# Trends in Canadian Aid

# Briefing Note Four

## Channels for Delivering Canadian ODA:
## Disaggregating Canadian aid flows through multilaterals and CSOs

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## Table of Contents and Summary Highlights

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**Brian Tomlinson**
**AidWatch Canada**

AidWatch Canada
Promoting Social Justice

## Preface and Acknowledgements

In January 2025, Cooperation Canada and AidWatch Canada published a series of Briefing Notes,[1] which provided an overview of main trends in Canadian ODA since 2015/16. The scope and allocations for Canadian aid have shifted over this past decade, responding to urgent global challenges (the pandemic and a deepening climate crisis) as well as Canadian foreign policy preoccupations (Ukraine), trade and investment challenges. Documenting changes in the Canadian aid context can serve as a foundation for understanding the current unravelling of international cooperation and to inform advocacy directions for feminist aid priorities that focus on reducing poverty and inequalities.

In May 2026, Cooperation Canada commissioned AidWatch Canada to update these four Briefing Notes, taking into account recent transformations in Canadian development cooperation with the most recent aid data for 2024/25. These Briefing Notes are organized around four thematic areas:

1) Overall Trends in Canadian ODA: What are the key dimensions of its volume and allocations?

2) What issues and approaches are driving the changing priorities in Canadian ODA?

3) Tracking ODA for Reducing Poverty and Inequalities: The Core Poverty Accountability Standard (CPAS), a new accountability metric, and

4) What are the main channels for delivering Canadian ODA, including multilateral organizations and CSOs?

They will continue to be updated periodically, taking into account the changing dynamics of development cooperation in the coming years.

I am very appreciative of the leadership and support by Paul Farran, Director of Policy and Advocacy, and Darron Seller-Peritz, Policy Analyst and Program Officer, with Cooperation Canada. Darron has encouraged and facilitated the research in every iteration and has generously arranged Cooperation Canada's financial support for the work needed to bring together these updated Briefing Notes. Paul and Darron provided thoughtful input into the development of the four Notes along with careful copy editing of the text and suggestions for its improvement.

The author alone is responsible for the content, calculations, and any errors or omissions in the analysis. The resulting Briefing Notes do not imply agreement by Cooperation Canada's Board of Directors or the Board of Directors of AidWatch Canada.

Brian Tomlinson
AidWatch Canada
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[1] See https://aidwatchcanada.ca/canadian-aid-trends/ for the 2025 Briefing Notes and a summary article by Brian Tomlinson and Darron Seller-Peritz.

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## Channels for Delivering Canadian ODA
## Highlights

## Part One: An Overview of Channels of Delivery for Canadian ODA

1. **Multilateral organizations (56%) and Civil Society Organizations (22%) are the primary channels for delivering Canadian Real ODA (2024/25).** (**Section 1**)

**Multilateral Organizations**

2. **Core support (assessed contributions) for multilateral organizations is 14% of Real ODA** and bilateral ODA channeled through multilateral organizations accounts for 26% of total ODA and 38% of bilateral aid in 2024/25. (**Section 1**)

3. **Multilateral channels account for 35% of Canadian bilateral ODA in 2024/25.** Multi-bi initiatives are a major channel for Canadian ODA. (**Section 2**)

4. **In 2024, Canada ranked 2nd among 32 DAC providers in earmarked contributions to multilateral organizations, which accounted for 69% of its total multilateral contributions.** This share is up sharply from an average of 45% in 2015–19, when Canada still ranked third behind the United States and Norway. The recent increase was largely driven by support for Ukraine. (**Section 2**)

5. **In recent years, 25% of Canada's Real ODA has been disbursed through International Financial Institutions.** For the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA) concessional window for the poorest countries, Canada ranks 7th in the latest IDA21 replenishment (2026 to 2028) contributing 3.08% of that replenishment, with approximately the same level of finance as its contributions to IDA20. Canada has disbursed approximately $520 million per year for IDA20. (**Section 2**)

**Direct Bilateral Aid for Partner Countries**

6. **Only a very small share of Canada's ODA (1%) was channeled directly through partner country governments in 2024/25.** Canada has substantially reduced its direct engagement with partner country governments through its ODA. Only six partner countries were implementing Canadian ODA in 2024/25, with total disbursements of $76.1 million (or 1.7% of Canada's Real Bilateral Aid for that year). (**Section 3**)

**Private Sector Channels and Mobilizing Private Sector Resources for Development**

7. **Canada places a strong emphasis on mobilization of private sector resources for development through various blended finance initiatives.** A primary channel is FinDev Canada, created for this purpose in 2018, but Canada also promotes private sector mobilization through various multilateral development banks' windows. Canada reported to the DAC only US$161 million in mobilized private finance in 2024. FinDev Canada has received a massive injection of capital ($2.7 billion) for climate finance for the period 2026/27 to 2030/31. (**Section 4**)

## Part Two: CSO Channels for Canadian ODA

8. **GAC bilateral aid implemented by CSOs (both Canadian and Foreign) increased by 28% from 2015/16 to 2019/20 and by 20% from 2019/20 to 2022/23 reaching $1,799 million in 2024/25.** Since 2019/20, aid channeled with Foreign CSOs has grown by more than 100%, but with Canadian CSOs by only 18%. (**Section 5.1**)

9. **GAC allocations to Canadian CSOs are concentrated with the top 20 organizations** receiving 56% of disbursements for the 2022/23 to 2024/25 period. (**Section 5.2**)

10. **Canada ranked 8th among its DAC peers in its ODA support for civil society organizations i**n the three years, 2022 to 2024, down slightly from 7th position for the previous three years. (**Section 5.3**)

11. **According to the OECD DAC Canada provides a mere 8% of its ODA directly with CSOs in partner countries in the 2022 to 2024 period.** Canada ranked 18th among 32 DAC providers. (**Section 5.4**)

12. **The implementation of the call-for-proposal mechanism as the main funding modality for Canadian CSOs after 2010 has shaped the recipient profile for GAC funding of CSOs in Canada,** with diminished support for very small and small organizations, compared to organizational revenue profiles in 2009. Calls for proposals, both public and unsolicited, are biased towards larger organizations and, for all organizations, affect capacities for long-term sustainable and equitable partnerships in the global south. (**Section 6.1**)

13. **Since 2015, government revenue has been the most important driver of increased revenue for the sector, but biased towards larger organizations.** Very large organizations and INGOs had the highest shares of government revenue on average, while organizations with less than $5 million in total revenue were least reliant on government sources. (**Section 6.1**)

14. **There is limited transparency on successful proposals for Calls-for-Proposals listed on the GAC website,** and no transparency for those organizations that have been successful with the Unsolicited Call mechanism. 40% of 25 announced Calls since 2019 have been by invitation only. (**Section 7.1**)

15. **In 2025, the number of new projects approved with CSO implementing partners has seemingly collapsed**. Only 29 projects implemented by CSOs were approved and initiated in 2025/26, less than a quarter of the lowest previous number of 129 projects in 2023/24, during the COVID-19 period. (**Section 7.1**)

16. **Support for CSOs in the delivery of programming has been a significant share for all GAC Branches,** with CSOs accounting for 43% of bilateral geographic disbursements for Sub-Saharan Africa on average between 2021/22 and 2024/25. CSO support accounted for 30% of allocations in 2024/25 by the newly created International Assistance Partnerships and Programs Branch. (**Section 8.1**)

17. **The share of humanitarian assistance in GAC's CSO disbursements has been declining since 2018/19, reaching a low of 20% in 2024/25.** But CSOs are still significant humanitarian actors, delivering 33% of humanitarian assistance in 2024/25. Foreign CSOs play a major role in CSO humanitarian assistance through GAC. (**Section 8.2**)

18. **Health and Reproductive Health are major sector priorities for GAC disbursements with CSOs, accounting for 25% of these disbursements.** Support for Women's Rights and Organizations followed at 9%, with Education at 7% and Agriculture at 7%. (**Section 8.3**)

19. **CSOs have played a major role in delivering more than a half of GAC's bilateral ODA in several key sectors,** with CSO disbursements at 74% in Nutrition, 61% of Women's Rights and Organizations, 55% of Government and Civil Society, and 52% of Population and Reproductive Health. (**Section 8.3**)

20. **On average, between 2022/23 and 2024/25, 70% of Canadian aid delivered through CSOs was directed to activities within the Core Poverty Accountability Standard.** (**Section 8.3**)

21. **From a country point of view, CSOs are more poverty-focused. Sub-Saharan Africa (51%) is a major priority in GAC CSO disbursements.** They delivered 45% of GAC bilateral ODA to the sub-continent. More than 50% of GAC CSO disbursements are for partners in Least Developed Countries. (**Section 8.4**)