



Global official development assistance surges in 2020 in response to COVID-19; more support needed

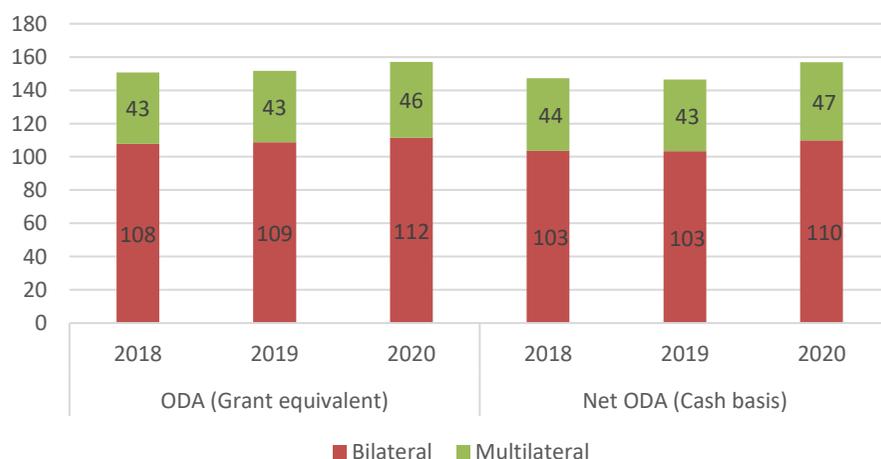
- *In 2020, official development assistance (ODA) increased by 3.5 per cent in real terms over 2019, as calculated by the new grant-equivalent measure, underpinned by an increase in COVID-19 related activities and bilateral loans.*
- *ODA was also higher as a share of donor country gross national income (GNI) on average – 0.32 per cent compared to 0.30 per cent. The increase was also in part due to a fall in GNI in most donor countries.*
- *The Inter-agency Task Force on Financing for Development (IATF) welcomes the increase but stresses in the 2021 Financing for Sustainable Development Report that ODA needs to be scaled up further to help developing countries tackle the ongoing challenges of the pandemic. The Task Force reiterates that more grants than loans are needed for vulnerable countries.*

In 2020, official development assistance totaled \$161.2 billion, or 0.32 per cent of GNI, below the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of GNI. Six donors met or exceeded the target: Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Overall, while 16 donor countries increased their ODA, 13 countries' ODA declined.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) also continues to publish data according to the previous cash flow basis. Under this methodology, net ODA was \$161.0 billion in 2020, recording an increase of 7.1 per cent in real terms. Bilateral ODA by OECD Development Assistance Committee members to least developed countries and Africa also increased in real terms, by 1.8 percent to \$34 billion, and 4.1 per cent to \$39 billion, respectively.

The IATF looks forward to the more detailed data that will be published in December 2021.

Official development assistance, 2018–2020 (Billions of United States dollars, 2019 constant prices)



Source: OECD Creditor Reporting System database.

¹ See OECD, "COVID-19 Spending Helped to Lift Foreign Aid to an All-Time High in 2020 but More Effort Needed," April 13, 2021.