

Chapter V

Great Britain's development assistance

Aleksandra Rabczun

The world is a system of communicating vessels so if the governments of highly developed countries want to maintain their level of development, they cannot ignore global problems such as poverty, hunger, migration, terrorism, environmental pollution and the low standard of living of people in the South. The largest donors of development assistance are some of the most developed countries in the world, i.e. the United States, Germany, Great Britain, France and Japan. The share of their assistance in the total assistance of the Development Assistance Committee after the year 2000 ranged from 61% to 65%.⁶ The analysis of development aid provided by the largest donors is important for many reasons. For instance, it can contribute to increasing the effectiveness of the assistance. The literature review shows that there are studies on development aid provided by the majority of important donors. Works on emerging donors are also becoming more and more popular. However, there is a gap in the scientific literature regarding British development aid⁷, both in Polish- and English-language literature. There is a need for an in-depth study of

⁶ Own study based on OECD (2019). *Net ODA (indicator)*. DOI: 10.1787/33346549-en (accessed: April 7, 2021).

⁷ The author of this text is also the author of the first Polish-language dissertation on British development aid for developing countries in the years 2000–2015.

the conditions, institutional and geographic structure as well as of the UK sectoral aid. Understanding British aid is important as the UK, as a key donor, sets the tone for the international development agenda. Moreover, the British institutional model of delivering development aid, led by the Department for International Development (DFID), is taken by many as an example. British foreign policy, and thus – development policy, is of course related to the colonial past and close ties with Africa and Asia. Criticism of the model of development aid chosen by Great Britain, taking place both inside the United Kingdom and abroad, prompts to take a closer look at its specificity. This chapter analyzes the conditions for providing development aid by Great Britain and presents its institutional structure. Particular attention has been paid to the geographic structure, especially the three main directions in which the British direct their resources. The chapter ends with an analysis of the forms of British aid with an emphasis on the achievement of the MDGs and the adopted strategy in the field of bilateral and multilateral aid.

5.1. Conditions of Great Britain's development assistance

Development policy has its origins in colonialism, mainly in African and Asian countries. The conditions for providing aid by Great Britain were influenced by economic, political and social factors. The international environment was not indifferent to the British development agenda. Continuous changes to internal conditions were *de facto* started by the Colonial Development Act of 1929. With the shifts of the political parties at the head of the British government, a long tradition began of creating new bodies responsible for development policy and then transforming them as new politicians came to power. It is worth noting that, apart from institutional changes, significant changes took place in the budget allocated to development aid, which is related to the economic situation of Great Britain itself.

While it was the Labour Party government that in 1997 made a historic change to the British aid system, David Cameron, who took office in 2010, representing the Conservative Party, had a significant influence on the shape of British development aid today. During his time in office, the

United Kingdom achieved for the first time the benchmark percentage of 0.7% of GDP allocated to aid purposes. Moreover, greater transparency and clarity have been introduced into the development policy agenda, and there have been efforts to make the aid as effective as possible.

The British use a different strategy depending on the region where they direct aid. Before making a decision to invest, Great Britain performs a regional analysis based on various criteria. There are four types of determinants in international economics: structural, institutional, cyclical and technological. In turn, in the field of political science, one can encounter a different division of determinants. It consists of two main groups of factors in international relations: conditioning and implementing. The conditioning factors include geographic, demographic, national, religious and ideological elements. The implementing factors include the economic, technological, military and legal ones (Deszczyński, 2012, pp. 33–43). It is possible to build one's own classification, which is a kind of hybrid of both previously presented factors. With developing countries so diverse internally and externally, rigid schemas are of little use. In order to understand their structure within each region where British aid goes, one can identify at least one additional factor crucial for the absorption of funds.¹

Among other important conditions, the legal basis for the provision of assistance should be indicated, as it determines the formal framework of British development assistance. In the years 2000–2015, this basis was the International Development Act of 2002. It consisted of an introduction, two parts and appendices. This act introduced rules on the provision of assistance to countries outside the United Kingdom, consistent with the activities of international financial institutions as well as the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission and purposes related to them. The new legal act was, in a way, a response to the report entitled “Eliminating World Poverty: A challenge for the 21st century”, highlighting the UK

¹ Given the regions and countries presented later in this chapter, the following elements are identified as an additional factor: in Sub-Saharan Africa – colonialism, in Arab countries (Middle East and North Africa) – religion, and in Central and South Asia – the local power, China, and its relations with other countries in the region.

government's contribution to reducing global poverty. The International Development Act gave the secretary of state the option of increasing development aid expenditure in relation to specific goals. Under the act, the secretary of state could, for example, provide development aid to any country or territory outside the United Kingdom, if he was convinced that it would contribute to poverty reduction (Thompson, 2017, p. 9).

The 2002 act allowed the UK government to use a wider range of financial instruments, not available before, to provide development aid. These include stocks and derivatives, bonds and guarantees. The legal act also made it possible for the bodies designated therein to engage in the provision of foreign aid either independently or with the secretary of state.

The International Development Act provided for payments to be made to development banks and included immunity and privilege provisions for the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Finance Corporation and the International Development Association. Finally, the Act includes plans for the continuation of activities by the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission (Thompson, 2017, p. 10).

In addition to the above-mentioned legal act, there are also other documents relating to development issues. These include The International Development (Reporting and Transparency) Act of 2006, International Development (Gender Equality) Act of 2014 and International Development (Official Development Assistance Target) Act of 2015 (Thompson, 2017, p. 3). The United Kingdom, as one of the key donors of development aid, cooperates within international organizations, therefore it is a signatory to international legal and declarative acts regarding development policy. Most often, however, guidelines and declarations at the international level tend to focus on the issue of development assistance effectiveness.

5.2. The institutional structure of Great Britain's development assistance

The British system of aid arose along with the problems that began to affect the colonies in the early twentieth century. Great Britain established various institutions that were to foster development in the colonies, then in the countries of the Commonwealth of Nations, and only at the very end – beyond it. The institutional structure of development assistance was initially organized on the basis of a geographical criterion with a clearly designated division of competences.

Initially, aid provided to other countries was intended to promote the commercial interest of Great Britain and the export of its products. Although at the declarative level (legal acts, speeches of ministers and officials) this principle was broken even before the collapse of colonialism, the actual cooperation was most often based on conditions that were very favorable for the British. The amount of aid provided by Great Britain fairly quickly made it a leader among donors, but the quality and purposefulness of aid was subject to wide international criticism due to gross violations of the interests of the countries at which the help was aimed.

Prior to 1997, the UK institutional system for delivering aid was rather complex and development responsibilities were split between different government departments. The complex organizational structure and the lack of a clear division of competences contributed to ineffective management of public funds. This institutional form was criticized due to its low clarity and transparency. Similar to the case of French aid (Fuchs, 1993, pp. 39–40), it was believed that the duplication of competences within the government generated unnecessary administrative costs. Paradoxically, the recipients of British aid could, under such conditions, apply for co-financing of projects from various sources at the same time. On the one hand, this could lead to abuses, but on the other hand, it was perceived quite positively by developing countries.

The shape of the institutional structure of British development assistance was also influenced by external factors related to the international environment. First, there were commitments under the Millennium Declaration and the Paris Declaration. They influenced not only the amount of aid (in relative and absolute terms), but also the application of

clear and transparent criteria for granting aid as well as the evaluation of implemented projects and programs. The aid was no longer to be general and imprecise. The aim was to be selective and to introduce support mechanisms for the countries that are trying to realistically change their situation, e.g. by improving the quality of governance or fighting corruption. The participation of the United Kingdom in the EU, the UN and the OECD as well as cooperation with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund were not without significance. The implementation of a policy based not only on British goals, but above all on international interest, resulted in a significant reorganization of the institutional structure.

One of the greatest institutional achievements was the establishing by the Labour Party government a separate department for international development. Since its establishment in 1997, Great Britain has become recognizable as a global leader in development. Set as an example (by *The Economist*) as a “model for other rich countries”, the British DFID was and still is primarily aimed at reducing poverty in the poorest countries in the world. More than once this institution refused to tie aid to UK commercial or political goals, thereby creating a strong international reputation. The Department for International Development is considered a pioneer in creating development concepts and putting them into practice. With strong leadership – the position of the head of this institution has been linked to a high position in the Cabinet and legislative support – it can make real changes. It is the main authority that shapes the UK development policy. From the very beginning, this department was equipped with a budget of USD 6 billion per year (Barder, 2005, p. 2). T. Blair repeatedly emphasized that the creation of such a cell is one of the achievements of which the British can be very proud.

While DFID has played a key role in the British government, other departments have been negative about the new formation since its beginnings. This was because the development department was granted a wide spectrum of opportunities, financial independence, and a broad competence in shaping UK development policy. Both Foreign Office and the Department of Trade and Industry were skeptical about the development agenda in the past, which also resulted in a dislike of DFID.

The ministries focused more on short-term commercial interests for the UK and not necessarily on long-term aid effects such as reducing poverty and improving the quality of life in developing countries. Disagreements between ministries usually took the form of a low-intensity flow of bureaucratic information, not sharing strategic documents with each other, accounting for resolution projects of the UN Security Council, and responsibility and formulation of political documents. Some of the misunderstandings between the ministries were more factual and independent, mostly centered around policy towards Africa (Porteous, 2005).

From the very beginning, DFID built positive relations with the British Treasury and the central bank. Important officials were generally convinced that progress in reducing global poverty would serve the UK's economic interest in the long term. Although relations were generally good, there were many minor tensions at the beginning of the ministry's operation. To date, DFID works closely with three other UK government agencies and public institutions. They are the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission, the Independent Commission for Aid Impact, and the Government Equalities Office.

As early as the end of the last century, the development department faced the task of changing the attitude of British policy so that development policy issues were included in the mainstream of government policy. Other departments saw more and more clearly the need to support developing countries and civil society organizations internationally, finding the DFID useful. The new department has built a network of relations in the government and individual ministries and has taught them to respect values such as efficiency and thinking for the quality of development.

An example of how much DFID was concerned with identifying the causes of poverty was, *inter alia*, a strategy of factors of change, in which attempts were made to create development programs with an understanding of the economic, social and political factors that helped or blocked changes in a given country (Mapping Political Context: Drivers of Change, n.d.). The goal of tackling the causes of poverty has led the Department for International Development to expand building of institutions and reforms to governance, security and access to justice, and

good management programs. The long-term DFID mission meant that British development aid focused not only on poverty reduction, but above all on eliminating its symptoms. As a result, new areas were introduced to development policy, such as conflict prevention, trade, environment and management.

With a new UK approach to government administration, DFID has set itself the goal of making policy evidence-based, focusing on outcomes rather than inputs, increasing transparency in the policy making and the use of resources. The tangible effect of the policy on evidence was the publication by DFID of two White Papers which contained guidance from non-governmental experts, NGOs and academics. The Department for International Development employed a wide range of specialists with the necessary knowledge and skills, ranging from economists to anthropologists, experts in health, engineering, education, statistics, commerce, conflict, environment, population and management. It was also involved in information and promotion activities related to development and carried out social campaigns. An example of this is the Global Citizen campaign co-created with the Ministry of Education, which includes the provision of materials and support for teacher training colleges in the new national curriculum to enable teachers to integrate development issues into the curricula of children in schools from the early stages of education. This was to raise awareness among the British about the necessity to engage with the needs of developing countries.

5.3. The geographic structure of Great Britain's development assistance

After the colonies regained independence, former empires were reluctant to come to terms with the loss of their privileged position. Instead of colonial ties, there was "cooperation" with newly established states, which was mainly based on trade relations. Along with the increased trade between developing countries and Great Britain, the beginnings of specific aid instruments, such as export credits directed to specific countries, appeared.

As the process of decolonization progressed, the priorities of British aid changed. In view of the emergence of a number of developing countries and the dilemma of which countries to help, the criterion was adopted that the focus should be on those belonging to the Commonwealth of Nations and on former colonies. The choice of such a geographical strategy in the 20th century determines the specific directions of development aid delivery to this day.

In the analyzed period, as much as 52.37% of British development aid was allocated to sub-Saharan Africa², 26.04% for Central and South Asia, 6.92% for the countries of the Middle East and North Africa, 6.43% for other countries in Asia and Oceania, 5.03% for Latin America and the Caribbean and 3.20% for the so-called European developing countries.³ Later in the chapter, detailed data for the top 5 recipients of British development aid in the most important geographic directions are presented.

The largest recipients of British development aid in the years 2000–2015 were Nigeria, India, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Tanzania. Interestingly, in recent years, the amounts for Syria and Pakistan (shown in Figures 2 and 3) have significantly increased compared to previous years. Of the top 15 recipients of British aid in three geographic regions in the 21st century, only Lebanon⁴ received less than USD 1 billion. An analysis of the history of these countries shows that most of them had close relations with Great Britain in the past, although among the recipients are also former colonies of other empires. Detailed data on the annual level of aid for the above-mentioned countries are presented in Figures 1–3.

² The classification of regions adopted in this chapter results from the OECD classification.

³ Own study based on: *Development Co-operation Report 2007*, *Development Co-operation Report 2009*, *Development Co-operation Report 2010*, *Development Co-operation Report 2011*, *Development Co-operation Report 2012*, *Development Co-operation Report 2013*, *Development Co-operation Report 2014*, *Development Co-operation Report 2015*, *Development Co-operation Report 2016*, *Development Co-operation Report 2017*.

⁴ The difference in development aid to Lebanon and Jordan in 2000–2019 is only USD 12 million.

Table 1. The amount of British development aid for the main recipients of development aid in Africa and Asia (in USD million)

Countries	2000	Total 2001–2004	2005	Total 2006–2009	2010	Total 2011–2014	2015	Total 2016–2019	Total 2000–2019
Sub-Saharan Africa									
Nigeria	22.89	243.18	2200.89	3705.80	264.60	1654.90	401.40	1578.2	10071.86
Ethiopia		224.84	75.19	993.53	407.00	2425.20	517.60	1655.6	6298.96
Tanzania	152.73	895.80	220.35	920.27	24.90	916.80	313.00	843.6	4287.45
Democratic Republic of the Congo		325.82	78.42	673.29	250.80	1381.10	218.10	896.1	3823.63
Kenya	73.11	234.73	86.28	341.67	105.20	776.00	237.70	703.7	2558.39
Middle East and North Africa									
Iraq	14.00	481.60	1317.50	959.80	31.00	667.30	84.70	464.4	4020.30
Syria	0.20	0.30	0.20	3.50	2.00	495.00	391.30	1471.3	2363.80
Yemen	4.60	26.70	20.30	109.40	63.90	409.30	125.40	989.3	1748.90
The West Bank and the Gaza Strip	0.00	0.00	0.00	185.60	97.60	434.90	78.60	278.6	1075.30
Lebanon	0.90	1.20	0.60	20.80	4.00	64.90	152.10	634.2	878.70
Central and South Asia									
India	204.20	1217.70	579.20	2103.20	650.30	1794.90	283.50	504.9	7337.90
Pakistan	23.70	299.20	63.10	878.80	298.50	1598.80	571.10	1973.6	5706.80
Afghanistan	12.70	488.80	219.90	1161.90	234.80	1513.70	458.30	1313.9	5404.00
Bangladesh	103.40	729.50	203.30	887.30	228.30	1447.60	250.10	1007.3	4856.80
Nepal	23.00	189.00	61.60	371.60	105.20	544.40	134.80	510.4	1940.00

Source: own study based on the following reports: *Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows to Aid Recipients 2006, Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows to Developing Countries 2010: Disbursements, Commitments, Country Indicators, Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows to Developing Countries 2016: Disbursements, Commitments, Country Indicators, Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows to Developing Countries 2017: Disbursements, Commitments, Country Indicators, Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows to Developing Countries: Disbursements, Commitments, Country Indicators Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows to Developing Countries 2021.*

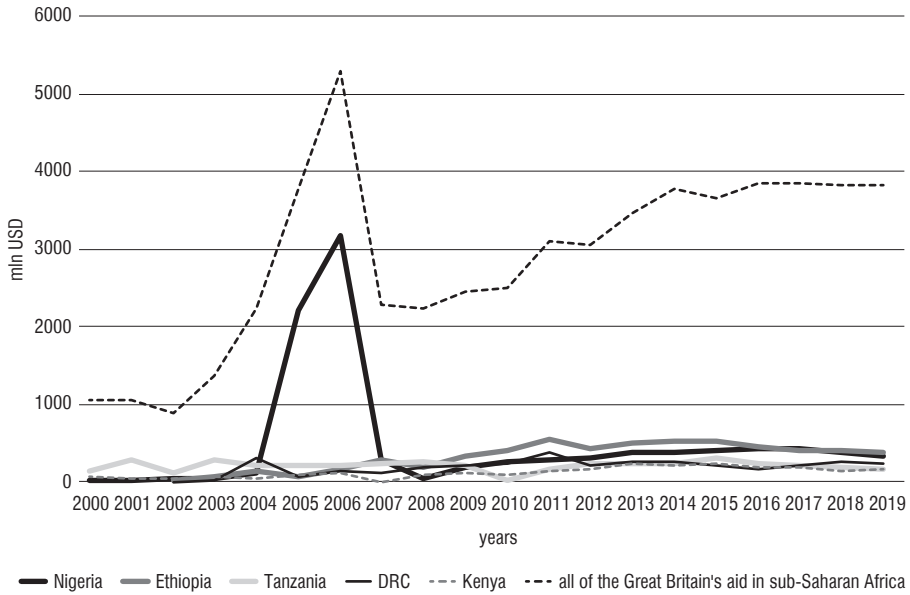


Figure 1. The amount of British development aid for the main recipients of development aid in sub-Saharan Africa (in USD million)

Source: own study.

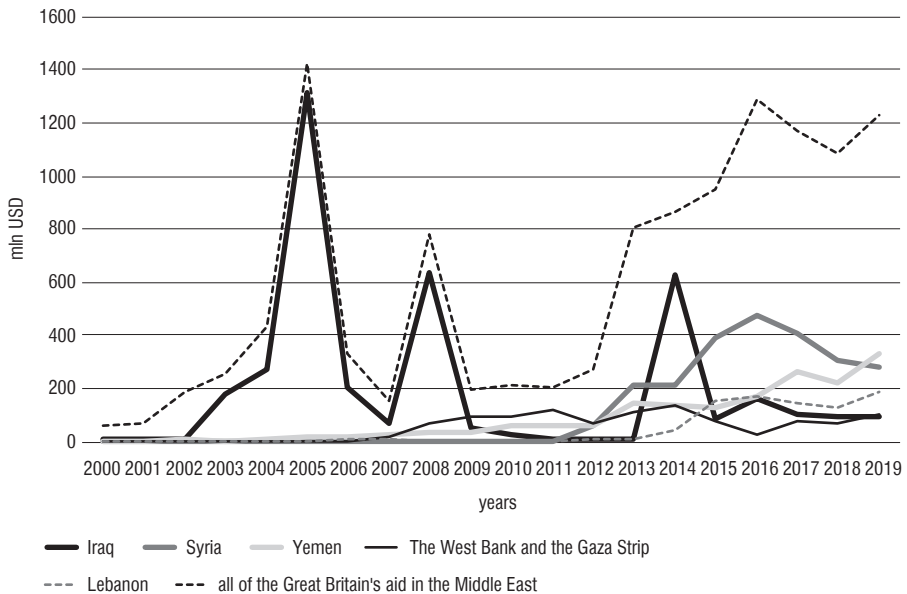


Figure 2. The amount of British development aid for the main recipients of development aid in the Middle East and North Africa (in USD million)

Source: own study.

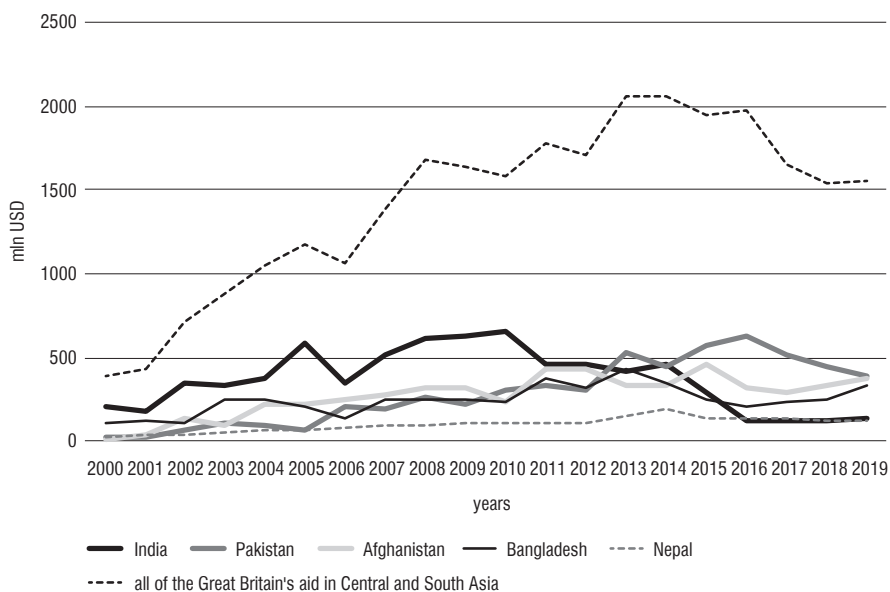


Figure 3. The amount of British development aid for the main recipients of development aid in Central and South Asia (in USD million)

Source: own study.

It is also worth analyzing what percentage of these countries' gross domestic product was development aid from the British. This makes it possible to check to what extent developing countries are independent and to what extent they are dependent on foreign support.

Countries with the highest nominal GDP, such as Nigeria, India and Iraq, have a low development aid-to-GDP ratio (with some minor exceptions, i.e. years when some important external factor was triggered). The places where aid significantly exceeds 1–2% in relation to GDP are the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Tanzania, DRC or Ethiopia, which are some of the least developed places in the world. As a rule, the ratio of development aid to GDP fluctuated for each country, depending on the internal situation and international conditions.

Britain and other countries formerly owning colonies have been accused of using strategies to favor former colonies. Authors use a variety of methods to either confirm or deny this claim. In the name of increasing the effectiveness of development aid, it is postulated to direct it where it can be best used and bring the greatest effect. In order to check the extent

Table 2. The amount of development aid in relation to the GDP of the largest recipients of British aid in Africa and Asia in the years 2000–2015 (in %)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Sub-Saharan Africa																				
Nigeria	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.09	1.25	1.35	1.10	0.01	0.06	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.08	0.07	0.08	0.11	0.11	0.10	0.07
Tanzania	1.14	2.10	0.77	1.88	1.29	1.20	1.17	1.06	0.91	0.75	0.08	0.46	0.63	0.52	0.49	0.66	0.50	0.40	0.35	0.28
DRC	n.d.	n.d.	0.10	0.17	2.93	0.66	0.91	0.72	0.99	1.21	1.16	1.48	0.75	0.77	0.76	0.58	0.47	0.56	0.58	0.47
Ethiopia	n.d.	n.d.	0.25	0.71	1.42	0.61	1.10	1.48	0.71	1.06	1.36	1.73	0.97	1.08	0.95	0.80	0.14	0.12	0.08	0.09
Kenya	0.58	0.42	0.41	0.53	0.28	0.46	0.42	0.04	0.25	0.35	0.26	0.34	0.32	0.45	0.36	0.37	0.26	0.25	0.18	0.18
Middle East and North Africa																				
Iraq	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.70	1.06	2.64	0.31	0.08	0.49	0.04	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.27	0.05	0.09	0.05	0.04	0.04
Syria	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
The West Bank and the Gaza Strip	0.34	0.39	0.55	0.72	0.68	0.55	0.81	0.52	1.58	2.20	2.26	2.81	1.58	2.52	3.18	1.82	0.55	0.99	0.94	1.47
Yemen	0.05	0.03	0.07	0.02	0.09	0.12	0.08	0.12	0.12	0.14	0.21	0.19	0.18	0.37	0.31	0.29	0.20	0.49	0.40	n.d.
Lebanon	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.03	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.09	0.30	0.33	0.28	0.23	0.37
Central and South Asia																				
India	0.04	0.04	0.07	0.05	0.05	0.07	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
Pakistan	0.04	0.04	0.07	0.05	0.05	0.07	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
Afghanistan	n.d.	n.d.	3.23	2.18	4.29	3.54	3.54	2.76	3.19	2.61	1.48	2.38	2.17	1.61	1.59	2.30	0.22	0.17	0.14	0.14
Bangladesh	0.19	0.23	0.19	0.42	0.39	0.29	0.19	0.31	0.28	0.24	0.20	0.29	0.23	0.28	0.20	0.13	1.76	1.55	1.81	1.93
Nepal	0.42	0.55	0.61	0.84	0.90	0.76	0.83	0.92	0.79	0.80	0.66	0.55	0.58	0.76	0.92	0.63	0.66	0.51	0.44	0.37

Source: own study based on data from the World Bank and OECD.

Table 3. Amount of British development aid for Africa and Asia *per capita* in 2000–2015 (in USD million).

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	mean 2000–2019
Sub-Saharan Africa																					
Sierra Leone	14.90	10.75	10.94	10.56	11.21	10.73	11.25	14.71	15.10	12.80	13.22	11.21	14.82	15.94	55.78	46.38	28.30	20.28	16.34	12.47	17.88
South Sudan	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8.44	17.01	20.61	26.05	29.66	20.04	19.85	18.39	23.93	9.20
Rwanda	6.64	4.47	6.25	5.01	6.70	9.27	10.55	10.24	10.49	9.19	10.58	13.17	4.25	14.96	7.14	13.62	7.96	6.39	5.93	6.27	8.45
Malawi	8.69	5.59	4.28	8.86	9.70	9.46	7.86	12.81	9.74	7.91	10.18	6.96	12.79	11.19	6.13	7.81	8.06	6.53	6.18	5.58	8.32
Somalia	0.12	0.39	0.32	0.36	1.16	1.02	4.94	2.38	6.68	3.74	5.17	12.29	11.18	12.84	15.18	13.49	14.43	24.90	17.22	14.53	8.12
Middle East and North Africa																					
The East Bank and the Gaza Strip	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	6.44	18.99	25.72	25.78	31.19	17.09	26.64	32.87	18.41	7.03	17.73	14.42	21.98	13.21
Iraq	0.60	0.53	0.55	7.02	10.45	48.94	7.40	2.48	22.51	1.68	1.04	0.44	0.34	0.33	18.37	2.38	4.38	2.84	2.57	2.51	6.87
Syria	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.11	0.05	0.09	0.09	3.07	11.08	11.40	21.74	27.20	23.68	18.21	16.67	6.67
Lebanon	0.23	0.10	0.05	0.07	0.13	1.45	1.57	0.21	1.12	0.81	0.50	1.25	2.13	6.83	23.28	24.94	21.77	18.79	27.68	6.65	
Jordan	1.44	1.63	0.94	0.72	0.84	1.06	0.15	0.08	0.69	0.22	0.36	0.35	0.93	3.06	3.42	9.47	24.71	8.03	18.51	16.57	4.66
Central and South Asia																					
Afghanistan	0.61	1.64	5.79	4.16	9.06	8.57	9.33	9.91	11.63	11.42	8.05	14.06	13.92	10.26	9.75	13.32	8.98	8.05	8.92	9.79	8.86
Nepal	0.96	1.36	1.49	2.12	2.59	2.39	2.87	3.60	3.70	3.84	3.89	3.85	4.08	5.42	6.85	4.99	0.20	0.44	0.41	1.15	2.81
Kyrgyzstan	0.45	0.49	0.90	1.41	1.23	1.82	2.15	2.47	2.58	1.65	1.34	2.16	1.14	1.47	1.68	0.69	1.27	1.42	1.57	2.01	1.49
Bangladesh	0.81	0.96	0.77	1.86	1.84	1.46	0.99	1.72	1.75	1.71	1.55	2.47	2.06	2.78	2.22	1.60	0.14	0.20	0.10	0.38	1.37
India	0.19	0.16	0.31	0.30	0.33	0.50	0.30	0.43	0.51	0.52	0.53	0.36	0.37	0.33	0.35	0.22	5.10	4.67	4.54	5.06	1.25

Source: own study based on data from the *World Bank and OECD*.

to which Great Britain follows objective measures in the distribution of aid, it was decided to analyze the value of development aid *per capita*. This approach can also be justified by the diversified demographic potential among the countries presented.

In sub-Saharan Africa, none of the countries receiving the biggest aid in USD is the country with the highest per capita development aid. This means that the British apply different criteria for selecting recipient countries in relation to this region. In the case of the Middle East and North Africa, with the exception of Jordan, which is sixth instead of fifth in terms of quotas, all countries overlap in both sets. This may be due to the fact that most of them were, however, French colonies (so the British did not have to favor anyone) and to the events inside these countries (overthrow of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, war in Syria, famine in Yemen). In the case of Central and South Asia, the breakdown in terms of the amount of aid in USD and *per capita* is the same for Afghanistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and India, which means that Pakistan was selected under a different criterion not directly communicated by the UK. It should also be borne in mind that important trade relations also exist between recipient and donor countries.⁵

5.4. Forms of Great Britain's development assistance

Over the decades, the forms of development aid have changed. This happened, *inter alia*, due to the change in the perception of their importance for economic and social development. The changes aimed at increasing the effectiveness of aid can be positively assessed, however, one should not forget about methodological negligence made by officials of aid institutions and practitioners. Unfortunately, it can also be found in professional literature as a result of its thoughtless adoption, mainly by young researchers (Deszczyński, 2011a, p. 98).

⁵ More on the trade relations of Great Britain and the main recipient states in Rabczun, A. (2020). *Great Britain's development aid for developing countries* (unpublished doctoral dissertation). Poznań: Poznań University of Economics.

Table 4. Great Britain's bilateral development aid in the years 2000–2015 (in USD mln)

sektor	2000	Total 2001–2004	2005	Total 2006–2009	2010	Total 2011–2014	2015	Total 2016–2019	Total 2000–2019
I. Social infrastructure and services	741.64	5622.05	2149.63	12540.71	3659.14	14441.6	3033.22	14332.55	56520.54
II. Economic infrastructure and services	179.86	1246.21	229.47	3455.51	677.48	3230.39	1095.14	2144.04	12258.1
III. Production sector	346.94	1037.57	272.55	989.28	534.92	1664.26	634.44	1674.78	7154.74
IV. Multisektor ⁶	207.71	377.75	332.72	1557.51	1442	4091.05	1090.61	4580.83	13680.18
V. Total sector aid (I+II+III+IV)	1476.14	8283.59	2984.37	18543	6313.55	23427.29	5853.42	22732.87	89614.23
VI. Freight aid / general program aid	439.01	324.77	73.57	2290.54	814.89	1171.46	106.47	121.01	5341.72
VII. Debt cancellation	155.23	1905.73	3533.54	4180.01	163.8	346.89	n.d.	11.46	10296.66
VIII. Humanitarian aid	344.32	1744.95	628.35	2750.11	570.26	3607.77	1473.08	4944.17	16063.01
IX. Unspecified ⁷	344.03	3745.84	1288.72	4306.16	501.61	2247.94	1638.03	3808.13	17880.46
Total (V+VI+VII+VIII+IX)	2758.73	16004.88	8508.55	32069.82	8364.11	30801.35	9071	31597.66	139176.1

Source: own study, based on OECD, (2021). *Aid (ODA) by sector and donor [DAC5]: Open Data – Bilateral ODA by sector [DAC5]. Obtained on June 28 2021 from <https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?QueryId=42232&lang=en#>.*

⁶ The multisector supports projects that cover other sectors but are set on the environment, gender equality and urban and rural development

⁷ Unspecified is the aid that cannot be allocated to any other category in the table, to any project, commitments for its use are not sector specific, it includes NGO support and administrative costs

Table 5. Great Britain's multilateral development aid in 2011–2015⁸ (in USD million)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total 2011–2015	Percent of the total
Multilateral organizations	2138.457	2111.349	2811.196	2540.1	2686.414	12287.52	100%
The United Nations	188.317	98.7104	1564.26	1614.106	1658.714	5124.107	42%
EU institutions	3.67	22.71	32.661	27.457	83.227	169.725	1%
IMF	4.928	20.993	15.374	n.d.	36.872	78.167	1%
World Bank	810.612	874.382	1023.797	743.84	720.782	4173.413	34%
International Bank for Reconstruction and Development	809.405	794.342	947.177	729.071	650.641	3930.636	32%
International Finance Corporation		80.04	76.62	14.769	40.438	211.867	2%
Regional development banks	66.102	105.214	61.951	35.92	117.857	387.044	3%
Other multilateral institutions	64.829	100.944	113.152	118.777	68.962	466.664	4%

Source: own study based on OECD. (2021). *Members' total use of the multilateral system. Obtained on April 7 2021 from <https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=MULTISYSTEM>*.

⁸ Due to the updating of statistics in the OECD database, access to data for 2016–2019 is not possible

Access to detailed data on the structure of the use of individual forms, implemented projects and programs, and specific donor declarations regarding the adopted priorities turns out to be problematic. The OECD, as an institution administering development aid data, does not require presenting them in such a detailed manner, and the United Kingdom provides fairly general reports on its website. For these reasons, the further part of the chapter presents data on bilateral aid (with reference to the sectoral structure) and multilateral aid, taking into account the existing limitations.

Bilateral aid is aid provided by donors to recipient governments. This may be at the level of the government or special government agencies. Bilateral aid is the primary and basic form of providing development aid (Kopiński, 2011, p. 19). Examination of the structure of bilateral aid allows for checking whether sectors referring to the MDGs are actually those where the most funds go.

Over 20 years, the United Kingdom has allocated over USD 139 billion to bilateral aid. The largest share of this amount was allocated to social infrastructure and services (almost 41% of the total). Humanitarian aid accounted for 12%, debt relief for developing countries 7%, and the value of economic infrastructure amounted to 9%. Relatively the least was allocated to commodity aid (4%). The implementation of projects and programs in the field of social and economic infrastructure directly relates to the Millennium Development Goals implemented in 2000–2015. Unspecified expenditure accounted for 13% of all bilateral aid. Without the implementation of interdisciplinary projects, it is impossible to achieve economic and social development. Indefinite expenditure is more difficult to test in terms of efficiency of use, but necessary to improve the living conditions of the population of developing countries. The needs vary depending on the region where the UK directs its resources, but it is precisely thanks to a differentiated approach that it is able to influence the aspects requiring support in each of the places of assistance.

If the aid is delivered to the recipient country through an international organization, such aid is referred to as multilateral aid. It should be emphasized that the British are one of the few post-colonial donors

who support developing countries through international institutions⁹ to such a wide extent (1/3 of the total aid). Due to limitations in access to data, Table 5 presents partial results in the field of British multilateral aid.

In 2011–2015, over USD 12 billion was allocated to British multilateral aid. Most of this amount was distributed through the United Nations (42%) and the World Bank (34%). A clear priority within British funds is given to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which is responsible for 32% of aid funds (i.e. it has almost all British multilateral aid under the World Bank). Regional development banks, such as the African Development Bank, receive a total of 3% of multilateral funding. The EU institutions and the International Monetary Fund each distribute only one percent of UK multilateral aid.

The British also make extensive use of food and humanitarian aid. Both of these forms of aid are controversial because they make governments of developing countries dependent on foreign aid and, moreover, do not motivate to make changes in the state. Much of the aid goes to mitigating the effects of natural disasters, and not necessarily to prevention and early warning systems. While such distribution is questionable, in the face of tragedies such as the Syrian civil war and the Yemen famine, it is difficult to agree that other forms of development aid should be minimized.

To sum up, Great Britain, as one of the main donors of development aid, is an important player on the international stage. Its development commitments influence the shape of international development policy. It is worth noting that the amount of aid provided as well as the adopted geographic and sectoral structure are influenced by the current economic, political and social events. The British, historically speaking, engaged in helping their colonies and from the beginning of the 20th century they supported the countries included in the global South. Despite the decolonization process, relations with the former British colonies are still alive – both in terms of trade and aid. Many British colonies can be found among the largest recipients of British aid. It is worth noting

⁹ In the years 2000–2015, Great Britain supported 38 different international institutions through which it provided development aid (Rabczun, 2020, pp. 107–109).

that the United Kingdom uses a different strategy of selecting aid recipient countries depending on the geographic region where the funds are allocated. The sector strategy implemented in the years 2000–2015, expressed through the use of specific forms of aid, shows the significant commitment of Great Britain to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in developing countries. The budget for social infrastructure (which includes, among others, the education and health sectors) has dominated other areas. In terms of multilateral aid, there is a clear preference for the agencies of the United Nations and the World Bank. It is significant that even before Brexit, the British provided only 1% of their aid through the EU institutions.