

# **UK aid to agriculture in a time of climate change**

Approach paper

**February 2023**

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# 1. Rationale, purpose and scope

Since the year 2000 and until recently, metrics and indicators of global hunger showed consistent and dramatic improvements. Over the past few years, however, progress towards the Sustainable Development Goal of ending hunger (SDG2<sup>1</sup>) has slowed or even, according to some metrics, been set back. The Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2022 report notes that after two decades of global hunger reduction, progress has almost come to a halt. The World GHI score of 18.2 for 2022 was only a moderate improvement over the score of 19.1 for 2014.<sup>2</sup> Other sources estimate that in recent years progress has actually reversed, and that levels of hunger have been growing, with the global prevalence of undernourishment increasing in each year since 2017.<sup>3</sup> According to the UN's 2022 *State of food security and nutrition in the world* report, for example, over 900 million people may have experienced severe food insecurity in 2021,<sup>4</sup> compared to a figure of 815 million people reported in 2016.<sup>5</sup>

The COVID-19 pandemic, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, inflation, and the global economic slowdown have all affected food prices and the purchasing power of poor people. Despite this worrying trend, progress against some indicators of global hunger has been sustained. Global Health Observatory data, for example, indicate that the percentage of children under five years old with stunting has continued to fall, from 24.4% in 2015 to 22% in 2020.<sup>6</sup> These indicators – despite any inconsistencies between them – all show that global hunger remains widespread two decades into the 21st century.

Growth in global agricultural productivity – driven by investments in agricultural research, innovation, and technology – has been one factor enabling progress in recent decades towards eradicating hunger. However, climate change is affecting food security, as increased temperatures, reduced rainfall and more frequent extreme weather events reduce crop yields. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), effective adaptation measures are needed to ensure food security is not undermined by climate change.<sup>7</sup> Agriculture, including livestock, is also central to climate mitigation. It is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions,<sup>8</sup> yet has the potential to mitigate these emissions considerably and even contribute to the removal of carbon from the air by storing it in well-managed soils.<sup>9</sup>

ICAI undertook a review of the Department for International Development's (DFID) support to agricultural research in 2013, which focused on the UK's work to improve food security and tackle hunger in developing countries through its agricultural research programme. Almost a decade on, this review presents an opportunity to understand how approaches to agriculture in UK aid have evolved with the increased focus on climate change.

This review will cover all UK official development assistance (ODA) support to agriculture, excluding forestry and fisheries, between 2016 and 2021. This includes agricultural interventions and research managed by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and formerly DFID; agricultural research funded by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and managed by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI); at least one programme funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra); and agricultural investments from British Investment International (BII) (formerly CDC Group). UK ODA to support programmes related to trade and agriculture will also be in scope, although any initiatives covered by a forthcoming ICAI review on UK aid for trade<sup>10</sup> will not be included to avoid duplication of efforts. The review will include programmes delivered through a range of bilateral and multilateral channels,

1 Goal 2: Zero Hunger, Sustainable Development Goals, United Nations, 2022, [link](#).

2 *Global Hunger Index: Food systems transformation and local governance*, Welthungerhilfe and Concern Worldwide, 2022, p. 5, [link](#).

3 Prevalence of undernourishment (percent) annual value, FAOSTAT, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, 2022, [link](#).

4 *The state of food security and nutrition in the world 2022*, Food and Agriculture Organisation, International Fund for Agricultural Development, UNICEF, World Food Programme and World Health Organisation, 2022, p. 13, [link](#).

5 *The state of food security and nutrition in the world 2017*, Food and Agriculture Organisation, International Fund for Agricultural Development, UNICEF, World Food Programme and World Health Organisation, 2017, p. 2, [link](#).

6 Joint child malnutrition estimates, World Health Organisation Data, 2022, [link](#).

7 Chapter 5: 'Food security' in *Special report on climate change and land*, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2019, p. 439, [link](#).

8 *Climate change and land: An IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems*, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2019, [link](#).

9 'Tackling climate change' in *Agriculture and rural development*, European Commission, [link](#).

10 *UK aid for trade: Approach paper*, Independent Commission for Aid Impact, 2022, [link](#).

including bilateral funding delivered through multilateral organisations. On Tuesday 7 February, the prime minister announced changes to the structure of the UK government, including to BEIS and the Department for International Trade. These changes will be reflected in the final report once more information is available.<sup>11</sup>

The review will examine how the government's approach and programming have evolved and built on lessons learned. It will assess how well the UK has contributed to learning around agricultural climate adaptation and resilience in a rapidly evolving field, including building evidence on 'what works', identifying scalable solutions, working with ODA-recipient governments, and influencing international partners. Through country case studies and citizen engagement, the review will examine how UK aid to agriculture supports the poorest people, and how well it engages with those it seeks to help in the design of UK aid programmes.

The review is part of a series of climate-related ICAI reviews, including full reviews of *International Climate Finance: UK aid for low carbon development (2019)*<sup>12</sup> and *International climate finance: UK aid for halting deforestation and preventing irreversible biodiversity loss (2021)*,<sup>13</sup> and a rapid review of *UK aid's alignment with the Paris Agreement (2021)*.<sup>14</sup> It will also build on ICAI's *Assessing DFID's results in nutrition (2020)*<sup>15</sup> review and will aim to complement the International Development Committee's inquiries on *Global Britain in demand: UK climate action and international development around COP26*<sup>16</sup> and *Food insecurity*.<sup>17</sup>

## 2. Background

Sustainable Development Goal 2 focuses on ending hunger and contains a number of agriculture-focused targets. These include increasing agricultural production, particularly for small-scale farmers (Target 2.3), and ensuring sustainable food systems through climate adaptation and resilience (Target 2.4).

The UK has been a major funder of international climate action in the period under review. In 2019, the UK announced that it was committed to doubling its ODA funding commitments through International Climate Finance, to £11.6 billion between 2021 and 2026, compared with the previous five-year commitment of £5.8 billion.<sup>18</sup> During 2021, the UK took its *Transforming Agricultural Innovation for People, Nature and Climate* campaign to key events such as the January 2021 Climate Adaptation Summit<sup>19</sup> and the 48th intergovernmental Committee on Food Security.<sup>20</sup> This campaign led to the launch of the '#ClimateShot' initiative<sup>21</sup> – a global call for action to increase investment and boost innovation in agriculture and food systems – at the 26th Conference of the Parties<sup>22</sup> (COP26), hosted by the UK in Glasgow in November 2021. One of the key outcomes of the COP26 summit was to secure greater pledges on adaptation funding than had been agreed to previously, with the Glasgow climate pact calling on developed nations to at least double climate finance for adaptation by 2025.

By contrast, agriculture is a relatively small component of the UK's current ODA portfolio. This broadly reflects global trends, with funding for agriculture declining from 25% of the global aid budget during the 1980s to around 5% today.<sup>23</sup> However, the UK currently spends considerably less on agriculture than the global average. Of the top five donors in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC), the UK spends the least on agricultural ODA, in both relative and absolute

11 See, *PM: Making government deliver for the British people*, Prime Minister's Office, February 2023, [link](#).

12 *International Climate Finance: UK aid for low-carbon development*, Independent Commission for Aid Impact, 2019, [link](#).

13 *International climate finance: UK aid for halting deforestation and preventing irreversible biodiversity loss*, Independent Commission for Aid Impact, 2021, [link](#).

14 *UK aid's alignment with the Paris Agreement*, Independent Commission for Aid Impact, 2021, [link](#).

15 *Assessing DFID's results in nutrition*, Independent Commission for Aid Impact, 2020, [link](#).

16 *Global Britain in demand: UK climate action and international development around COP26*, Second report of session 2021-22, House of Commons International Development Committee, 19 October 2021, [link](#).

17 *Food insecurity*, Second report of session 2022-23, House of Commons International Development Committee, 28 June 2022, [link](#).

18 International Climate Finance refers to the UK's portfolio of investments designed to support the eradication of international poverty by helping developing countries manage risk and build resilience to the impacts of climate change.

19 The Climate Adaptation Summit was an online event hosted by the Netherlands government and the Global Center on Adaptation, aimed at convening global leaders to accelerate calls for action on climate change adaptation. See [link](#).

20 The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) is an intergovernmental platform for working to ensure food security and nutrition for all, supported by the UN's Food and Agricultural Organisation, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the World Food Programme and representatives of the CFS Advisory Group. See [link](#).

21 Action Agenda, Climate Shot, [link](#).

22 The Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is an annual meeting of countries that are signatories of the convention, to review progress and make decisions on climate action. See [link](#).

23 Aid (ODA) by sector and donor, OECD.Stat, 2022, [link](#).

terms.<sup>24</sup> Agriculture accounted for 1.4% of UK ODA between 2002 and 2011.<sup>25</sup> Renewed interest following the global food price crisis of 2007-08 saw funding steadily increase until it reached 3.9% of UK ODA in 2015, after which it fell steadily, reaching 2% in 2020.<sup>26</sup>

Despite its declining share of the UK aid programme, agriculture remains a sector of vital importance for many of the poorest developing countries and poorest people. Agriculture accounted for over a quarter of gross national income for the least developed countries (LDCs) in 2021<sup>27</sup> and represented over half of all total employment in LDCs in 2019.<sup>28</sup> A large proportion of employment in agriculture is informal in nature, and often carried out by women. Most farms are very small, with 475 million of the world's 570 million farms being less than two hectares in size.<sup>29</sup> While smallholder agriculture is often well adapted to local conditions, smallholders in LDCs often live in poverty without effective support systems, and hence may be less able to adapt to the negative effects of climate change.<sup>30</sup>

The UK government has committed itself to driving the sustainable use of natural resources, and to addressing agriculture through a lens of climate change action and biodiversity conservation. This includes promoting sustainable agriculture through trade, such as the UK's collaboration with the Tropical Forest Alliance on the Forest, Agriculture and Commodity Trade (FACT) Dialogue, as reflected in the 2021 *Integrated review of security, defence, development and foreign policy*,<sup>31</sup> and through UK centres of expertise referred to in the 2022 *Strategy for international development*.<sup>32</sup>

FCDO sets the strategic direction for much of the UK's approach to agricultural development and is responsible for the majority of UK ODA spending on agriculture. In 2015, DFID produced its *Conceptual framework on agriculture*,<sup>33</sup> which set out its long-term strategic direction for agriculture, just rural transitions, agribusiness and agricultural research. One of the core themes running through this framework is that long-term economic transformation will entail most rural poor people leaving farming to take up employment in other sectors. It recognised, however, that a large number of the poorest people in low-income countries are employed in agriculture, and that development in this sector is highly cost-effective. In the short term, this means that growth in the agricultural sector is likely to make a greater contribution to poverty reduction than investment in other sectors. While reliance on agriculture for mass employment is not the long-term goal, investing in agriculture while aligning with industrial strategy is a stepping stone towards rural transformation. Our review will include sub-themes on the UK's stated aim to direct agricultural ODA to help smallholders, typically subsistence farmers, to commercialise their output by facilitating access to new markets (smallholder commercialisation) and market systems development.<sup>34</sup>

Building on previous ICAI reviews, our review will also examine as a third sub-theme how agriculture programmes intend to improve the nutritional status of food consumers, for instance through interventions that include nutrition-sensitive agriculture. Climate-smart agriculture will be examined as a fourth sub-theme, and wider considerations of climate change will be mainstreamed across the whole of the review.

At present, agriculture policy and global programming in FCDO falls under the director-general of the Indo-Pacific region (the Food Security, Land and Agriculture team in the Economic Growth Department), while agricultural research falls under the director-general for Economics, Science and Technology. BEIS ODA spending on agricultural research during the review period was channelled through the department's Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF), managed by UKRI.<sup>35</sup> The majority of Defra spending on agricultural ODA falls

24 United Kingdom – Agriculture, Donor Tracker, 2022, [link](#).

25 Aid (ODA) by sector and donor, OECD.Stat, 2022, [link](#).

26 Aid (ODA) by sector and donor, OECD.Stat, 2022, [link](#).

27 Official triennial review dataset (2000-2021), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2022, [link](#) (note: this figure includes forestry and fisheries).

28 Employment in agriculture (% of total employment) (modelled International Labour Organisation estimate), World Bank Data, 2022, [link](#).

29 'What do we really know about the number and distribution of farms and family farms worldwide?' Background paper for *The state of food and agriculture 2014*, ESA working paper No. 14-02, Sarah K Lowder, Jakob Skoet and Saumya Singh, Food and Agriculture Organisation, 2014, [link](#).

30 *Present and future of work in the least developed countries*, International Labour Organisation, 2022, p. 126, [link](#).

31 *Global Britain in a competitive age: The integrated review of security, defence, development and foreign policy*, Cabinet Office, 2021, p. 90, [link](#).

32 *The UK government's strategy for international development*, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, 2022, p. 9, [link](#).

33 *DFID's conceptual framework on agriculture*, Department for International Development, 2015, [link](#).

34 *Economic development strategy: prosperity, poverty and meeting global challenges*, Department for International Development, 2017, p. 33, [link](#).

35 In 2022 it was announced that funding for the GCRF and the Newton Fund, which previously supported partnerships between researchers in the UK and lower-income countries, would not be continued. A new International Science Partnership Fund has been announced, which will include ODA funding. *New international research fund announced by UK government*, Institute of Development Studies, 14 December 2022, [link](#).

under its work on forestry and biodiversity, which will not be covered in this review, although we will review at least one Defra agriculture project.<sup>36</sup> BII investments in agriculture are mainly in Africa and South Asia, and are currently guided by BII's 2022-26 *Strategy and Investment policy*,<sup>37</sup> supplemented by other thematic sub-strategies including its 2020 *Food and agriculture sector strategy*.<sup>38</sup>

### 3. Review questions

This review will examine how well the UK is using ODA to support agriculture in a time of climate change, in particular for the poorest populations and those most at risk. The review questions are built around the evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence and effectiveness. Our review questions and sub-questions under each of these criteria are set out in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Our review questions

Review criteria and questions	Sub-questions
<b>Relevance:</b> Does the UK have a credible approach to supporting agriculture?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well does the UK aid approach to agriculture take into account the expected impacts of climate change?</li> <li>• How well does the UK aid approach to agriculture support inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction?</li> <li>• In a time of climate change, is the UK making relevant ODA investments in agricultural research?</li> </ul>
<b>Coherence:</b> Does the UK have a coherent approach to ODA-funded agriculture?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How coherent and coordinated are programmes across UK ODA spending departments and potential arm's-length bodies?</li> <li>• How well has the UK worked with and influenced partner countries and multilateral institutions on agriculture?</li> </ul>
<b>Effectiveness:</b> Is the UK's support for agriculture achieving its intended outcomes, on inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction, food and nutrition security and climate resilience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well have farmers, consumers, and people affected by agriculture programmes been engaged in the design of UK aid programmes?</li> <li>• How well are UK aid programmes helping to build sustainable agricultural practices which meet needs and respond to environmental concerns?</li> <li>• To what extent is learning and evidence from research programmes being taken up and utilised in-country?</li> </ul>

### 4. Methodology

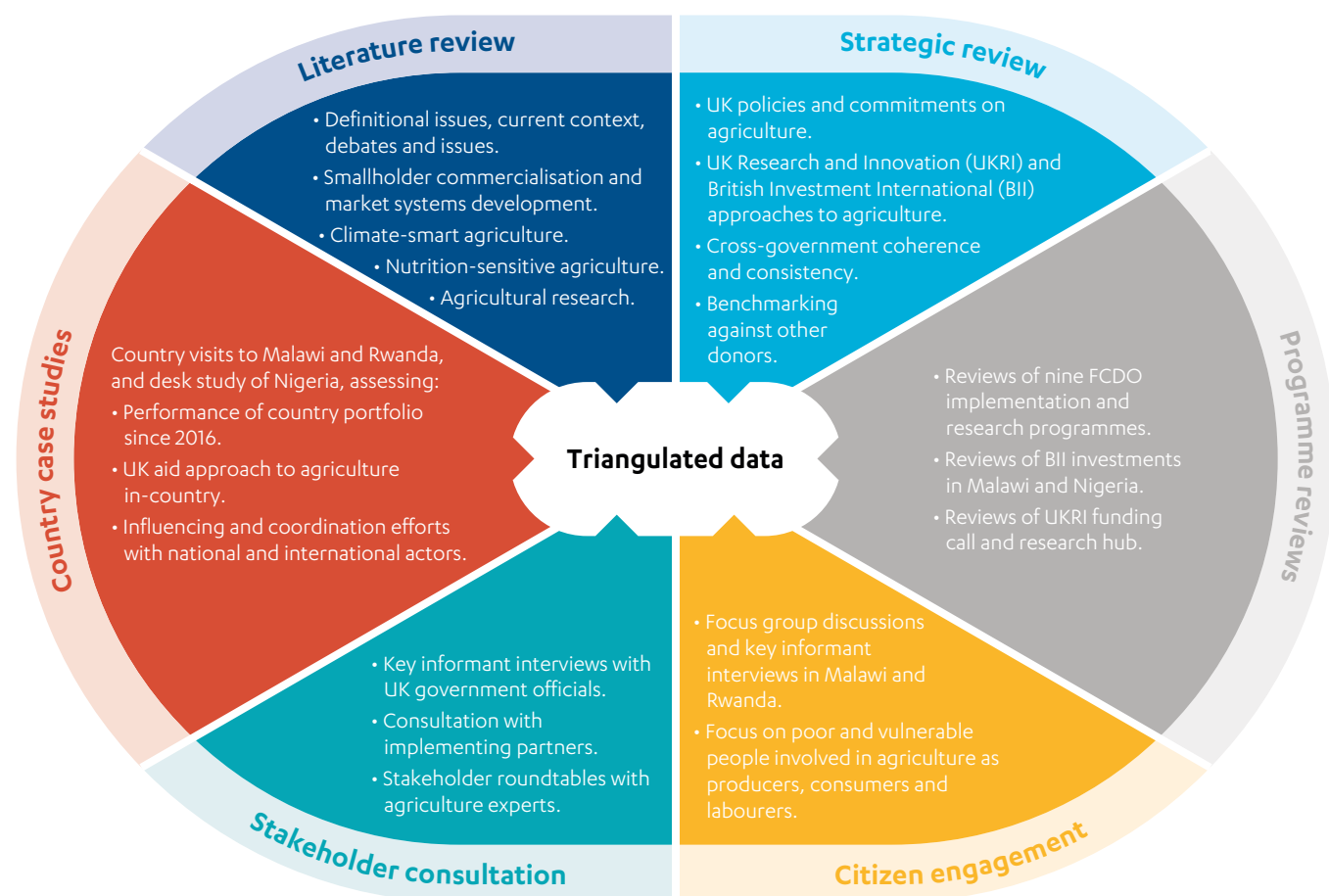
The methodology for this review will involve six main components to address our review questions and ensure a sufficient triangulation of the evidence (see **Figure 1**).

36 This spending has been covered in a previous ICAI review (see footnote 12), but where Defra agricultural ODA spend is not covered under our previous review it will be in scope here.

37 *Productive, sustainable and inclusive investment: 2022-26 technical strategy*, British Investment International, 2022, [link](#).

38 *Food and agriculture: Sector strategy*, CDC, 2020, [link](#).

Figure 1: Methodology



**Component 1 – literature review:** the literature review will provide an overview of the state of research and strength of evidence on the major topics of the review in order to point to good practice and ‘what works’ in agricultural development programmes. It will outline common concepts and agreed meanings related to agriculture, as well as summarising the main schools of thought on agricultural development. It will include sections on dominant approaches in agricultural interventions, including smallholder commercialisation and market systems development, climate-smart agriculture and nutrition-sensitive agriculture. It will also include an overview of evidence on the development impact of ODA-funded agricultural research.

**Component 2 – strategic review:** we will carry out desk-based mapping of the key UK strategies, policies, commitments and programme guidance concerning agriculture and development. This exercise will assess the strategic approach across all UK ODA spending, including UKRI/GCRF and BII. We will examine cross-government strategic coherence by looking at how approaches to agriculture interventions, research and investment are feeding into and learning from one another, and their strategic alignment. We will carry out benchmarking exercises to review the UK’s approach to agricultural interventions and research against other major international donors.

**Component 3 – programme reviews:** we will undertake desk reviews of a sample of nine FCDO programmes across its portfolio of agricultural interventions and agricultural research programmes. The sample of programmes has been selected to ensure appropriate coverage across the main themes, funding channels, country-led and centrally managed programmes, and programme size (see **Section 5** on sampling for more details). We will also conduct desk reviews of BII investments in agriculture by reviewing a selection of direct equity and intermediated investments in Malawi and Nigeria. BII’s single investment in Rwanda, from which it has now exited, will be covered only through informant interviews. We will also conduct desk reviews of UKRI’s portfolio of agricultural research through a sample of three GCRF Research Hubs (the South Asian Nitrogen Hub, the Poultry Hub and the Water Security Hub) and three GCRF grant awards made under the 2018



Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) call for proposals on *Agri-systems research to enhance livelihoods in developing countries*.

**Component 4 – stakeholder consultation:** we will undertake stakeholder consultations and interviews that will triangulate with all components of the review. We will interview current and former UK government officials working on agriculture programmes, independent contractors involved in delivery, multilateral counterparts, other donor countries, international and national non-governmental organisations, and academics and key experts in the area of agriculture for development. We plan to hold two stakeholder roundtables with independent experts; one on climate change and agriculture, the other on agricultural research.

**Component 5 – country case studies:** the review team conducted in-person visits to two case study countries, Malawi and Rwanda, and will undertake a desk study of Nigeria. These countries have been selected due to their importance in the portfolio and the spread and nature of programming in the three countries. Although all three are in the continent of Africa, they have different geographic characteristics and differ in terms of dominant forms of agricultural practices. Our case studies will involve high-level portfolio reviews of relevant spending in each country and the effectiveness of UK ODA interventions, an assessment of national partnerships and influencing efforts in the countries, and an examination of the relevance of UK approaches to needs and priorities in each country.

**Component 6 – citizen engagement:** ICAI is committed to incorporating the voice of people affected by UK aid into its reviews. Consultations with people affected in Malawi and Rwanda are undertaken by national research partners, supported by the core review team as well as citizen engagement experts to ensure that rigorous safeguarding and research protocols are followed. The research is qualitative in nature, and the evidence from the citizen engagement activities will contribute to informing our relevance and effectiveness review questions. We engaged with poor people who are involved in agriculture and are expected to have been directly affected by UK aid, including farmers, agricultural labourers, employees of micro and small enterprises, people involved in food processing and sales, and consumers. The citizen engagement is gender-sensitive<sup>39</sup> and will involve an exercise of reporting back to those consulted.

## 5. Sampling approach

The methodology involves two sampling components: a selection of programmes for desk review and a selection of case study countries.

Several criteria have been used to support the sampling of the portfolio of projects and programmes within this review – all of which are considered important factors in influencing the degree to which results claimed by departments have been met.

For the programme reviews, our sample was selected from 40 programmes that FCDO identified as part of its agriculture portfolio. We used purposive sampling based on five principal criteria (programme themes, responsible department or arm's-length body, funding channel, modality and programme size), as shown in **Table 2**. Eleven programmes were then selected as offering a representative sample across the principal criteria. These are listed in **Table 3**.

<sup>39</sup> A gender-sensitive approach understands and gives consideration to “socio-cultural norms and discriminations in order to acknowledge the different rights, roles & responsibilities of women and men in the community and the relationships between them” (UN-REDD glossary of terms, [link](#)). In the design of our citizen engagement this will entail following protocols as set out in the ICAI citizen engagement guidelines.

Table 2: Sampling criteria applied in this review

Principal criteria	Categories
Programme themes (review sub-themes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smallholder commercialisation</li> <li>• Market systems development</li> <li>• Climate-smart agriculture</li> <li>• Nutrition-sensitive agriculture</li> </ul>
Responsible department or arm's-length body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DFID/FCDO</li> <li>• BII (formerly CDC)</li> <li>• UKRI/GCRF (BEIS-funded)</li> </ul>
Funding channel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bilateral</li> <li>• Multi-bilateral</li> <li>• Multilateral</li> </ul>
Modality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centrally managed programming</li> <li>• Country-led programming</li> <li>• Grant awards</li> <li>• Direct equity investments</li> <li>• Intermediated investments</li> </ul>
Programme size*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small (£0-50 million)</li> <li>• Medium (£50-150 million)</li> <li>• Large (£150 million+)</li> </ul>

\*Note: the programme size criterion was only applied to sample FCDO implementation and research programmes as it would exclude the rest.

Table 3: Sample of programmes selected for desk review

Responsible department or arm's-length body	Programmes
FCDO intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support to the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme</li> <li>• Africa Division funding to the African Agricultural Development Company (AgDevCo)</li> <li>• Commercial Agriculture for Smallholders and Agribusiness</li> <li>• Programme of Support to Agriculture in Rwanda</li> </ul>
FCDO research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support to the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), 2017-22</li> <li>• Support to the International Agricultural Centres</li> <li>• AgResults: innovation in research and delivery</li> </ul>
BII	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct equity investments in Malawi</li> <li>• Intermediated investments in Nigeria</li> </ul>
UKRI/GCRF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sample of the three agriculture-relevant GCRF Research Hub grant awards</li> <li>• A sample of three GCRF grant awards under the 2018 BBSRC call for proposals on <i>Agri-systems research to enhance livelihoods in developing countries</i></li> </ul>

For our country case studies we had to balance purposive sampling criteria against practical considerations that would allow the review team to conduct country visits for the review. The countries were selected to ensure good coverage of the review’s sub-themes (smallholder commercialisation, market systems development, nutrition-sensitive agriculture, climate-smart agriculture) and the range and depth of programming under different departments and arm’s-length bodies in the global portfolio. We also considered the countries’ different geographic characteristics, dominant agricultural practices and developmental status.

A shortlist of five countries emerged with substantial spend and representation of the review’s sub-themes, but different profiles in terms of the programmes of departments and BII investments. After further analysis, Malawi and Rwanda stand out as complementary case studies for country visits that collectively offer a broad coverage of the global portfolio, with Nigeria selected as a desk-based study.

Table 4: Sample of case study countries

Country	Reason for selection
<b>Malawi</b>	Malawi has a diverse portfolio. FCDO-led work includes bilateral and multilateral support for both smallholder commercialisation and potentially ‘left-behind’ climate-vulnerable communities. There are also direct equity investments made by BII, and these allow examination of synergy with FCDO programming through the Africa Division funding to the African Agricultural Development Company (AgDevCo), and support to the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme (GAFSP) and Commercial Agriculture for Smallholders and Agribusiness (CASA) programmes. FCDO research engagement and eight substantial UKRI/GCRF grant awards working in Malawi allow analysis of how research has contributed evidence for use in-country.
<b>Rwanda</b>	Rwanda has a deep portfolio of FCDO-led programmes in the agriculture sector, particularly interventions in smallholder commercialisation and market systems development, and sector support to the Ministry of Agriculture. This includes both country-led and centrally managed programming through bilateral, multilateral and multi-bilateral channels. There is also a recently announced Defra collaboration with the UN and the University of Rwanda. This allows examination of relevance, coherence and effectiveness across a range of in-country and central programming, across two departments.
<b>Nigeria</b>	Nigeria has a wide range of FCDO country-led programming, which includes work on climate-smart agriculture and inclusive agricultural markets. It also includes a wide portfolio of BII investments and one UKRI/GCRF grant award. Nigeria offers a contrasting economic and physical geography to Malawi and Rwanda, and greater diversity of programming.

## 6. Limitations to the methodology

This review will inevitably be subject to a number of limitations. Some key aspects and how we have addressed them are summarised below.

**Scope of the review:** the review topic encompasses a potentially very broad range of themes, intervention types and approaches. Much spending which can be linked to agriculture is funding for ‘enabling factors’, such as infrastructure, private sector development and financial initiatives that indirectly impact on agriculture. For the purposes of our review, we have dealt with this by limiting the scope to only those interventions that are directly considered as agriculture, while being mindful of enabling factors and ensuring that a view of these is included where contextually relevant.

**Generalisability of programme reviews:** we have used purposive sampling throughout the review methodology in order to arrive at a sample that covers a range of UK programming, thematic areas and approaches. Some parts of the UK ODA for agriculture portfolio, notably agricultural investments through

BII and funding for research through UKRI/GCRF, are more difficult to sample from due to the number and diversity of projects. While ICAI acknowledges that the sample is not therefore fully representative, and some findings from our programme reviews may not be generalisable across the portfolio, the purpose of an ICAI review is not to review individual components but UK ODA to agriculture as a whole. All findings are derived from triangulation across the review, and evidence is not considered in isolation.

**Data quality:** our methodology depends primarily on data generated by programme monitoring and evaluation systems to assess effectiveness. Reported results will be triangulated through key informant interviews and citizen engagement, and we will conduct our own assessment of the credibility of the results data that have been generated. However, since our methodology depends on the data produced by programmes, we may not be able to reach firm conclusions on the programmes if these data are of poor quality or we judge them to be unreliable. If this were the case, we would have to highlight the lack of data in our findings.

**Data on impact:** interventions in agriculture are typically carried out over long periods. They are also characterised by long impact pathways between the time of the intervention and when positive or negative results are expected to occur. This is particularly the case with agricultural research. This can make it difficult to find clear evidence of the effects of a particular intervention on agricultural output or poverty reduction. Our review sub-questions have therefore been formulated in such a way as to be able to comment on best practice and early results. Key informant interviews and analyses of ‘what works’ allow us to make judgments on the likelihood of future impact.

## 7. Risk management

We have identified several risks associated with this review and developed a series of mitigating actions, where necessary, as presented below in **Table 5**.

Table 5: Risks and mitigations

Risk	Mitigation and management actions
Programmes that might include agriculture components may have been inadvertently omitted from our sample as they were not labelled as such in records.	We have made clear the purpose, scope and interest of our review to the UK government and will work with them to make sure our sample is representative of the breadth of UK aid interventions in agriculture. We are working closely with case study countries to ensure that relevant in-country programmes are not missed.
A fuel shortage in Malawi, ongoing COVID-19 restrictions and Ebola in East Africa may constrain the ability to reach some parts of Malawi and Rwanda.	The team continues to monitor the safety situation in both countries where we plan to conduct citizen engagement activities and will use appropriate safety measures during evidence collection. The context may change rapidly, requiring flexibility in the timing and location of citizen engagement and feedback activities.
Low capacity and changes to staffing in the UK government may make it more difficult to access key people, documents and institutional memory.	The review is conducted by an experienced team, which will minimise the burden on the UK government. The team is also looking to contact former UK government staff to access their insights and engage with topic experts to reduce the reliance on government stakeholders where required.

## 8. Quality assurance

The review will be carried out under the guidance of the ICAI chief commissioner, Tamsyn Barton, with support from the ICAI secretariat. Both the methodology and the final report will be peer-reviewed by Dr Steve Wiggins, an expert in agriculture and rural development.

## 9. Timing and deliverables

The review will be executed over a period of nine months, beginning in September 2022.

Table 6: Timing and deliverables

Key stages and deliverables	Provisional timetable
<b>Inception phase</b>	September – October 2022
<b>Design meeting</b>	October 2022
<b>Evidence gathering</b>	October 2022 – February 2023
<b>Emerging findings presentation</b>	February 2023
<b>Report drafting</b>	March – June 2023



This document can be downloaded from [www.icaI.independent.gov.uk](http://www.icaI.independent.gov.uk).

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