

**WRITTEN EVIDENCE SUBMITTED TO THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE:
INQUIRY ON UPDATING THE UK'S INTEGRATED REVIEW OF SECURITY,
DEFENCE, DEVELOPMENT AND FOREIGN POLICY**

BY THE CATHOLIC AGENCY FOR OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT (CAFOD)

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About CAFOD

1. CAFOD is the official aid agency for the Catholic Church in England and Wales; part of the global Caritas confederation of national organisations, each governed by their national Bishop's conference and linked to national Catholic commissions on health, education, peace and justice issues. CAFOD partners with diverse local NGOs, including both faith-based groups and others working on human rights and other issues regardless of religion or culture.

Changing context

2. The global situation has shifted since initial publication of the Integrated Review (IR). The war in Ukraine has highlighted the need for transformational change to the global food system. The impacts of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic had already revealed the fragility of the global food system, with rising food prices and the numbers of people facing hunger increasing. As global food and fertiliser prices continue to rise, and the Ukraine crisis leads to market volatility, the impacts will be felt most heavily in low-income countries, especially those reliant on food imports.
3. Furthermore, the world has seen the increasing frequency and intensity of climate induced disasters, such as the devastating impacts of flooding in Pakistan in September 2022. In East Africa, the region is facing its fifth consecutive failed rainy season and the worst drought for 40 years, resulting in over 50 million people at risk of acute food insecurity this year.¹
4. This submission will therefore focus on two transnational challenges that the UK Government has outlined in the IR, climate change and biodiversity loss, highlighting how the current global food system has exacerbated these challenges, and what the UK Government can do to build resilient food systems at home and abroad.
5. Ultimately, this submission is calling for greater investment into agroecological practices because building resilience both at home, and abroad, should be rooted in building local food systems and sustainable practices that benefit people, nature and climate.

Summary of recommendations

Include a Food Systems approach within the Integrated Review

¹ ICPAC, 2022. Available at: <https://www.icpac.net/news/in-eastern-africa-over-50-million-to-face-acute-food-insecurity-in-2022/>

6. Update the 'Building resilience at home and overseas' section in the IR to outline the hidden role of fossil fuels, particularly in the agriculture sector, and commit to supporting more sustainable local food systems as part of a wider energy transition strategy.
7. Include a commitment to scale up investment in an agroecological transition as a key strategy within the UK's priority in the IR to reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 and to invest in a nature positive economy.
8. Update the IR to reflect the importance of local communities in protecting nature and tackling climate change.

Supporting resilient local food systems

9. Review all international public support for agriculture within the next 12 months and repurpose finance away from chemical fertilisers towards resilient local food systems.
10. Include transformative agroecology programmes as a key part of international climate finance strategy and UK aid programmes, that focus on diverse nutritious crops, grown in harmony with the environment and resilient to climate change, support local markets and supply chains, and prioritise local communities and Indigenous Peoples.

Break fossil fuel dependency in the food system

11. The UK's commitment to moving away from the use of fossil fuels has been welcome. At COP27, the UK recommitted to the Glasgow Statement on International Public Support for the Clean Energy Transition, which committed to halting all financing for fossil fuel development overseas by the end of 2022 and diverting the spending to green energy².
12. However, it is vital that fossil fuel dependency is also broken in the global food system. The food system is responsible for a third of greenhouse gas emissions³ and is the primary driver of global biodiversity loss⁴. Intensified agriculture is reliant on fossil fuels and degrades soil and ecosystems by using petrochemical fertilisers and using unsustainable practices such as monocropping.
13. The war in Ukraine has affected food supply lines from Ukraine and Russia, which has plunged millions of people into food insecurity. In East Africa for example, 50 million people are at risk of acute food insecurity this year.⁵ Yet, proposed solutions to the current crisis, such as increasing supplies and the

² UNCCC, 2021. Statement On International Public Support For The Clean Energy Transition. Available at: <https://ukcop26.org/statement-on-international-public-support-for-the-clean-energy-transition/>

³ Crippa, M. et al, 2021. Food systems are responsible for a third of global anthropogenic GHG emissions. Available at: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s43016-021-00225-9>

⁴ Benton, T. G., et al, 2021. Food system impacts on biodiversity loss: Three levers for food system transformation in support of nature. Available at: https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/2021-02/2021-02-03-food-system-biodiversity-loss-benton-et-al_0.pdf

⁵ ICPAC, 2022. Available at: <https://www.icpac.net/news/in-eastern-africa-over-50-million-to-face-acute-food-insecurity-in-2022/>

use of chemical fertilisers and increasing global trade through lengthy supply chains, only increase the dependence of the food system on fossil fuels. These proposed solutions do not increase people's access to healthy and nutritious food due to low incomes and high prices⁶.

14. It is also people in lower- and middle-income countries that are paying for the environmental and climatic impacts of a fossil fuel-based food system through increased risk of extreme weather events, leading to, destruction of lands and livelihoods. According to the FAO, "between 2008 and 2018, the impacts of natural disasters cost the agricultural sectors of developing country economies over USD 108 billion in damaged or lost crop and livestock production. Such damage can be particularly detrimental to livelihoods of smallholder and subsistence farmers, pastoralists, and fishers."⁷
15. The UK Government's aim of achieving its commitments on net zero at home and overseas will be in jeopardy if fossil fuels continue to underpin our global food system. Therefore, the UK must widen its approach to tackling the use of fossil fuels globally, particularly in the agricultural sector.
16. As such, we recommend the Government updates the 'Building resilience at home and overseas' section in the IR to outline the hidden role of fossil fuels, particularly in the agriculture sector. This should include a commitment to review all its current agricultural projects and programmes over the next 12 months and repurpose finance away from chemical fertilisers towards sustainable local food systems.
17. We also recommend the UK Government works with its international partners to scrutinise their own public finances given the interconnectivity of the food system.

Case Study: CDC Group's agricultural-related investments

18. Analysis for a 2021 report by CAFOD and RSPB⁸ found that a number of CDC Group's (now BII) largest agriculture-related investments supported private companies. In some cases, investments in private companies were also supported by co-investments from the majority UK-funded Private Infrastructure Investment Group (PIDG). These investments to private companies now constitute the largest source of bilateral UK aid support for agriculture in several countries.
19. Analysis showed that from 2013-2019, UK aid-funded institutions invested at least £125.5m of UK aid in Indorama Eleme Fertiliser, a gas-based fertiliser producer based in Nigeria. In the same period, total reported bilateral UK aid

⁶ Oxfam, 2022. Fixing our food: Debunking 10 myths about the global food system and what drives hunger. Available at: <https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/621411/bp-food-systems-10-myths-080922-en.pdf;jsessionid=B62BBF27A823129D4001D1C50E99981B?sequence=1>

⁷ FAO, 2021. The impact of disasters and crises 2021 on agriculture and food security. Available at: <https://www.fao.org/3/cb3673en/cb3673en.pdf>

⁸ CAFOD and RSPB, 2021. Harnessing the potential of agriculture for people and nature: the role of UK aid. Available at: https://cafod.org.uk/content/download/56335/773972/version/2/file/CAFOD-RSPB_POLICY-BRIEF_AGRICULTURE-FOR-PEOPLE-AND-NATURE_MAY2021.pdf

to Nigeria for agriculture and rural development was just £26.3m. Figure 1 below shows that Indorama Eleme Fertiliser received nearly five times the total bilateral grant aid provided for agriculture and rural development in Nigeria.

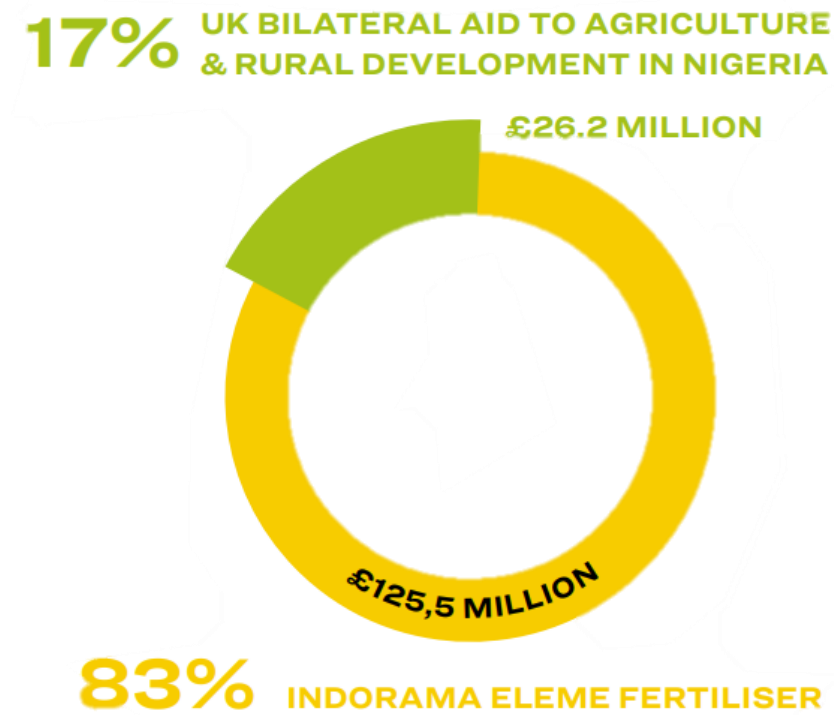


Figure 1: UK bilateral aid to agriculture and rural development in Nigeria and investments in Indorama Fertiliser (cumulative) (2013-2019). Source: CAFOD and RSPB report on Harnessing the potential of agriculture for people and nature: the role of UK aid. 2021

Scale up investment in agroecological solutions

20. As the UK Government tackles fossil fuel dependency in the food system, we also urge the UK Government to support a transition towards more sustainable practices of food production.
21. CAFOD and our partners support agroecological principles of food production as these practices work in harmony with the local environment and for the benefit of local people. Agroecological approaches that focus on diversifying crops, reintroducing indigenous species where these have been lost, reforesting and restoring land and marine areas not only help communities adapt through greater dietary diversity, greater crop diversity and therefore greater resilience to climate change, but they strengthen

biodiversity and soil quality, can increase carbon capture, and provide viable livelihood strategies.^{9 10}

22. Small-scale farms are also highly efficient, producing around 35% of global food production on 12% of the land.¹¹ They also usually produce a wider diversity of crops than larger (bigger than 2 hectares) farms, contributing both to environmental and nutritional diversity and resilience.
23. However, CAFOD and RSPB's report has shown that agroecology receives little support from governments and donors. In fact, just 4% of the UK aid budget goes to agriculture and less than 5% of that amount goes to agroecological approaches.¹²
24. Therefore, the UK Government must recognise the need to scale up investment in an agroecological transition as it is complimentary to the UK's priority in the IR to reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 and to invest in a nature positive economy. The UK can do this by shifting its own public finance towards agroecological approaches that focus on the production of diverse nutritious crops, grown in harmony with the environment and resilient to climate change, support local markets and supply chains, and secure land rights. It can do so by reviewing its current ODA and international climate finance (ICF) commitments, including the £3bn ICF earmarked for nature, to ensure that transformative agroecological programmes are prioritised.

Case Study: Agroecological smallholder farmers networks in Paraíba, Brazil

25. Paraíba is located in the semi-arid region of Brazil, which is subject to cyclical drought, soil degradation and seasonal pests - and is becoming increasingly affected by climate change.
26. CAFOD's partner, the Pastoral Land Commission of João Pessoa, has worked with smallholder farmers to build an economically viable and environmentally friendly farming network of farmer associations. This includes the adoption of agroecological practices, working together to strengthen the quality and quantity of produce, developing new markets, and lobbying local government for logistical and technical support.
27. Smallholder farmers avoid using chemical fertilisers, protect water sources, and restore natural vegetation around springs, while learning from neighbours. This has strengthened their adaptive capacity to apply locally

⁹ IPBES (2019): Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. E. S. Brondizio, J. Settele, S. Díaz, and H. T. Ngo (editors). IPBES secretariat, Bonn, Germany. Available at: [Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services | IPBES secretariat](#)

¹⁰ Pimbert, M. and Moeller, N. (2018). Absent agroecology aid: on UK agricultural development assistance since 2010. *Sustainability*. 2018, 10 (2). Available at: [Sustainability | Free Full-Text | Absent Agroecology Aid: On UK Agricultural Development Assistance Since 2010 \(mdpi.com\)](#)

¹¹ FAO, 2021. News release: Small family farmers produce a third of the world's food. Available at: <https://www.fao.org/family-farming/detail/en/c/1398060/>

¹² CAFOD and RSPB, 2021. Harnessing the potential of agriculture for people and nature: the role of UK aid. Available at: https://cafod.org.uk/content/download/56335/773972/version/2/file/CAFOD-RSPB_POLICY-BRIEF_AGRICULTURE-FOR-PEOPLE-AND-NATURE_MAY2021.pdf

relevant solutions to climate impacts. This support has transformed the quality and quantity of food production, improved food security and enabled farmers to double incomes in the last three years.

28. During the earlier stages of COVID-19, many markets in Paraíba and nearby towns were closed. As a result, tonnes of papaya, oranges, beans, sweet potato, cassava, corn, watermelon and bananas were in danger of rotting in the fields and gardens, with farmers facing ruin. However, through the local farmers association that had been established, farmers joined with local women's groups, church networks, unions and social movements to organise the distribution of fresh healthy produce for vulnerable families living on the *periferia* - on the edge of cities - and their neighbours in poorer rural communities. Farmers who might have gone under have been able to find a market for their produce, and their organisations and communities have emerged with greater resilience.

Prioritising local communities

29. Local communities, such as farmers, Indigenous Peoples, pastoralists and fisherfolk, are central to protecting nature and biodiversity. Local people have the context-specific knowledge and are often the best stewards for protecting the local environment. For example, indigenous territories hold about 80 percent of the world's biodiversity¹³ and smallholder producers produce around 60-80% of food worldwide¹⁴.

30. However, the potential of local communities to prevent climate change, biodiversity loss, and food insecurity was overlooked in the previous IR.

31. As noted above, agroecology is beneficial for people, nature and the climate. This is important as 80 percent of people living in extreme poverty live in rural areas, and the vast majority of these depend on agriculture for their livelihoods¹⁵. Furthermore, women produce more than half of all the food that is grown globally¹⁶. Yet, 2.5 billion people involved in smallholder farming are affected by land insecurity¹⁷, which disincentivises them from investing in long term sustainable food production and can drive local conflict. With secure land rights, people will be more encouraged to carry out sustainable farming practices which boost yields, produce healthy food and work in harmony with local nature.

32. While we welcome the UK Government's commitment to the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use (GLDFLU) at COP26, we would

¹³ FAO, 2017. News release: 6 ways indigenous peoples are helping the world achieve #ZeroHunger. Available at: <https://www.fao.org/zhc/detail-events/en/c/1028010/#:~:text=They%20conserve%20and%20restore%20forests%20and%20natural%20resources&text=Natural%20resources%20are%20considered%20shared,the%20impacts%20of%20climate%20change>

¹⁴ Kalibata, A. and Taylor, M., 2021. Opinion: Land rights for small producers: a critical solution to the world's food systems. Available at: <https://news.trust.org/item/20210714115228-ymwxo>

¹⁵ IFAD Webpage. Available at: <https://www.ifad.org/en/investing-in-rural-people>

¹⁶ FAO Webpage. Available at: <https://www.fao.org/3/x0262e/x0262e16.htm>

¹⁷ Kalibata, A. and Taylor, M., 2021. Opinion: Land rights for small producers: a critical solution to the world's food systems. Available at: <https://news.trust.org/item/20210714115228-ymwxo>

like to see concrete indicators for how progress should be measured on agricultural reform. In relation to securing land rights, CAFOD suggests there are indicators at the national level on¹⁸:

- a. Legal framework (including customary law) to guarantee women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control (SDG Indicator 5.a.2)
 - b. Number of communities that have secured their land rights within the past year, or started the process, and total percentage with secure land rights
 - c. Total number/ proportion of agricultural population with secure rights to agricultural land and share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land (SDG Indicator 5.a.1)
33. As such, CAFOD recommends that the UK Government updates the IR to reflect the importance of local communities in protecting nature and tackling climate change. The UK Government must deliver on its GLDFLU commitments, and in the long term, invest in spaces where the voices of local communities can be heard to better understand how donors can support a transition towards local food systems that are diverse in seed varieties, protect farmers' land rights and champion the autonomy of farmers to choose what they grow and what they want to sell to market.

¹⁸CAFOD and RSPB, 2022. How the UK Government can support transformational action in the global food system. Available at:

https://cafod.org.uk/content/download/59184/801647/version/2/file/CAFOD_RSPB_Policy%20Brief%20Food%20Systems%20May%202022.pdf