



# World Vision Ireland

## Pre-Budget Submission 2024

July 2023

## Introduction

Established in 1983, World Vision Ireland has been responding to the needs of vulnerable children in the world's most fragile contexts for 40 years. As part of World Vision International, the largest relief and development NGO in the world, World Vision Ireland has been responding to chronic and acute humanitarian crises in countries such as Somalia, Sudan, Syria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Afghanistan. We also support long term development programming, building resilience of children, their families and communities. Our programmes are community-led and child focused.

The principle aim of World Vision Ireland is to help children of all backgrounds in the world's most fragile places and to work with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and to improve livelihoods. Alongside our partners, we tackle poverty at its roots, with an integrated approach that includes ensuring children are educated, healthy and well nourished, protected and empowered, and live in resilient and prosperous communities.

The world is now at a crossroads, where hunger, malnutrition, childhood stunting, acute food insecurity, food price inflation and extreme poverty are on the rise for the first time in many years. There is now demonstrable evidence that the world is moving away from the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms, by 2030. The impacts of Covid-19 have set back humanitarian and development programmes by a decade and the climate crisis continues to pose unprecedented and unjust pressures on communities who have contributed least to it.

Climate change is eradicating ways of life in front of our eyes; climate-based conflicts are becoming more widespread and there is an ever-increasing number of climate induced shocks around the world. These are having a devastating impact on vulnerable communities around the world, not least on children. These communities who are most impacted are least responsible for the impacts of climate change. Over the coming years, the humanitarian landscape, as a result of a nexus of intensifying challenges, could be like nothing the international community has ever faced.

With this in mind, World Vision Ireland makes the following recommendations to the Irish Government for Budget 2023.

*Front Cover: school children race each other on their way home after class in Katito, Kenya*

## World Vision Ireland Recommendations:

- 1) World Vision Ireland greatly welcomes the successive increases in the **ODA budget** towards 0.7% and the Government's commitment to ringfence the money being spent overseas. However, we share concerns about the conflation between ODA money being spent here in Ireland and money being used overseas. We join calls for Ireland to continue progress towards the target of 0.7% of GNI on Official Development Assistance (ODA) by increasing the ODA budget in 2024 by €305m.
- 2) The status of **child rights** and the focus on children by governments and organisations around the world has diminished over the past 10-15 years as other issues have become more prominent. This has come at the same time as the global well-being of children has come under increasing threat.

We encourage the Government to place child wellbeing and child focused policies and strategies at the fore in all humanitarian emergency and long-term development programming. We also ask that child participation be enabled and facilitated in relevant decisions on hunger and nutrition and climate policy processes at all levels, as children can play a significant role as agents of transformation and change.

- 3) Every day, millions of children are being forced to go without food or do not get enough nutritious food, in direct contrast to our vision for children to experience fullness of life. Most hungry children remain invisible, unaccounted for and unheard. [45 million children](#) under 5 are currently suffering from wasting worldwide.

We urge the Irish Government to integrate child nutrition sensitive approaches in policies, funding and regulations affecting all **hunger and nutrition** related goods, programmes and services.

- 4) World Vision Ireland welcomes Ireland's commitment to **climate finance** and the global pledge of \$100bn per year. Ireland's pledge and current commitment of €225m per year has taken a progressive step towards this, however we note that there is still a gap between our current commitment and Ireland's fair share of climate finance. We urge the Irish Government to dramatically increase its commitment to align with its pledge.
- 5) Year on year, we are witnessing **increasing humanitarian needs** around the world. A record [240 million people in 69 countries](#) need urgent humanitarian assistance, The majority of whom are women and children. Humanitarian programmes around the world are currently only funded to 18.3% of their [total requirements](#), which results in millions of people missing out on life saving, emergency assistance.

We welcome Ireland's ongoing support to the world's most fragile contexts with timely, flexible, predictable and multi-year funding for chronic and acute crises. In line with an overall increase in ODA, we recommend Ireland increases its support to address humanitarian needs, including many of the worlds forgotten crises.

## Global Needs Increasing

The climate crisis is having an unjust and unequal impact on the lives of children around the world. Every year, millions of children suffer as a result of climate induced shocks including famine, droughts and cyclones, as well as those facing armed conflict, forced displacement, political strife and the resulting economic damage. 356 million children are currently living in extreme poverty, forced to survive on less than \$1.90 per day. This year, the skyrocketing cost of living, the legacy of Covid-19 and ongoing environmental degradation seek to compound the mounting challenges facing the international development and humanitarian sectors. Children always face the greatest burden and it is essential that we focus on reaching those who are the most vulnerable first.

Vulnerable children are those whose quality of life and ability to fulfil their potential are most affected by extreme deprivation and violations of their rights. According to UNICEF, almost [1 billion children](#) around the world are multidimensionally poor, which means they lack basic necessities such as nutrition, clean water housing and education. These children often live in catastrophic situations and in relationships characterised by violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation, exclusion and discrimination. It is World Vision Ireland's aim to reach those most in need and, to put in a strategic and structured approach to this, **we urge the Government to place child wellbeing and child focused policies and strategies at the fore in all humanitarian emergency and long-term development programming.**

**We ask that the Government enable and facilitate child participation in relevant decisions on hunger and nutrition and climate policy processes at all levels as children can play a significant role as agents of transformation and change.**

## Hunger & Nutrition

Hunger causes profound damage to the lives of children, from physical stunting and wasting, to long-term cognitive, social and emotional development. Hunger and food poverty are at an all-time high. [At least 202 million children](#) under 5 live in severe food poverty, which puts them at high risk of stunting, wasting and death.

The UN estimates that more than [30 million](#) children in the 15 countries hardest hit by food and nutrition crises are suffering from wasting (acute malnutrition) and 8 million are severely wasted, the most life-threatening form of malnutrition.

Hungry and malnourished children, particularly girls, are more likely to drop out of school and are more vulnerable to different forms of violence; these factors perpetuate the cycle of poverty, hunger and violence into the next generation of children. Structural causes such as climate change, conflicts and the growing costs of living are compounded by inadequate policy and funding for effective interventions, limited regulation of food production and suboptimal family and individual consumption habits. Levels of nutrition literacy are low and service delivery infrastructure at community level is insufficient to adequately cover the needs of the most vulnerable children.

**We urge the Irish Government to integrate child nutrition sensitive approaches in policies, funding & regulations affecting all hunger and nutrition related goods, programmes and services.**



## Climate Justice

World Vision Ireland welcomes the continued increase in Ireland's contribution towards climate finance and towards the global pledge of \$100bn per year. €225m is a significant and progressive step towards this ambitious goal. However, both as a global community and individually, we are a long way from achieving the \$100bn pledge.

At the international level, Oxfam's [Climate Finance Shadow Report 2023](#) shows that the real value of support aimed at climate action in 2020 was between \$21bn - \$24.5bn. For Ireland, Christian Aid and Trócaire's [2019 report](#) indicated that Ireland's fair share is closer to €475m per year and the Overseas Development Institute ODI, in 2021, [estimated](#) that Ireland's fair share is closer to €621m.

The climate crisis is the greatest challenge facing us as a sector. It disproportionately affects the most vulnerable around the world. It is deeply impacting children now and preventing them from having a viable and successful future. The IPCC report affirms the dire consequences for small island developing states in a 1.5 degree world and the impact that climate change is having on their sustainable livelihoods, wellbeing, viability, security and sovereignty is stark.

The gap between rhetoric, ambition and implementation must be closed. The cost of inaction is severe. **We urge the Irish Government to dramatically increase its commitment to align with its pledge.**



## Humanitarian Crises

Year on year, we are witnessing increasing humanitarian needs around the world. In 2022 and 2023 to date, World Vision Ireland responded to humanitarian crises in South Sudan, Syria, Somalia, Vanuatu and Ukraine as a result of both natural disasters and man-made crises. However, the severe and chronic underfunding for humanitarian emergencies means that the work of NGOs and the humanitarian sector can only reach a fraction of those who require emergency and lifesaving assistance.

The global attention and funding provided for crises such as in Ukraine and Türkiye, provides a roadmap and shows what is possible when governments, international communities and the general public come together. However, as the number of humanitarian crises continues to increase, the global attention has fallen and there are far too many under-reported and under-funded emergencies.

[UNOCHA has documented](#) that of the \$56bn required to fully address all of the humanitarian emergencies around the world in 2023, only \$10bn / 18.4% has been secured, with some countries currently receiving as little as 3% of the required funding.

We welcome the leadership role Ireland has played and its ongoing support to the world's most fragile contexts with timely, flexible, predictable and multi-year funding for chronic and acute crises. In line with an overall increase in ODA, **we recommend Ireland increases its support to address humanitarian needs, including many of the world's forgotten crises.**

## Conclusion

We are now beyond the tipping point. Despite the best will and ambition of the international community and the ever-present work of NGOs in the most fragile and dangerous places around the world, decades of humanitarian and development progress have been put into reverse. Today, an estimated [356 million children](#) live in extreme poverty, with up to 1 billion children considered to be multidimensional poor. As a result of the impacts of climate change and recurrent and chronic humanitarian crises, including conflict and natural disasters, more than 345 million people face high levels of food insecurity in 2023 with [over 900,000](#) people struggling to survive in famine like situations, a 10-fold increase over the last 5 years. This continues to disproportionately impact the lives and wellbeing of the approximately 1.2 billion children worldwide who are living in poverty.

The World Food Programme has [reported](#) that the number of people suffering from ‘catastrophic’ conditions is ever increasing, expanding to Somalia, Burkina Faso, Haiti, Mali, Nigeria, South Sudan and Yemen, some of the world’s most fragile contexts. At least 45 million children are suffering from wasting and the number of people affected by food insecurity has nearly doubled over the past three years – to a record 258 million in 58 countries as of 2022. Hunger is on the verge of spiralling out of control and **the global community must not fail on its promise to end hunger and malnutrition by 2030.**

Ireland showed extraordinary leadership in the development of the Sustainable Development Goals. However, Ireland and the rest of the world have fallen a long way short on their implementation. In order to catch up to our SDG commitments, World Vision Ireland urges the Government to show its leadership once again and to **ensure that the SDGs are implemented** across all Government planning and budgetary processes domestically and also to continue to support their realisation for children and their communities in the world’s most fragile contexts.

With growing hunger, humanitarian crises and increasing child poverty and vulnerability, now more than ever Ireland’s leadership in providing principled and quality ODA is required. This leadership must begin with a clear **plan towards 0.7% ODA**, which is distinct funding for overseas development and humanitarian responses. Increasing Ireland’s ODA ensures that the core aspect of Ireland’s ODA policy, reaching the furthest behind first, is realised.

### World Vision Ireland

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Charity Number: CHY6434/20011796