

# The Quality of UK Aid Spending, 2011–2018: An Analysis of Evaluations by the Independent Commission on Aid Impact

Ian Mitchell and Arthur Baker

## Abstract

This paper analyses the grades awarded in the 65 primary reviews undertaken by the UK Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) over its first eight years of operation, from 2011 to 2018. ICAI's mandate is to provide independent evaluation and scrutiny of the impact and value for money of all UK aid. So far, there has been no summary of ICAI's gradings or reviews. This paper calculates the aid spending covered by ICAI reviews and how it is graded and summarises by the government department responsible.

It finds that ICAI has directly evaluated £28bn of UK aid over the period. Around four-fifths of spend assessed was graded as “satisfactory” (amber/green) or “strong” (green). Most reviews relate to spend by the Department for International Development. In other departments, there have been relatively few graded reviews. Reviews covering DFID's aid spend have covered around a third of its aid spending and graded four-fifths as satisfactory or better. Reviews covering the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's aid spend have covered a quarter of its aid spend, and the subset that are graded show four fifths of the spend was assessed as “unsatisfactory.”

The findings from ICAI reviews, and this report, should inform the UK Government's aid allocations between departments at the forthcoming spending review.

**Keywords:** Aid; Effectiveness; Impact; Evaluation; Value for Money; UK

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The data used in this paper is available here: <https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/ICAI-reviews-data-analysis.xlsx>. More information on CGD’s research data and code disclosure policy can be found here: [www.cgdev.org/page/research-data-and-code-disclosure](http://www.cgdev.org/page/research-data-and-code-disclosure).

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## List of Abbreviations

BEIS	Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy
CSSF	Conflict Stability and Security Fund
DECC	Department for Energy and Climate Change
DEFRA	Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs
DFID	Department for International Development
DHSC	Department of Health and Social Care
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
GCRF	Global Challenges Research Fund
HMT	Her Majesty's Treasury
ICAI	Independent Commission for Aid Impact
NAO	National Audit Office
NCA	National Crime Agency

## Executive Summary

This paper examines the scores awarded to programmes and funding instruments by the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) over its first eight years of operation. It uses the grades awarded by ICAI between 2011–2018 to compare the performance of government departments and funds. Departmental performance should inform how aid is allocated between departments, and ICAI’s reviews are probably the best resource we have on this.

ICAI is a non-Departmental body, operationally independent from Government, and reports to the House of Commons International Development Select Committee. Its mandate is to provide independent evaluation and scrutiny of the impact and value for money of all UK Government Official Development Assistance (ODA).<sup>1</sup> Those assessments, and the performance of government departments, should be a key factor informing decisions about aid allocation.

A large majority of reviews received either Green/Amber or Amber/Red (three reviews received a Green and one received a Red, all of these relate solely to DFID and covered comparatively small amounts of spending). For brevity, we will refer to Green and Green/Amber as “satisfactory” scores, and Red and Amber/Red as “unsatisfactory.”

The analysis here presents ICAI’s gradings across time and between reviews. There are limitations to interpreting gradings between ICAI reviews—reviews have different focuses, are relative to the objectives of the programme assessed, and the grading reflects the judgement of ICAI’s different commissioners (see section 2.5 for a full discussion). Still, the final grading system is used to communicate the ultimate impact, and we think the comparison is meaningful and valuable.

In its first eight years from 2011 to 2018, we find that:

- ICAI has directly evaluated around £28bn of UK ODA in 65 reviews<sup>2</sup> between 2011 and 2018. This is equivalent to about a third of all UK ODA spent 2010–2017. Most of these reviews (58 reviews) awarded scores:
  - **Around four-fifths were rated Green or Amber/Green** (strong or satisfactory). This indicates that according to ICAI, aid is well-spent overall.
  - **Around a fifth were rated Amber/Red or Red** (unsatisfactory or poor).
- ICAI’s reviews are not intended to be a representative sample of UK Aid spending. Their selection criteria bias the sample towards “emerging” and higher risk areas. So, the true picture is likely to be even more positive.

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<sup>1</sup> ICAI website <https://icai.independent.gov.uk/about-us/>

<sup>2</sup> This figure excludes follow-up reviews, and two reviews which are summaries of others

**Table 1. Summary of ICAI reviews 2011–18**

Overall score	By review		By spending	
	Number of reviews	% of graded reviews	£m evaluated	% of graded spending
Green	4	7	429	2
Green/Amber	33	57	16,895	77
Amber/Red	20	34	4,430	20
Red	1	2	109	<1
Not Graded	7		5,970	
Total Graded	58	-	21,862	-
Total	65	-	27,832	-

Source: CGD analysis of ICAI reviews

Performance varies widely by department. Of the major ODA spenders:<sup>3</sup>

- **DFID spending performed best**, with almost four-fifths of spending graded strong or satisfactory (and 36 of 55 reviews of DFID-led programmes). ICAI directly evaluated £24.7bn of DFID spending. This is equivalent to about a third of DFID’s total aid spend 2010–2017.
- **FCO spending performed worst**, around four-fifths of spending graded unsatisfactory (and two of three graded reviews of FCO-led programmes). Further, an ungraded rapid review of the Prosperity Fund (90 percent of Prosperity Fund ODA was spent by the FCO in 2016) expressed serious concerns, including that spending might not meet the legal definition of aid (Official Development Assistance, ODA).

The FCO is the second largest aid spending department (including its spending through cross-government funds). ICAI has directly evaluated spending equivalent to about a quarter of the FCO’s total aid spend 2010–2017 (including ungraded reviews).

- **There is a mixed picture for BEIS**, the third largest spender of UK ODA. The International Climate Fund, which now accounts for just under half of BEIS’ total ODA, performs well. It has twice received Amber/Green ratings, once in 2014 (before the creation of BEIS) and once in 2019 (after our review period). The Global Challenges Research Fund, which accounts for around 40 percent of BEIS’ total ODA 2016–2021, was evaluated in 2016. Although this review was ungraded, it

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<sup>3</sup> We define major ODA spenders as those which spent more than 1 percent of UK ODA in 2017. See Annex 2 for full departmental breakdown; and Table 2 for a summary.

voiced serious concerns. A review of the third strand of BEIS's ODA—the Newton Fund—is forthcoming.

- The **Home Office** has not yet been reviewed, despite spending more than a billion pounds of ODA since 2010 (the majority is spent on asylum seekers and settling refugees).
- **The Conflict Stability and Security Fund** received an Amber/Red in a 2018 overall review of the fund. This included spending by the FCO, DFID, the NCA, and the MoD. The Conflict Pool (the CSSF's predecessor) also received an Amber/Red in 2012.

ICAI has also evaluated departments and funds spending smaller amounts of aid:

- **DEFRA** jointly managed the International Climate Fund, which received Green/Amber.
- **DHSC's** work on global health threats received a Green/Amber.

In order to test the robustness of our results, we have we have summarized ICAI's scores in three different ways (see method section 2.5 and results section 4), to ensure that our findings are robust to different methods and assumptions. Each of these approaches produces results which support the above findings.

The Government is committed to achieving value for money in its aid spending. ICAI has reviewed a substantial portion of aid evaluated in FCO to be unsatisfactory, and qualitatively there are serious concerns with parts of BEIS's spend.

In the forthcoming spending review, the Government should ensure that ICAI's findings inform its allocations. To ensure aid has a positive impact, and to ensure the confidence of taxpayers, Departments and programmes that score poorly in ICAI's evaluations should see their aid re-allocated to programmes with a clearer positive performance.

# 1. Introduction

This paper examines the findings of the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) over its first eight years of operation. It summarises the review scores awarded by ICAI according to amount of spending covered, and by the government department responsible for spending.

The **Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI)** conducts independent evaluation and scrutiny of the impact and value for money of all UK Government ODA, to ensure that UK aid is spent effectively for the benefit of both recipients and UK taxpayers.<sup>4</sup> ICAI reports to Parliament through the House of Commons International Development Committee. Since its launch in 2011, ICAI has produced 67 reviews, covering almost £28bn of UK aid. ICAI's reviews are in depth pieces of analysis. Full, graded reviews take around nine months each to complete and include field work and interviews with various stakeholders, as well as literature reviews and desk research. ICAI's reviews are therefore an invaluable source of information about aid impact across government departments. Rapid Reviews are not graded, as they focus on emerging issues and are not intended to reach final conclusions on performance.

Since 2015 there has been a marked increase in aid spent through departments other than the Department for International Development (DFID) and across-government funds, with the proportion spent outside of DFID rising from 19 percent in 2015, to 28 percent in the latest (2017) figures.<sup>5</sup> There has also been a focus on the effectiveness of aid. The Secretary of State for International Development has committed to ensuring that aid is not only well spent, but “could not be better spent.”<sup>6</sup> To this end, she has suggested cutting spending to multilateral agencies that don't meet these standards,<sup>7</sup> including UNESCO.<sup>8</sup> In this context, and with a spending review likely to take place in 2019, the UK government should be considering carefully which UK departments spend aid most effectively.

This paper synthesises the results of ICAI's reviews, summarising the review scores awarded by ICAI according to amount of spending covered, and by the government department responsible for spending to inform decisions about effective aid allocation.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://icai.independent.gov.uk/about-us/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statistics-on-international-development-final-uk-aid-spend-2017>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/international-development-secretary-on-uk-aid-the-mission-for-global-britain>

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/foreign-affairs/news/99817/no-10-slaps-down-penny-mordaunt-over-plan-end-unesco-funding>



## 2. Method

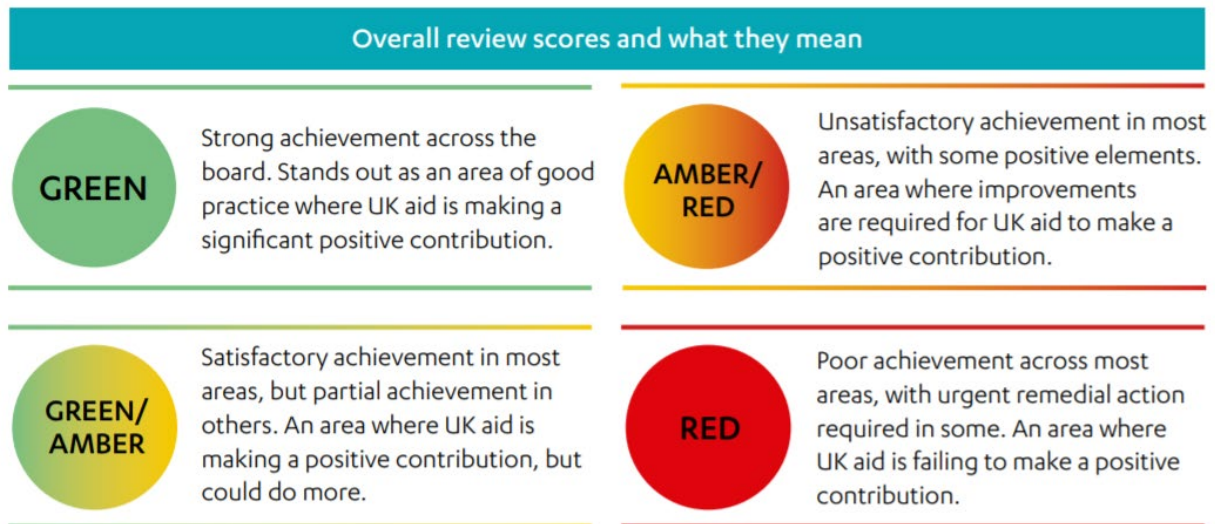
Our aim is to understand and summarise ICAI’s reviews and their review scores both in terms of how much spending they cover and in terms of how they apply to Government departments. This section first gives an overview of ICAI’s methods, then describes our approach.

### 2.1 ICAI’s Approach

ICAI uses a four-grade schema to score each review (figure 1). From 2016 onwards, each ICAI review included this graphic. Before that, ICAI used the same traffic light system, but with slightly different criteria for each score. For instance, Amber/ Green meant “the programme meets most of the criteria for effectiveness and value for money and is performing well. Some improvements should be made.” This change in the definition is discussed below in the limitations.

Reviews can focus on individual programmes, thematic areas, or whole government funds. ICAI has four criteria when selecting topics for review: Relevance, Materiality, Risk, and Value added (for details of each criterion see Annex 5). These criteria are likely to focus ICAI’s work on newer and more risky areas of spending, since the criteria include risk and “relevance of the topic to new and emerging challenges for the aid programme.”

Figure 1. All graded ICAI reviews (2016 onwards) include this graphic



Source: ICAI, <https://icai.independent.gov.uk/about-us/our-workplan/>

The International Development Committee is consulted on the selection of topics. ICAI contracts service providers to carry out work on their behalf. They also request input from “independent reviewers” on reviews. However, commissioners, and ultimately the chief commissioner, are responsible for the selection of topics and content of reviews, including grades.

## 2.2 Assessing Scoring and Spend

Due to several limitations to the data available (see section 2.5), some care needs to be taken in comparing the scores of ICAI reviews. We have conducted three different analyses of ICAI scores, to make sure that our results are not driven by analytic choices.

**Counting grades:** First, we compare the number of reviews of each grade that departments have received. Since some reviews cover multiple departments, we look at the lead department for each review. We define this as the department with the largest amount of spending directly evaluated. However, it is possible that some departments received positive scores for smaller projects, and negative scores for larger ones. To control for this, we must estimate the coverage of reviews.

**Estimating spending directly evaluated:** Second, we calculate the amount of spending directly evaluated—the combined budget of the programmes explicitly sampled—by each review. We then calculate the total amount of directly evaluated spending by each department that received each review. However, we want to ensure that our methodology for calculating spending is not driving our results. It is possible that the amount of spending sampled by each review does not accurately represent the total amount of spending that the sample aims to represent. To test this, we must estimate the spending indirectly evaluated:

**Estimating spending indirectly evaluated:** Finally, we make a judgement as to how much spending the review aimed to evaluate. We then calculate the total amount of directly evaluated spending by each department that received each review.

Reviews do not have a systematic way of recording how much spending is within their scope, or which departments they are evaluating. We describe below how we made these assessments.

## 2.3 Inclusion of Reviews

We include 65 reviews undertaken by ICAI between 2011 and 2018. We exclude “meta-reviews” which summarize or synthesise results of other reviews, to avoid double counting. All other ICAI reviews in this period are included.

## 2.4 Spending Assessed

To determine how much spend a review covered we calculate two figures: spending directly evaluated; and spending indirectly evaluated. The main results are all based on the directly evaluated figures, but in assessing the reviews we also recorded the broader definition:

### Spending directly evaluated

In assessing the spend directly evaluated, there were three broad scenarios where the spend was defined:

- 1) Most reviews explicitly used a sample of “case study” programmes or countries to represent a broader population. In these cases, we only count the spend covered by the sample (which can include spending over multiple years). There are three reasons for focussing only on sample spending:
  - a. The method for drawing samples is not consistent across reviews, and the samples were not necessarily representative.
  - b. Whilst samples were generally well-defined in terms of spend, the population they were meant to represent was often less well defined.
  - c. Some reviews (usually thematic ones) were much broader and shallower than others. Using only their sample spending avoids broad and shallow reviews from having disproportionate weight in our analysis.
  
- 2) For reviews that cover multiple government departments (including reviews of cross government funds), we assign spending to each department proportionally to the amount of spending evaluated for each department.
  - a. Where there is a sample of programmes, and the review is explicit about which department programmes are managed by, we take the sum of the value of these programmes.
  - b. Where there is no sample of programmes, we make a judgement based on the contents of the review about how much spending is covered and divide this according to how much each department commits to the fund (e.g., the Prosperity Fund).
  
- 3) For reviews that focus on a single programme, fund, or area and do not draw a sample, we follow the logic of the review.
  - a. If a single programme is reviewed in detail, we take the full budget of the programme. (e.g., DFID’s Health Programmes in Burma or DFID’s Livelihoods Work in Western Odisha).
  - b. For larger funds, we restrict the amount of spending included based on what the review has meaningfully evaluated. For example, for the GCRF, we only included spending which had already been approved for delivery to partners.
  
- 4) If a review is thematic and does not mention either specific case studies or programmes, we take the budget on that theme in the most recent year (e.g., DFID’s approach to anti-corruption).

### **Spending indirectly evaluated**

We also considered the spending that was ‘indirectly’ evaluated by the reviews.

- 1) We took the total spending on the activity that the review is evaluating.
- 2) We pulled this figure from the review itself, to ensure that we were only counting spending that the review was explicitly talking about.
- 3) For some reviews this is a single year of spending, and for others it is multiple years. Again, we followed the logic of the review, including multiple years if the review meaningfully evaluated spending across multiple years, and mentioned a multiple year figure.

## 2.5 Limitations

There are several potential limitations to this analysis.

**Comparability of ICAI reviews and grades.** ICAI reports are assessed against the objectives of the programme in question (see below) and have a different focus according to the type of review and the questions it poses (see section 4.5). In addition, ICAI reports consider very different subjects – from girls’ education, to spend in supporting security in Somalia. This suggests that when comparing an amber/ green in one review it may not be entirely consistent with that in another. This should be borne in mind when interpreting ICAI grades, and our results. However, in taking decisions about spend the Government must make decisions on how to allocate spending between girls’ education, supporting security in Somalia, and other goals. Part of ICAI’s remit is to assess the impact and value for money of those projects. The common scoring system ICAI uses recognises this, and we feel it is appropriate, meaningful and useful to collate and compare these grades.

ICAI’s grading system has not remained constant over time. The overall criteria for each grade changed slightly in 2016, as did they type of questions that each review asked. This means that reviews over time might not be directly comparable. However, this does not pose a serious challenge to our findings for two reasons. Firstly, figure 3 shows that there is no clear trend in the grades given by ICAI over time, the proportion of positive and negative reviews have stayed roughly stable. Secondly since both DFID, the FCO, and the CSSF/Conflict Pool were reviewed in each period, we can see that the departmental pattern is not driven by this.

**Sample bias.** ICAI’s reviews are not intended to cover a representative sample of UK ODA. Indeed, the method for selecting topics for review favours ‘emerging’ and riskier programmes<sup>9</sup>. However, whilst this means that UK Aid is probably more effective than ICAI’s reviews indicate, the comparison of different government departments is still valid, as there is no evidence that ICAI’s selection criteria are applied inconsistently across government.

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<sup>9</sup> See Annex 5 for ICAI’s selection criteria for reviews.

**Grading according to objectives.** Reviews tend to evaluate spending against departments' own objectives and priorities. This approach makes sense to create reviews that are individually meaningful and useful to departments. It also means that ICAI's reviews do not hold departments to a standard that they could object to. However, if objectives vary in their degree of challenge, then review results may not be comparable across departments. For example, a review of DFID's work on maternal mortality noted that *"DFID's 2010 Results Framework set out a clear strategy for improving maternal health, based on global evidence of 'what works'. Recognising that maternal health is influenced by a wide range of factors, it set out a well-balanced strategy for achieving long-term results."* The review awarded DFID an Amber/ Red, partly because DFID did not follow this framework to a great enough extent. Programmes might therefore be rewarded for having objectives or frameworks that are less ambitious, rather than for being more effective.

**Quality of ICAI reviews.** Since this paper synthesises ICAI reviews, the quality of ICAI reviews will affect our results. Even if there were issues with the quality of ICAI reviews, we do not believe that the quality of ICAI reviews varies systematically across government departments, meaning a comparison of departments using review scores remains valid.

**Not a measure of impact or cost-effectiveness.** ICAI's scores are not a measure of impact or cost effectiveness, rather they are a subjective judgement about how well aid programmes are run, based on various questions. It is possible that some spending graded Amber/ Red has higher cost-effectiveness ratios than some spending rated Green/ Amber. However, assuming that ICAI's judgements are reasonably good, we would expect grades to be correlated with cost-effectiveness.

**Small sample.** ICAI has conducted many reviews of DFID. However, there are only a small number of reviews of other government departments. However, since those reviews tend to cover a reasonable proportion of the Department's spend, we believe that they are a good indication of performance. Since we finished our analysis two more ICAI reviews have been published. We may update our analysis as reviews continue to be published, and we invite others to do the same.

**Categorizing spending.** Calculating the spending by each department covered by a review requires some subjective judgement. However, our overall findings are robust to at least three different analyses of ICAI's reviews. We are not aware of any quantitative analysis of ICAI's results that would tell a significantly different story. We invite the reader to use our data (available in csv format) to try other methods.

Due to these limitations, our results should not be interpreted with care, but we feel that it is appropriate, meaningful and useful to collate and compare these grades and by comparing gradings by number of reviews, spend and indirect spend, we can check the consistency of approach across these three methods.

## 3. ICAI Coverage

### 3.1 Overall Coverage

This section looks at the coverage of ICAI’s reviews relative to overall departmental spend over the period. This informs whether we can use the results as an indicator of departmental performance. ICAI’s remit is to conduct “*a small number of well-prioritised*” reviews so we shouldn’t necessarily expect a particular level of coverage.

ICAI has produced 67 reviews. Two of these were “meta reviews”, which synthesised existing reviews on a given theme.<sup>10</sup> On top of this, ICAI publishes regular summaries of the results of its reviews, and government departments’ responses. Of the 65 primary reviews 7 were undegraded, and 58 gave grades. Some of these reviews cover spending by more than one government department.

### 3.2 Coverage by Year

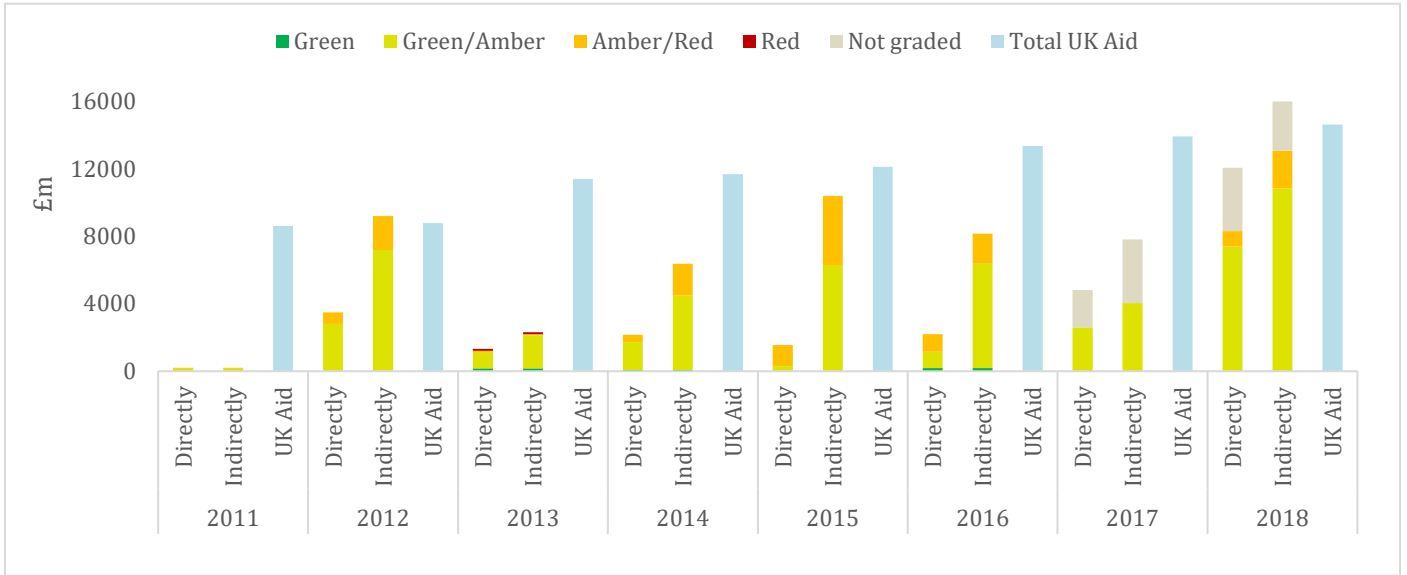
Figure 2 shows the amount of spending directly and indirectly evaluated by each review.<sup>11</sup> with the total UK aid budget for context. Since ICAI reviews can each cover spending in several years and some of them overlap, the total annual value of aid reviewed should not be thought of as a fraction of total UK aid in that year. However, ICAI’s reviews clearly do cover a significant proportion of UK aid spending.

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<sup>10</sup> How DFID Learns, and DFID’s Approach to Delivering Impact

<sup>11</sup> See Methods for definitions for spending directly and indirectly evaluated.

**Figure 2. Spending evaluated by ICAI reviews and total UK ODA by year**



Source: CGD analysis of ICAI reviews

Notes: the spend directly and indirectly assessed often cover more than one year, which is why they sometimes exceed the annual UK aid spend

The amount of spending evaluated increased significantly between 2016 and 2018. This is largely driven by an increase in the scope of reviews. Earlier reviews tended to focus on individual countries and programmes. Before 2014 the average amount of spending directly evaluated varied between £61m and £270m. In 2015 and 2016 the average was £310m and £366m respectively, as ICAI began conducting cross cutting reviews with wider scopes. By 2017 and 2018 the average spends covered was £688m and £916m respectively, driven by very large reviews on value for money, procurement, transport & infrastructure, cash transfers, and two cross government funds.

### 3.3 Coverage by Department

Figure 3 shows the amount of departmental spending ICAI has reviewed directly and indirectly, with the total ODA spend of each department 2010–2017. ICAI has reviewed more spending by DFID than other departments, both in absolute terms, and relative to each department total aid spending.

Although ICAI has reviewed a significant proportion of ODA spending by the FCO and BEIS, only a small proportion of the FCO’s spending and, up to 2018, none of BEIS’ has been graded. Before 2015 the FCO only spent a very small fraction of UK ODA. After 2015, the proportion of UK Aid being spent by other government departments increased significantly, as did aid being spent through cross-government funds.<sup>12</sup> ICAI responded by

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.nao.org.uk/report/managing-the-official-development-assistance-target-a-report-on-progress/>

producing rapid reviews of The Prosperity Fund, the Global Challenges Research Fund, aid, as well as a preliminary review of aid spent outside DFID overall. Rapid Reviews are “short, real-time reviews of an emerging issue or area of UK aid spending” but are “not intended to reach final conclusions on performance or impact and are therefore not scored.”<sup>13</sup>

**Table 2. ICAI report department coverage and grading**

Department	Number of graded ICAI reviews	Total ODA spending 2010-2017 (£m)	Total ODA directly evaluated by reviews* (£m)	Percentage of graded spend receiving Green or Amber/ Green
DFID	57	73,017	24,668	79%
FCO	4	4,658	746	21%
CSSF/ Conflict Pool**	3	2,192	184	6%
BEIS	0	1,465	1,300	-
DECC	1	1,777	647	100%
Home Office	1	1,151	0	-
DEFRA	1	309	24	100%
DHSC	1	217	411	100%
MOD	2	87	3	0%
NCA	1	46	13	0%

Source: CGD analysis of ICAI reviews.

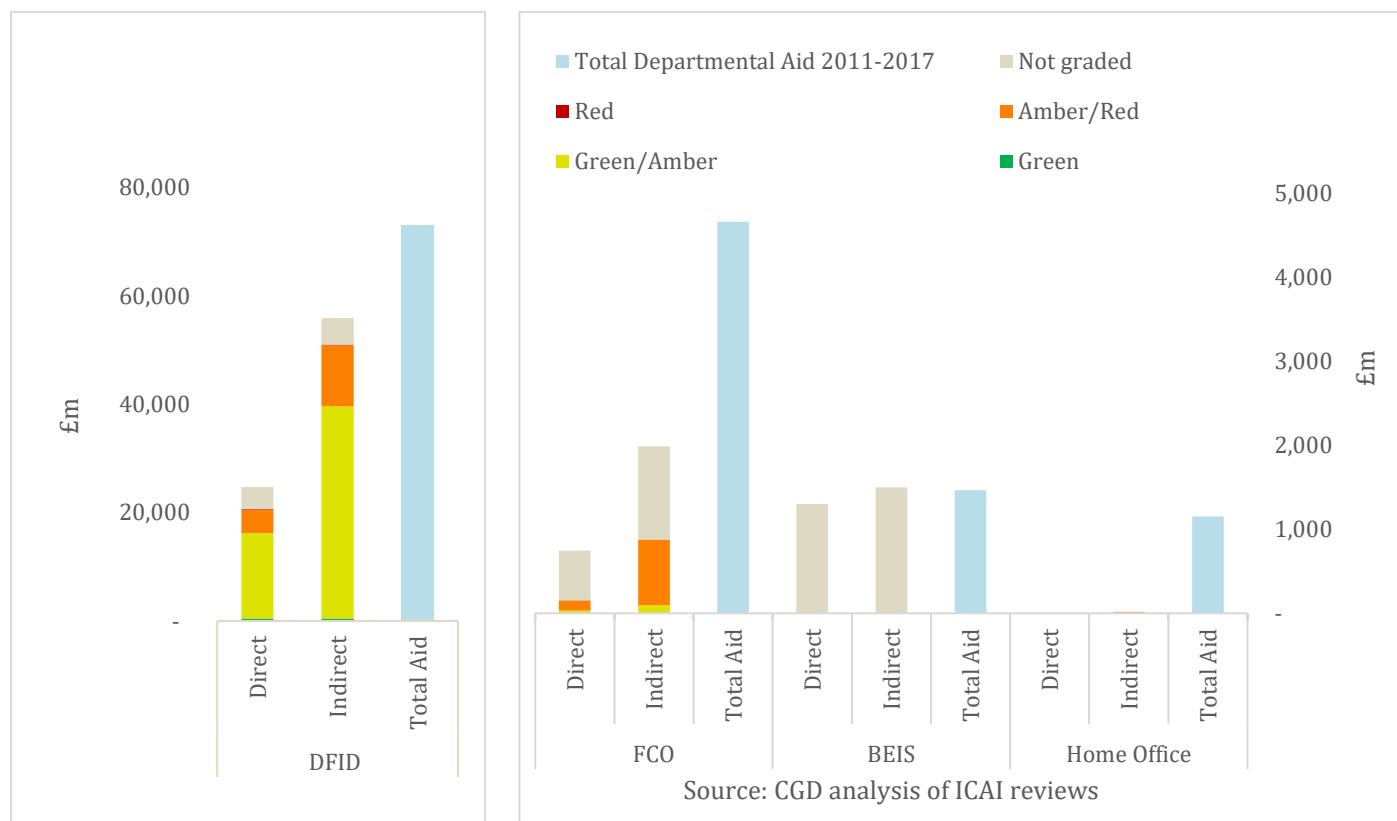
Notes: \*Total directly evaluated includes multiple years spend and some reviews overlap. BEIS and DECC have now merged. \*\*Spending by the CSSF/ Conflict Pool are not mutually exclusive with departments, as departments spend through them.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://icai.independent.gov.uk/reports/future-work-plan/>



**Figure 3. ICAI coverage: departmental spending directly and indirectly evaluated, and total aid spending 2010-2017. Major aid spenders (those spending at least 1% of UK ODA in 2017) are included**



## 4. Results

This section sets out the results of our analysis, in terms of the grades according to the number of reviews, and the spend which they cover. The underlying data is available in Annexes 2 and 3, and the full list of individual reviews is contained at Annex 4.

### 4.1 Reviews and Grades

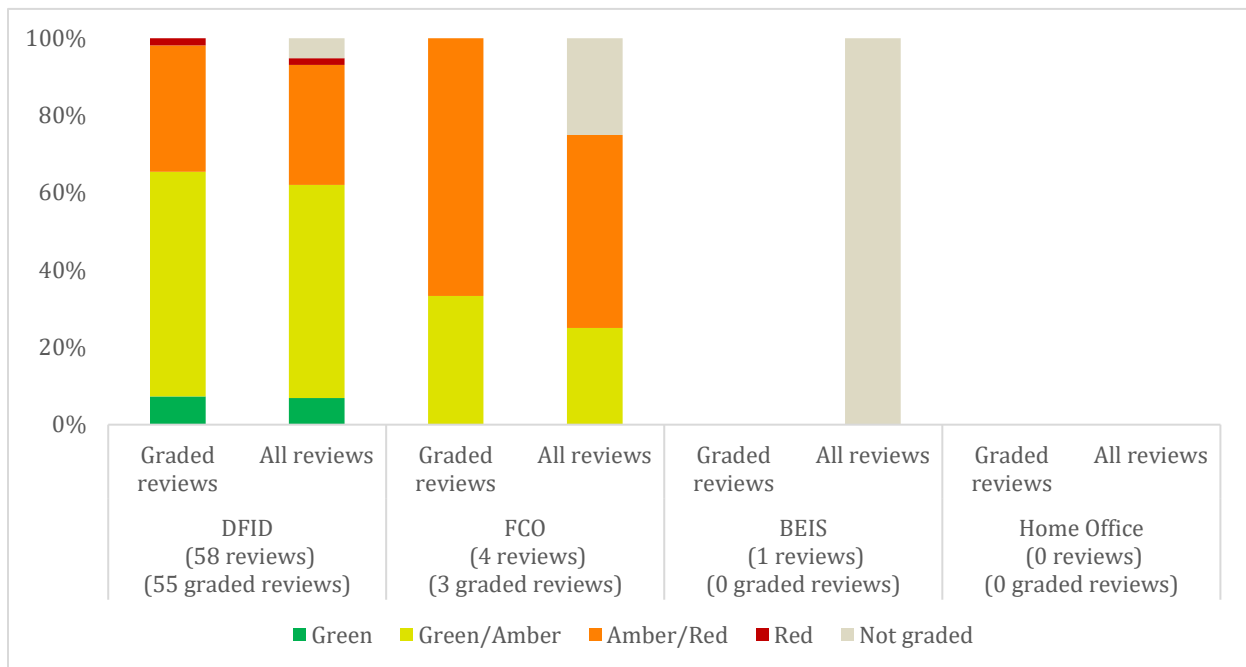
ICAI's reviews indicate that aid is well-spent. Figure 2 shows that in every year, a large majority of spending was rated Green/ Amber. Four reviews (7 percent) were rated Green, indicating strong achievement across the board. Thirty-three reviews (57 percent) were graded Green/Amber, indicating satisfactory achievement in most areas. Twenty reviews (34 percent) were graded Amber/Red, indicating unsatisfactory achievement in most areas. Only one review was rated Red, indicating poor achievement.

Performance varies significantly by department. Two thirds (36 of 57) of graded reviews of DFID were Green or Amber/Green. Conversely, two thirds (2 of 3) of graded reviews of the FCO were unsatisfactory (Amber/Red). The only review of BEIS between its creation in

2016 and 2018 was ungraded but did raise serious concerns. A 2019 review of International Climate Fund, of which BEIS was the second largest funder, was graded Green/Amber, but fell outside our review period.

There is a positive picture painted of collaborations between DFID and other departments. Two reviews of the International Climate Fund/Finance (covering spending by DFID, DEFRA, and DECC/BEIS, see section 4.4). No reviews have yet focussed on the Home Office.<sup>14</sup>

**Figure 4: ICAI grades by lead department to 2018 (departments which spent at least 1% of UK ODA in 2017)**



Source: CGD analysis of ICAI reviews.

Notes: The number of reviews in which a given department was the 'lead department' is not necessarily the same as the number of reviews evaluating that department. See methods section.

## 4.2 By Spending Directly Evaluated

Reviews are not equal in size or scope. Some cover individual projects of a few million pounds, while others cover whole funds or thematic areas, and billions of pounds worth of spending. Furthermore, some reviews cover spending by multiple government departments. For each review, we therefore recorded how much spending by each participating

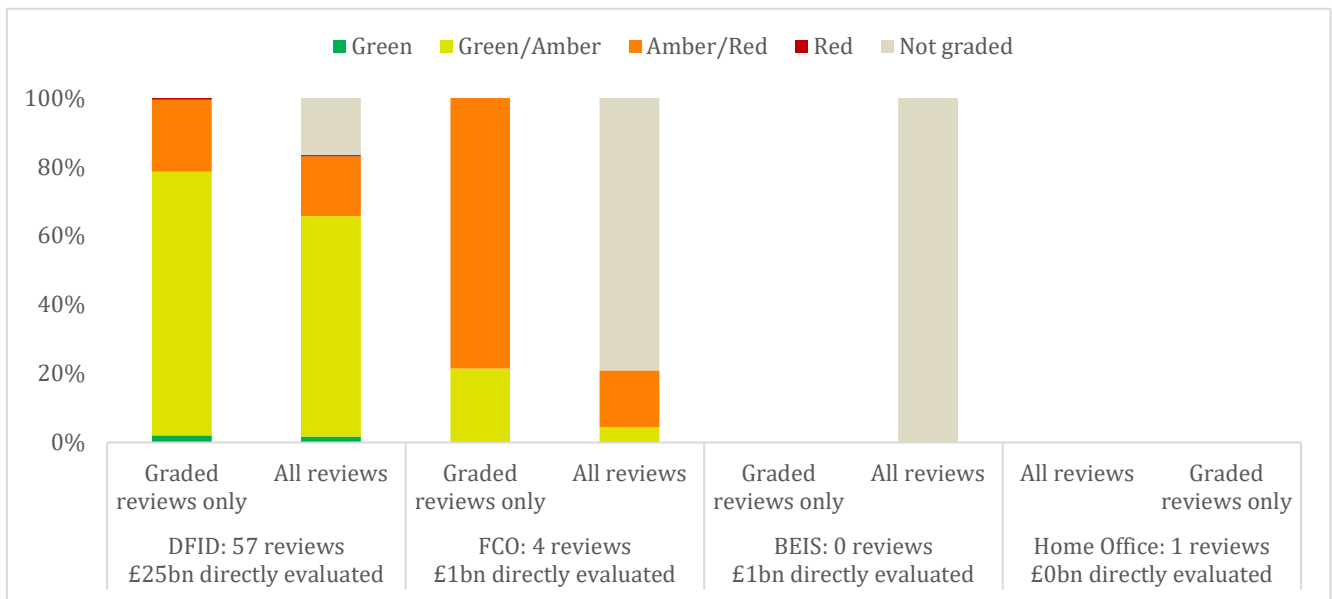
<sup>14</sup> We treat the National Crime Agency separately from the Home Office as it is formally a separate non-ministerial government department, and it is treated differently by the Governments "Statistics on International Development." Furthermore, the NCA's ODA activities are distinct from the Home Office's.

department was directly evaluated. Figure 4 shows how much directly evaluated spending for each department received what grade.

We find that reviews have directly evaluated £27.8bn of aid spending, and reviews which provided a grade covered £21.9bn of this (“Rapid Reviews” are not graded), almost four-fifths of spending received Green/Amber and around a fifth received Amber/Red. Only 2 percent and 0.5 percent of spending received Green and Red respectively.<sup>15</sup>

The difference in performance between government departments is even starker considering spending. Almost four-fifths of spending by DFID received Green or Green/Amber. Conversely, almost four fifths of spending by the FCO received Amber/Red.

**Figure 5. ICAI grades for spending directly evaluated to 2018 (major aid spenders)**



Source: CGD analysis of ICAI reviews.

Note: Number of reviews refers to graded reviews only.

### 4.3 By Spending Indirectly Evaluated

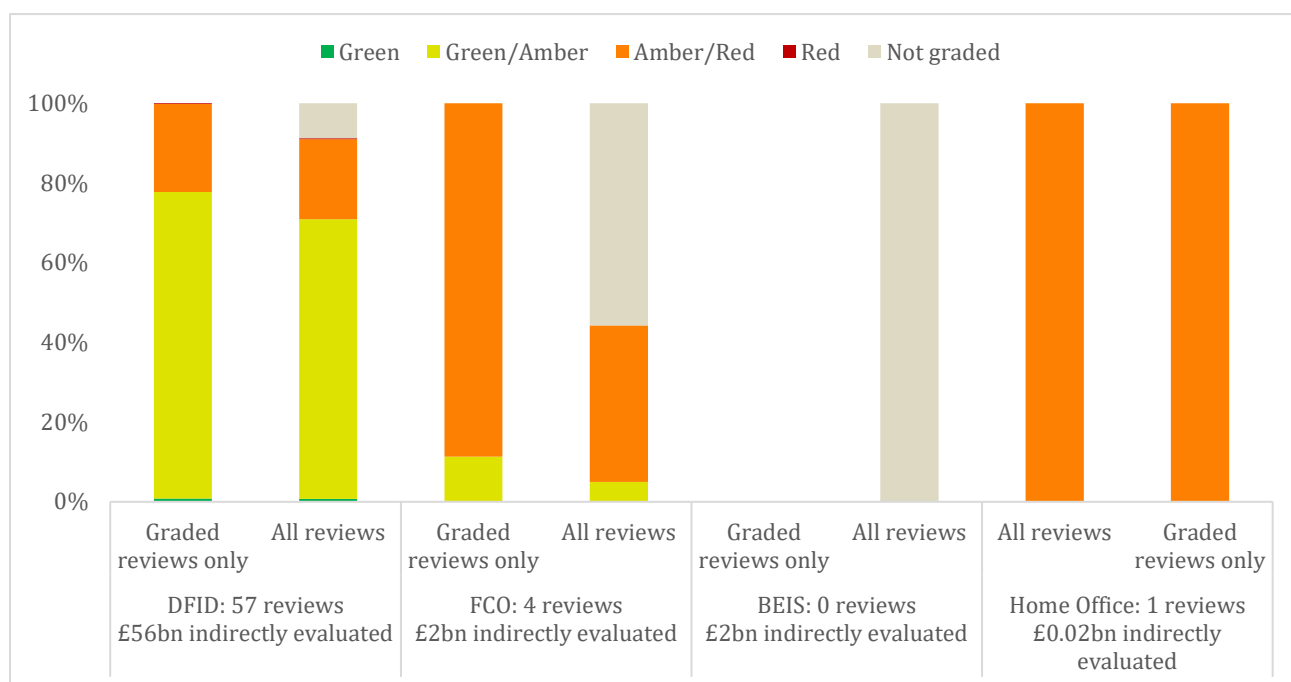
Reviews do not explicitly or consistently state how much spending they aim to evaluate, meaning some judgement is needed to calculate how much spending a review covers. For our main results we use spending directly evaluated: the amount of spending in the case studies or samples directly evaluated by each review.

<sup>15</sup> For brevity, I will refer to “Green” and “Green/ Amber” as satisfactory, “Amber” and “Amber/ Red” as unsatisfactory.

Another reasonable approach would be to estimate total spending on the activity that each review evaluates. Generally, this amount is larger. For instance, the review of DFID’s impacts on maternal health noted that spending specifically related to family planning, reproductive health care and maternal and neonatal health 2011–12 to 2014–15 totalled £1.3bn (indirect spend), but that the review assessed a sample of eight programmes with combined budgets of £750 million (direct spend).

We chose to use spending directly evaluated for our main results partly because these numbers are usually given by the review meaning this method required us to make fewer judgements, and partly because samples and case studies are not always intended to be representative. However, figure 6 shows that this decision does not significantly change our results. In fact, the overall takeaway that DFID performs better than the FCO is even more stark looking at aid indirectly evaluated.

**Figure 6. ICAI grades for spending indirectly evaluated to 2018 (major aid spenders)**



Source: CGD analysis of ICAI reviews.

Note: Number of reviews refers to graded reviews only

#### 4.4 Cross-Government Funds

In the above analysis, grades awarded to government funds (GCRF, ICF) are allocated to the departments that spend through them. Cross-government funds’ (CSSF, Prosperity Fund) grades are split between spending departments. However, since they have separate governance arrangements and individual ICAI reviews, it’s worth looking at them individually.

There are three large cross-government funds spending ODA. The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF), the Prosperity Fund. The CSSF spent 4.5 percent (£601m) of UK ODA in 2016, making it the largest cross government fund.<sup>16</sup> The Prosperity Fund spent 0.3 percent (£38m) of UK ODA in 2016, but by 2020 it will spend £340m of ODA.<sup>17</sup>

### **Conflict Stability and Security Fund**

ICAI conducted a full review of the CSSF in March 2018 (three years after its inception). It received an Amber/Red overall. ICAI gave a Green/Amber for Relevance, an Amber/Red for effectiveness, and an Amber/ Red for Learning. Similarly, in 2012 ICAI awarded the Conflict Pool, the CSSF's predecessor, an Amber/ Red.

Two other ICAI reviews assess CSSF programmes. A review of UK aid's response to irregular migration in the central Mediterranean is inconclusive: "For the CSSF, the small and fragmented nature of the migration portfolio makes it difficult to conclude that it represents value for money, but efforts are underway to increase the average programme size and improve strategic effects."

ICAI's review of UK Aid in Somalia sampled 25 projects (12 by DFID, 9 from the Conflict Pool, and 4 from the CSSF). This covered £455m of spending from DFID, and £10m from the FCO. This review gave a Green/ Amber overall for all three questions (Relevance, Effectiveness, and Learning). However, for the Effectiveness score, it said that "although Most UK programmes are performing well against their immediate objectives... we would like to see a stronger approach to results management in the CSSF."

The review measured four indicators for sound project management for each project (for DFID projects, there was a fifth indicator). For the indicators measured across departments, DFID scored significantly better, with around 70 percent (35 of 48) of the indicators met, compared to only around 30 percent for the CSSF (5 of 16) and Conflict Pool (10 of 36). The report notes that "The CSSF projects were notably weaker in their results frameworks and in their monitoring of impact and value for money... While CSSF programmes are intended to be smaller and more flexible, which entails lighter management, there is scope for the CSSF to improve its focus on results and value for money without compromising its operating model."

### **Prosperity Fund**

A rapid review was conducted of the Prosperity Fund. This review was not scored but did voice major concerns. Firstly, it said that it's not clear that a sufficiently demanding threshold for poverty reduction is being applied in practice. "We are not convinced that the current set of concept notes assure the likelihood of programmes satisfying the requirements of the international ODA definition and, where relevant, the International Development Act."

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<sup>16</sup> Statistics on International Development 2016, DFID

<sup>17</sup> The cross-government Prosperity Fund, A rapid review, ICAI

The review also raised concerns about portfolio development, governance, results measurement and delivery capacity. Given these issues, the review recommended that: “The government should consider adjusting the planned rate of expenditure of the Prosperity Fund as its delivery capacity develops, if necessary by spending its resources over a longer period.”

### **International Climate Finance**

There have been two reviews of the UK’s International Climate Finance, one in 2014 and one in 2019 (outside our review period). Both gave a Green/Amber score. Between 2014 and 2019 BEIS was created (subsuming DECC) and the management of Climate Finance changed.

In the period from 2011 to 2016, the UK’s climate finance was disbursed through a cross-government fund, the International Climate Fund. During this period, the three spending departments worked under joint ministerial oversight with a joint board and a secretariat chaired by DFID. Since April 2016, the responsibility for managing spending targets and programmes has been devolved to the three departments, although the portfolio continues to be branded internationally as “UK International Climate Finance” and DFID remains the largest spender.

This implies consistently strong performance by the IFC over a reasonable timespan and institutional changes.

### **4.5 Evaluation Type**

Since 2016, ICAI has categorized its evaluations into four distinct types and defines them as follows

- **Impact reviews** involve a thorough assessment of what underlies the UK government’s results claims and the significance of its development impact. They include a strong focus on evidence of results and the quality of the systems used to capture that evidence.
- **Performance reviews** take a robust look at the effectiveness and value for money of aid programmes, with a strong focus on accountability. They also explore the adequacy of the government’s systems, processes and capacity, exploring how these are linked to patterns of performance in different sectors and areas.
- **Learning reviews** explore new and emerging areas of the aid programme to capture emerging learning and inform future decision-making. They pay particular attention to how well the government generates and shares knowledge on how to tackle new challenges. While part of the independent scrutiny process, these reviews involve close interaction with the relevant ODA spending department to promote the uptake of lessons.

- **Rapid reviews** are short, real-time reviews of an emerging issue or area of UK aid spending that is of particular interest to the UK Parliament and public. While we examine the evidence to date and comment on issues of concern, our rapid reviews are not intended to reach final conclusions on performance or impact and are therefore not scored.

Source: ICAI's website<sup>18</sup>

Table 3 shows the grades DFID and the FCO have received for each review type. For performance reviews, DFID performs significantly better than the FCO, with 87 percent of spending graded (8 of 12 reviews) satisfactory, compared to only 8 percent (one of two reviews) for the FCO. DFID performs even more strongly on learning reviews, including 10 percent rated green, the highest possible rating.

**Table 3. ICAI grades by evaluation type**

	Performance		Learning		Impact	
	DFID (11 reviews)	FCO (2 reviews)	DFID (4 reviews)	FCO (0 reviews)	DFID (2 reviews)	FCO (0 reviews)
Green (\$m)	0	0	184	0	0	0
Green/Amber (\$m)	7037	10	1600	0	1891	0
Amber/Red (\$m)	1043	114	39	0	750	0
Red (\$m)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overall % satisfactory	87%	8%	98%	-	72%	-

Source: CGD analysis of ICAI reviews

DFID performs least well on Impact Reviews, with only 69 percent of spending (two out of three reviews) rated satisfactory. Impact reviews can be particularly challenging, because they require strong “evidence of results and the quality of the systems used to capture that evidence.”

ICAI is yet to conduct impact or learning reviews of other departments, so we can't compare their performance here with DFID. If Impact and Learning reviews awarded more positive grades than performance reviews, this might bias our results in DFID's favour. However, this is not the case. Overall, DFID's scores on impact and learning reviews together are similar to its scores on Performance reviews, and if anything, slightly lower. Impact and learning reviews taken together grade 82 percent of DFID spending satisfactory, compared to 87 for performance reviews.

<sup>18</sup> <https://icai.independent.gov.uk/reports/future-work-plan/>

## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Aid allocation across government should be informed by evidence about performance by different government departments. ICAI's reviews are one way of comparing performance across government, against the aims and objectives of each department.

Whilst ICAI reviews are not a representative sample of UK ODA, we have seen that for some departments, ICAI has now reviewed a substantial share of their ODA spend, and this sample therefore provides some information about their overall approach. Similarly, ICAI's reviews vary in the objectives assessed and scope, but comparisons of their overall grading are helpful in obtaining a picture of departmental performance.

ICAI's reports show that, overall a large share of aid is well-spent with some 79 percent graded as satisfactory or above. ICAI's reviews also show that aid can be spent well in a range of Government departments and that collaboration across government can be positive. The International Climate Fund (ICF) is one good example of this, and collaboration between the Department of Health and Social Care and DFID on global health threats is another.

However, ICAI's reviews have raised serious concerns about the quality of aid being spent by the Foreign Office, including whether all spending meets the legal definitions of ODA. With 79 percent of the spend evaluated scoring unsatisfactory—representing over a sixth of FCO's total ODA spend—the evidence does not suggest the government can confidently increase allocations to the FCO or sign-off new FCO-run programmes until it has demonstrated improved performance.

BEIS has three main ODA-spending instruments: the GCRF, ICF, and Newton Fund. ICAI's review of the GCRF was ungraded but raised serious concerns. The Government should look carefully whether its recommendations have been followed before awarding it new funding. The ICF was given a positive review in 2014, before BEIS took over its management. It would be reasonable to allocate it new funding, if this meet strategic objectives. A review of the Newton Fund is due to be published in April 2019. The government should consider this carefully when considering funding to the Newton Fund.

We strongly encourage ICAI to continue to clearly and consistently score their reviews. Without this, interpreting how positive or negative a review is would be a much more subjective process, and as such the impact of ICAI's work would be reduced. Further, it would make it impossible to use reviews to compare programmes and departments. We believe that this is a valuable feature of ICAI's work.

With over a quarter of aid spend outside of DFID, ICAI will need to continue to shift its focus on to other Departments spend, especially those with a poorer track record.



## Annexes

### Annex 1. ICAI Questions

Pre-2016	Post 2016
<b>Objectives:</b> Does the programme have realistic and appropriate objectives and a clear plan as to how and why the planned intervention will have the intended impact?	Relevance
<b>Impact:</b> Is the programme having a transformational, positive and lasting impact on the lives of the intended beneficiaries and is it transparent and accountable? <b>Delivery:</b> Does the programme have robust delivery arrangements which support the desired objectives and demonstrate good governance and management through the delivery chain?	Impact, results, Effectiveness, Efficiency, VfM
<b>Learning:</b> Does the programme incorporate learning to improve future aid delivery?	Evidence, Learning

## Annex 2. Summary of ICAI reviews and by spending directly evaluated

Dept	Graded reviews	Total ODA spending 2010-2017 (£m)	Total spending directly evaluated (£m)	Total spending directly evaluated and graded (£m)	Green		Green/Amber		Amber/Red		Red		Not graded	
					(£m)	(%)	(£m)	(%)	(£m)	(%)	(£m)	(%)	(£m)	(%)
DFID	57	£73,017	£24,688	£20,609	429	2%	15596	77%	4291	21%	109	1%	4080	17%
FCO	4	£4,658	£746	£156	0	0%	34	21%	123	79%	0	0%	590	79%
BEIS	0	£1,465	£1,300	£0	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	1300	100%
DECC	1	£1,777	£647	£647	0	0%	647	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Home Office	1	£1,151	£0	£0	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
DEFRA	1	£309	£24	£24	0	0%	24	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
DHSC	1	£217	£411	£411	0	0%	411	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
MOD	2	£87	£3	£3	0	0%	0	0%	3	100%	0	0%	0	0%
NCA	1	£46	£13	£13	0	0%	0	0%	13	100%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total selected departments and agencies</b>		<b>£82,727</b>	<b>£27,832</b>	<b>£21,862</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>16895</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>4430</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>5970</b>	<b>27%</b>

Note: Total UK aid spending during this period was 88.5bn. The figure reported above only includes aid spending departments in the table

### Annex 3. Summary of ICAI reviews and by spending indirectly evaluated

Dept	Graded reviews	Total ODA spending 2010-2017 (£m)	Total spending indirectly evaluated (£m)	Total spending indirectly evaluated and graded (£m)	Green		Green/Amber		Amber/Red		Red		Not graded	
					(£m)	(%)	(£m)	(%)	(£m)	(%)	(£m)	(%)	(£m)	(%)
DFID	57	£73,017	£55,901	£50,973	429	1%	39189	77%	11246	22%	109	0%	4928	9%
FCO	4	£4,658	£1,987	£879	0	0%	99	11%	779	89%	0	0%	1108	56%
BEIS	0	£1,465	£1,500	£0	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	1500	100%
DECC	1	£1,777	£1,250	£1,250	0	0%	1250	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Home Office	1	£1,151	£18	£18	0	n/a	0	n/a	18	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
DEFRA	1	£309	£140	£140	0	0%	140	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
DHSC	1	£217	£477	£477	0	0%	477	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
MOD	2	£87	£27	£27	0	0%	0	0%	27	100%	0	0%	0	0%
NCA	1	£46	£25	£25	0	0%	0	0%	25	100%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total selected departments and agencies</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>£82,727</b>	<b>£61,325</b>	<b>£53,788</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>41155</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>12095</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>7537</b>	<b>12%</b>

Note: Total UK aid spending during this period was 88.5bn. The figure reported above only includes aid spending departments in the table

## Annex 4. Full list of ICAI reviews 2011-2018

Title	Review type	Review year	Overall Score	Department		Spending Indirectly evaluated		Spending Directly Evaluated	
				Lead	Spending	(£m)	Explanation	(£m)	Explanation
The UK's approach to funding the UN humanitarian system	Performance	2018	Green/Amber	DFID	DFID	846	The UK is a major funder of humanitarian responses, providing £1.56 billion in 2017-18.	183	DFID core funding to UN agencies examined 2017
Achieving value for money through procurement (Part 1: DFID's approach to its supplier market, and Part 2: DFID's approach to value for money through tendering and contract management)	Performance	2018	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	1400	DFID spending through suppliers 2016-17 (p.i)	2,060	Value of contracts in sample (part 2 p.40-50)
Assessing DFID's results in improving Maternal Health	Impact	2018	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID	1300	Spending specifically related to family planning, reproductive health care and maternal and neonatal health 2011-12 to 2014 -15. (p.16)	750	For this review, we assessed eight centrally managed programmes with combined budgets of £750 million (p.17)
Building resilience to natural disasters	Performance	2018	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	807	Sum of budgets of resilience programmes in case study countries (p.19-21).	807	Sum of budgets of resilience programmes in case study countries (p.19-21).
DFID's approach to disability in development	Rapid	2018	Not graded	DFID	DFID	114	Budget of programmes reviewed, scaled by disability % (p.40)	114	Budget of programmes reviewed, scaled by disability % (p.40)
DFID's approach to value for money in programme and portfolio management	Performance	2018	Not graded	DFID	DFID	3649	Programme sample (p.36-40)	3,649	Programme sample (p.36-40)
DFID's governance work in Nepal and Uganda	Performance	2018	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	1365	Spend on governance in Nepal & Uganda (2009-2016) (p.40-44)	886	Amount spent/ budgeted by sampled programmes (p.40-44)
DFID's transport and urban infrastructure investments	Performance	2018	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	3900	This review examines DFID's bilateral programming on transport and urban infrastructure, which over 2015 and 2016 consisted of 57 programmes with combined budgets of £3.9 billion (p.1)	1,460	"We selected 13 bilateral programmes for detailed review... Their combined budget of £1.46 billion accounts for 37% of DFID's transport and urban infrastructure programming during our review period." (p.9)

Title	Review type	Review year	Overall Score	Department		Spending Indirectly evaluated		Spending Directly Evaluated	
				Lead	Spending	(£m)	Explanation	(£m)	Explanation
The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund's aid spending	Performance	2018	Amber/ Red	FCO	DFID	200	CSSF budget in 2015-16 (p.5) scaled by departmental contribution (p.8)	32	CSSF budget in case study countries and regions (p.15) scaled by departmental contribution (p.8)
The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund's aid spending	Performance	2018	Amber/ Red	FCO	FCO	720	CSSF budget in 2015-16 (p.5) scaled by departmental contribution (p.8)	114	CSSF budget in case study countries and regions (p.15) scaled by departmental contribution (p.8)
The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund's aid spending	Performance	2018	Amber/ Red	FCO	NCA	80	CSSF budget in 2015-16 (p.5) scaled by departmental contribution (p.8)	13	CSSF budget in case study countries and regions (p.15) scaled by departmental contribution (p.8)
The UK aid response to global health threats	Learning	2018	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	1154	Total budget for all stronger, smarter, swifter programmes on global health threats plus GAVI. (p.12)	1,119	The centrally managed programmes we reviewed and how they fit into the Stronger, Smarter, Swifter strategic framework (including GAVI) (p.43).
The UK aid response to global health threats	Learning	2018	Green/ Amber	DFID	DHSC	477	Total budget for all stronger, smarter, swifter programmes on global health threats plus GAVI. (p.12)	411	The centrally managed programmes we reviewed and how they fit into the Stronger, Smarter, Swifter strategic framework (including GAVI) (p.43).
The UK's humanitarian support to Syria	Performance	2018	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	910	The UK has mounted its largest-ever humanitarian operation, committing £2.71 billion to the regional response since 2012, with £910 million allocated for humanitarian operations in Syria. (p.1)	490	Budget of delivery partner case studies (p.40-41)
DFID's approach to supporting inclusive growth in Africa	Learning	2017	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	1777	DFID's economic development portfolio 2015-16 (p.11).	481	DFID's economic development portfolio in our case study countries (p.11-12).
Global Challenges Research Fund	Rapid	2017	Not graded	BEIS	BEIS	1500	With a budget of £1.5 billion from 2016 to 2021, (p.1).	1,300	"By July 2017, nearly £1.3 billion of the £1.5 billion total had been approved to delivery partners"

Title	Review type	Review year	Overall Score	Department		Spending Indirectly evaluated		Spending Directly Evaluated	
				Lead	Spending	(£m)	Explanation	(£m)	Explanation
									(p.4). "We explored how GCRF funding calls for research proposals were developed and assessed, and reviewed the bids made into and allocations made out of the Fund to date." (p.5)
The cross-government Prosperity Fund A Rapid Review	Rapid	2017	Not graded	FCO	DFID	1108	Total indicative budget of concept notes in development (p.11)	260	Concept notes approved by department (p.12) (estimated from graph).
The cross-government Prosperity Fund A Rapid Review	Rapid	2017	Not graded	FCO	FCO	1108	Total indicative budget of concept notes in development (p.11).	590	Concept notes approved by department (p.12) (estimated from graph).
The effects of DFID's cash transfer programmes on poverty and vulnerability	Impact	2017	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	1,661	DFID budget for programme sample cash transfer programmes (p.36-41) (Sample includes all cash transfer projects).	1,661	DFID budget for programme sample cash transfer programmes (p.36-41).
The UK's aid response to irregular migration in the central Mediterranean	Rapid	2017	Not graded	DFID	DFID	57	"UK migration-related aid programmes in Libya and the central Mediterranean" (p.22).	57	"UK migration-related aid programmes in Libya and the central Mediterranean" (p.22).
The UK's aid response to irregular migration in the central Mediterranean	Rapid	2017	Not graded	DFID	FCO	n/a	No FCO funded programmes examined.	n/a	No FCO funded programmes examined.
The UK's aid response to irregular migration in the central Mediterranean	Rapid	2017	Not graded	DFID	NCA	n/a	No NCA funded programmes examined.	n/a	No NCA funded programmes examined.
UK aid in a conflict-affected country: Reducing conflict and fragility in Somalia	Performance	2017	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	545	Total DFID aid spent in Somalia, 2009 - 2015 (90% of total UK Aid spend) p.9.	454	Budgets of programmes sampled by department (p.43-49)
UK aid in a conflict-affected country: Reducing conflict and fragility in Somalia	Performance	2017	Green/ Amber	DFID	FCO	61	Total FCO aid spent in Somalia, 2009 - 2015 (10% of total UK Aid spend) (p.9).	10	Budgets of programmes sampled by department (p.43-49)
Accessing, staying and succeeding in basic education – UK aid's support to marginalised girls	Performance	2016	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID	1473	Girl-focused country programmes, girl-focused centrally managed programmes, and Girls Education Challenge (p.15)	745	Girl-focused programmes in case study countries. (p.9)

Title	Review type	Review year	Overall Score	Department		Spending Indirectly evaluated		Spending Directly Evaluated	
				Lead	Spending	(£m)	Explanation	(£m)	Explanation
Assessing DFID's Results in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	Impact	2016	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	700	DFID spent £700 million over the previous 5 years on WASH programmes in 27 countries (p.8)	230	Conducted desk reviews of 25% of the projects contributing to the results framework (p.14). Specific case studies in Mozambique (DFID contributed about 1/3 of £164, p.20) and Zimbabwe (no budget listed).
DFID's approach to managing fiduciary risk in conflict-affected environments	Performance	2016	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	5500	2015/16 spending in fragile states and regions (p.15).	734	2015/16 spending in 5 case study countries. (p.12-13)
DFID's efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls	Learning	2016	Green	DFID	DFID	184	DFID has 23 programmes dedicated to addressing VAWG with a total budget of £184 million, and more than 100 other programmes with one or more elements addressing VAWG. (p.i)	184	DFID has 23 programmes dedicated to addressing VAWG with a total budget of £184 million, and more than 100 other programmes with one or more elements addressing VAWG. (p.i)
UK aid's contribution to tackling tax avoidance and evasion	Learning	2016	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID	39	The total financial commitment to the initiatives covered by this review is £38.9 million over a fourteen year period (2010-24). (p.8)	39	The total financial commitment to the initiatives covered by this review is £38.9 million over a fourteen year period (2010-24). (p.8)
When aid relationships change: DFID's approach to managing exit and transition in its development partnerships	Performance	2016	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID	267	UK net aid flows to case study transition countries in 2014. (chart on p.37, full data in DFID Statistics on International Development).	267	UK net aid flows to case study transition countries in 2014. (chart on p.37, full data in DFID Statistics on International Development).
A preliminary investigation of Official Development Assistance (ODA) spent by departments other than DFID	-	2015	Not graded	various	various	n/a		n/a	
Assessing the Impact of the Scale-up of DFID's Support to Fragile States	-	2015	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID	3400	The UK Government has committed to spending 30% of Official Development Assistance (ODA) in fragile states by 2014-15, an increase from £1.8 billion of	949	Programmes reviewed in Somalia & DRC (p.6-7)

Title	Review type	Review year	Overall Score	Department		Spending Indirectly evaluated		Spending Directly Evaluated	
				Lead	Spending	(£m)	Explanation	(£m)	Explanation
							bilateral ODA (2011-12) to £3.4 billion (2014-15).		
Business in Development	-	2015	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID	494	Based on the information available to us, we calculate that, between 2012-13 and 2014-15, DFID committed £494 million to its work with business in development. (p.2)	238	Sample of approaches, initiatives, funds, investments and programmes which we have considered during the course of our review. (p.38-40)
DFID's approach to delivering impact	-	2015	Not graded	DFID	DFID	n/a		Meta review.	
How DFID works with multilateral agencies to achieve impact	-	2015	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	6300	DFID spends almost two thirds of its annual budget (£6.3 billion in 2013-14) through them (p.1).	304	UK Spending through multilaterals in case study countries (Imputed UK Share of Multilateral Net ODA by country 2014, DFID Statistics on International development 2015).
Review of UK Development Assistance for Security and Justice	-	2015	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID	210	The UK's largest current S&J programmes, by total budget (p.6).	69	UK S&J programmes in case study countries (Malawi & Bangladesh) (p.6).
DFID's Approach to Anti-Corruption and Its Impact on the Poor	-	2014	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID	22	DFID has increased its annual anti-corruption expenditure from approximately £3.5 million in 2007-08 to some £22 million in 2013-14, as reflected in Figure 2.	22	DFID has increased its annual anti-corruption expenditure from approximately £3.5 million in 2007-08 to some £22 million in 2013-14, as reflected in Figure 2.
DFID's Bilateral Support to Growth and Livelihoods in Afghanistan	-	2014	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID	63	This review assesses the effectiveness of DFID's bilateral growth and livelihoods projects, which account for approximately 30% of DFID's £190 million annual aid budget in Afghanistan (p.1)	98	Sum of budgets of five case study projects (p.7)
DFID's Contribution to Improving Nutrition	-	2014	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	193	DFID spent £192.8 million on nutrition in 2012 (p.1)	280	Sum of budgets of nutrition-based programmes in sample countries (p.7)



Title	Review type	Review year	Overall Score	Department		Spending Indirectly evaluated		Spending Directly Evaluated	
				Lead	Spending	(£m)	Explanation	(£m)	Explanation
DFID's Contribution to the Reduction of Child Mortality in Kenya	-	2014	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	37	In 2013-14, the share of DFID's health support to Kenya was planned to be £37 million (p.4).	163	We decided to focus, instead, on five core health programmes, totalling £163 million, which address malaria and support to immunisation and 'health systems strengthening' (p.5)
DFID's Private Sector Development Work	-	2014	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID	1800	DFID is forecasting that, by 2015-16, it will spend £1.8 billion a year on economic development activities, more than doubling the amount spent in 2012-13 (p.4).	328	DFID expenditure of selected case study programmes, 2007-1 (p.7)
How DFID Learns	-	2014	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID			Meta review.	
Rapid Review of DFID's Humanitarian Response to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines	-	2014	Green	DFID	DFID	77	The UK provided £77 million of humanitarian assistance, led by DFID 2013/14 (p.1)	77	The UK provided £77 million of humanitarian assistance, led by DFID 2013/14 (p.1)
Rapid Review of DFID's Smart Rules	-	2014	Not graded	DFID	DFID	n/a		n/a	
The UK's International Climate Fund	-	2014	Green/ Amber	DFID	DECC	1579	Total departmental ICF allocations 2011-2015 (p.12)	646.92	Departmental contribution to bilateral and multilateral ICF programmes. (p.6)
The UK's International Climate Fund	-	2014	Green/ Amber	DFID	DEFRA	140	Total departmental ICF allocations 2011-2015 (p.12)	23.96	Departmental contribution to bilateral and multilateral ICF programmes. (p.6)
The UK's International Climate Fund	-	2014	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	2800	Total departmental ICF allocations 2011-2015 (p.12)	527.12	Departmental contribution to bilateral and multilateral ICF programmes. (p.6)
DFID's Empowerment and Accountability Programming in Ghana and Malawi	-	2013	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	41	Combined budget of two grant making funds for civil society organisations (CSOs) and a project that supports community monitoring of local services (p.1)	41	Combined budget of two grant making funds for civil society organisations (CSOs) and a project that supports community monitoring of local services (p.1)

Title	Review type	Review year	Overall Score	Department		Spending Indirectly evaluated		Spending Directly Evaluated	
				Lead	Spending	(£m)	Explanation	(£m)	Explanation
DFID's Health Programmes in Burma	-	2013	Green	DFID	DFID	135	Combined budgets of DFID's health programmes in Burma (p.5-6)	135	Combined budgets of DFID's health programmes in Burma (p.5-6)
DFID's Livelihoods Work in Western Odisha	-	2013	Green	DFID	DFID	33	Budget of DFID's Western Orissa Livelihoods Project (WORLP) (p.1)	33	Budget of DFID's Western Orissa Livelihoods Project (WORLP) (p.1)
DFID's Peace and Security Programme in Nepal	-	2013	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	53	This review assesses five DFID peace and security projects, costing £53 million (p.1)	53	This review assesses five DFID peace and security projects, costing £53 million (p.1)
DFID's Support for Civil Society Organisations through Programme Partnership Arrangements	-	2013	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	120	DFID will provide a total of £120 million a year to 41 organisations, with grants ranging from £151,000 to £11 million (p.1)	32	Sum of annual funding of case study organisations 2011-12 (p.27)
DFID's Support for Palestine Refugees through UNRWA	-	2013	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	173	The Department for International Development (DFID) is UNRWA's fourth largest donor, contributing £173.2 million in the period 2008-12 (p.1)	246	Budget of programmes selected for the review (p.7)
DFID's Support to Agricultural Research	-	2013	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	350	DFID has committed £350 million to agricultural research (2010-15) to improve food security and tackle hunger in developing countries (p.1)	268	DFID spending on " Examined projects" (p.7)
DFID's Support to Capital Projects in Montserrat	-	2013	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID	24	DFID expects to provide aid of over £24 million each year to Montserrat from 2012-13 to 2014-15 (p.1)	34	Budgets of case study countries (p.24-25)
DFID's Trade Development Work in Southern Africa	-	2013	Red	DFID	DFID	109	"We reviewed two programmes: the £100 million TradeMark Southern Africa (TMSA) and the £9 million regional component of the Mozambique Regional Gateway Programme (MRGP)." (p.1)	109	"We reviewed two programmes: the £100 million TradeMark Southern Africa (TMSA) and the £9 million regional component of the Mozambique Regional Gateway Programme (MRGP)." (p.1)
DFID's Use of Contractors to Deliver Aid Programmes	-	2013	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	488	Spending on contractor work 2011/12 (p.2).	264	"We reviewed DFID's central procurement group (PrG) and five case studies of varying

Title	Review type	Review year	Overall Score	Department		Spending Indirectly evaluated		Spending Directly Evaluated	
				Lead	Spending	(£m)	Explanation	(£m)	Explanation
									sizes with a combined contract value of £264 million: programmes in Bangladesh, Yemen and Nigeria; a global climate and development knowledge network; and due diligence on civil society organisations receiving DFID funds." (p.1)
DFID's Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Programming in Sudan	-	2013	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID	56	DFID contribution spent on WASH programming in Sudan (p.26)	46	Wash component of project sample (p.4)
DFID's work through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	-	2013	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	690	Over the period 2007-11, the UK Government was the second largest donor to UNICEF after the United States, contributing £690 million. (p.1)	48	DFID funding of UNICEF case study programmes until Oct 2012. (p.6)
Foreign and Commonwealth Office's and the British Council's use of aid in response to the Arab Spring	-	2013	Green/ Amber	FCO	FCO	39	The FCO has increased its ODA expenditure in the region from just £16 million in 2009-10 to £38.8 million in 2011-12 or 14% of its total ODA (p.1)	23	FCO and British Council ODA expenditure in APPF focus countries (p.24)
DFID: Programme Controls and Assurance in Afghanistan	-	2012	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID	178	DFID's planned expenditure on bilateral aid to Afghanistan is £178 million in 2011-12 and in each of the next three financial years (p.1)	202	Ten sample programmes in Afghanistan (p.5)
DFID's Bilateral Aid to Pakistan	-	2012	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	267	UK total aid spending Pakistan 2010-2011	250	The evaluation looks at the results achieved in a sample of programmes in these sectors with combined commitments of over £250 million (p.1)
DFID's Education Programmes in Three East African Countries	-	2012	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID	129	DFID-approved education programmes in Ethiopia, Rwanda and Tanzania, 2011-12 (p.4).	129	DFID-approved education programmes in Ethiopia, Rwanda and Tanzania, 2011-12 (p.4).

Title	Review type	Review year	Overall Score	Department		Spending Indirectly evaluated		Spending Directly Evaluated	
				Lead	Spending	(£m)	Explanation	(£m)	Explanation
DFID's Electoral Support through UNDP	-	2012	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	140	Total DFID contribution through UNDP for elections 2001-2011 (p.1).	32	Sum of DFID contribution through UNDP for elections to case study countries (p.5).
DFID's Oversight of the EU's Aid to Low-Income Countries	-	2012	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID	1400	The UK's contributions to the EU for aid expenditure are approximately £1.4 billion a year, (p.1)	205	Total DFID ODA disbursements in 2011 in case study countries (p.5).
DFID's Support for Health and Education in India	-	2012	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	279	The report " does this through a review of four health and education programmes in the state of Bihar. Together, these are budgeted to spend over £180 million between 2010 and 2016." (p.1)	180	The report " does this through a review of four health and education programmes in the state of Bihar. Together, these are budgeted to spend over £180 million between 2010 and 2016." (p.1)
DFID's education programmes in Nigeria	-	2012	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID	119	DFID expenditure to date (as of the date of the report) on the education programmes in Nigeria investigated by the review (p.4)	119	DFID expenditure to date (as of the date of the report) on the education programmes in Nigeria investigated by the review (p.4)
Evaluation of the Inter-Departmental Conflict Pool	-	2012	Amber/ Red	FCO	DFID	63	Total spending on Conflict Pool 2010-2011 (p.3-4)	2.84	Sum of conflict pool spending in case study countries (Pakistan & DRC) divided between government departments. The review stated that the bulk of the programmes in the case study countries were delivered by the FCO. We've assigned 60% FCO and 20% each to DFID and the MOD. (p.1, 3, 9)
Evaluation of the Inter-Departmental Conflict Pool	-	2012	Amber/ Red	FCO	FCO	108	Total spending on Conflict Pool 2010-2011 (p.3-4)	8.52	Sum of conflict pool spending in case study countries (Pakistan & DRC) divided between government departments. The review stated that the bulk of the programmes in the case study countries were delivered by the FCO. We've assigned 60% FCO

Title	Review type	Review year	Overall Score	Department		Spending Indirectly evaluated		Spending Directly Evaluated	
				Lead	Spending	(£m)	Explanation	(£m)	Explanation
									and 20% each to DFID and the MOD. (p.1, 3, 9)
Evaluation of the Inter-Departmental Conflict Pool	-	2012	Amber/ Red	FCO	MOD	9	Total spending on Conflict Pool 2010-2011 (p.3-4)	2.84	Sum of conflict pool spending in case study countries (Pakistan & DRC) divided between government departments. The review stated that the bulk of the programmes in the case study countries were delivered by the FCO. We've assigned 60% FCO and 20% each to DFID and the MOD. (p.1, 3, 9)
Girl Hub: a DFID and Nike Foundation Initiative	-	2012	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID	12	Total budget (p.3)	12	Total budget (p.3)
The Effectiveness of DFID's Engagement with the Asian Development Bank	-	2012	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	570	DFID's total funding to ADB over five years (p.1)	409	DFID contribution to case study projects (p.27-31)
The Effectiveness of DFID's Engagement with the World Bank	-	2012	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	5100	Over the last five years, DFID has contributed £5.1 billion to IBRD and IDA (p.1)	1,600	The Department for International Development (DFID) contributed £1.6 billion to the Bank in the 2010-11 financial year, which represented a fifth of all UK Official Development Assistance
The Management of UK Budget Support Operations	-	2012	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	644	Total budget support aid 2010-2011 (p.1)	182	Level of UK general budget support 2010-11 in case study countries (p.6)
The UK Emergency Response in the Horn of Africa	-	2012	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	200	Total DFID Humanitarian response in Horn of Africa 2011-2012	159	DFID HA expenditure in financial year 2011-12 (p. 26)
DFID's Approach to Anti-Corruption	-	2011	Amber/ Red	DFID	DFID	7	"In the period 2010-14, DFID plans to invest around £7 million via the Metropolitan Police, City of London Police and the Crown Prosecution Service into fighting corruption" (p.11). This is the only mention of	7	"In the period 2010-14, DFID plans to invest around £7 million via the Metropolitan Police, City of London Police and the Crown Prosecution Service into fighting corruption"

Title	Review type	Review year	Overall Score	Department		Spending Indirectly evaluated		Spending Directly Evaluated	
				Lead	Spending	(£m)	Explanation	(£m)	Explanation
							spending intended to reduce or prevent corruption.		(p.11). This is the only mention of spending intended to reduce or prevent corruption.
DFID's Climate Change Programme in Bangladesh	-	2011	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	75	'The review " focusses on the £75 million Department for International Development (DFID) Bangladesh Climate Change Programme, approved in September 2008." (p.1)	75	'The review " focusses on the £75 million Department for International Development (DFID) Bangladesh Climate Change Programme, approved in September 2008." (p.1)
DFID's Support to the Health Sector in Zimbabwe	-	2011	Green/ Amber	DFID	DFID	103	Page 3, table 1. Sum of programmes	103	Page 3, table 1. Sum of programmes

Source – CGD analysis of ICAI reviews

## **Annex 5. Selection criteria for ICAI reviews**

ICAI describe their selection criteria for reviews as follows:

We use four selection criteria when planning our work plan:

- Relevance – the relevance of the topic to new and emerging challenges for the aid programme and its level of interest to stakeholders and the public.
- Materiality – the importance of the topic in terms of scale of expenditure.
- Risk – the level of risk involved to achieve the objectives of UK aid or to the appropriate use of UK funds.
- Value-added – appropriate coverage of the UK aid programme, across sectors, issues, types of programme and spending department.