician for approval. The review will also engage other stakeholders at key points, such as HM Treasury.

Timing and deliverables

The review was announced in Statistics on International Development (SID) 2017 and started at the beginning of 2018 and is due to conclude during 2018. The main output of the review will be a paper that sets out the methodology and any recommended changes. Key findings of the review will be published in a future edition of Statistics on International Development.

The review forms part of a set of reviews in the on-going development of the SID publication.

Contact

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