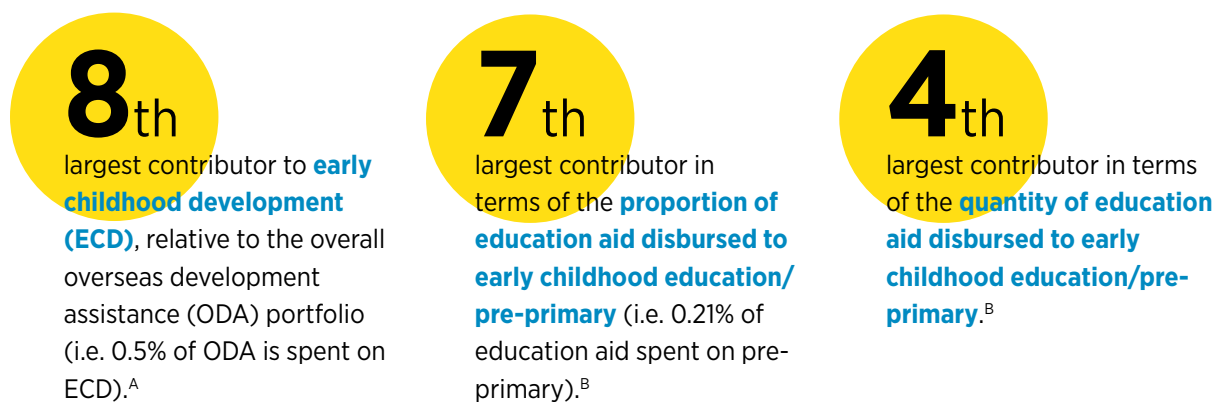


LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND

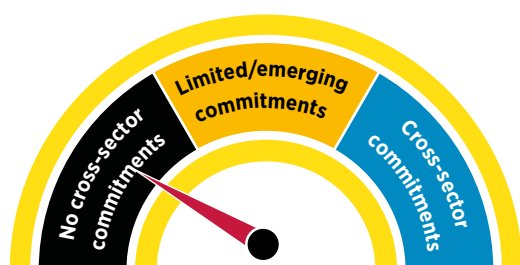
Invest in the early years

In 2018, Germany was the **second-largest donor country** to overseas development assistance, and is considered an important donor globally. The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) takes a **human rights-based approach to development**, and in its development policy¹ a **focus on ‘leaving no one behind’** is stated. In addition, Germany is **committed to strengthening ties with Africa**. During its G20 presidency, Germany spearheaded the Compact with Africa, as their work concentrates on Africa. **Basic, vocational training and higher education are focus points**, with particular emphasis on refugees, fragile and conflict-affected areas. **Teacher development is instrumental in their objective to improve quality and equitable access to education.**

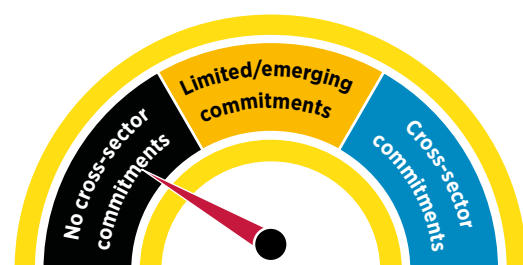
A review across 10 donors showed that in 2017 Germany was the:



Strategic commitment to early childhood development



Disability-inclusive early education investment commitments



^A The table looking at the comparative levels of spending on ECD for the donors in this report can be found in the corresponding global report.

^B In this report, two aspects were looked at in order to draw a comparison between the aid given to early education by various donors. Firstly, the total (quantitative amount) amount spent on aid to early education, and secondly, in an attempt to measure donor ‘effort’, the authors of the report compared the ratio of aid disbursed to the early education subsector to overall aid to the education sector. The comparative table can be found in the corresponding global report.

Integrated and inclusive early childhood development

Relative to its overall aid allocation, Germany spent less on early childhood development across the sectors of health, nutrition, education and sanitation, collectively, in comparison to many other major donors reviewed for this report. As such, Germany, ranked second last for its ‘effort’ in allocating aid disbursements to areas which support early childhood development. Moreover, a search conducted in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Creditor Reporting System (CRS) database, of current active aid projects, found no mention of early childhood development.

Germany had an overall focus on health: more than two-thirds of its aid allocation across the four domains analysed for this report was spent in the health sector (Figure 1). Very little of Germany’s aid spend had an explicit focus on early childhood development, for any of the sectors assessed, including in its priority sector of health.

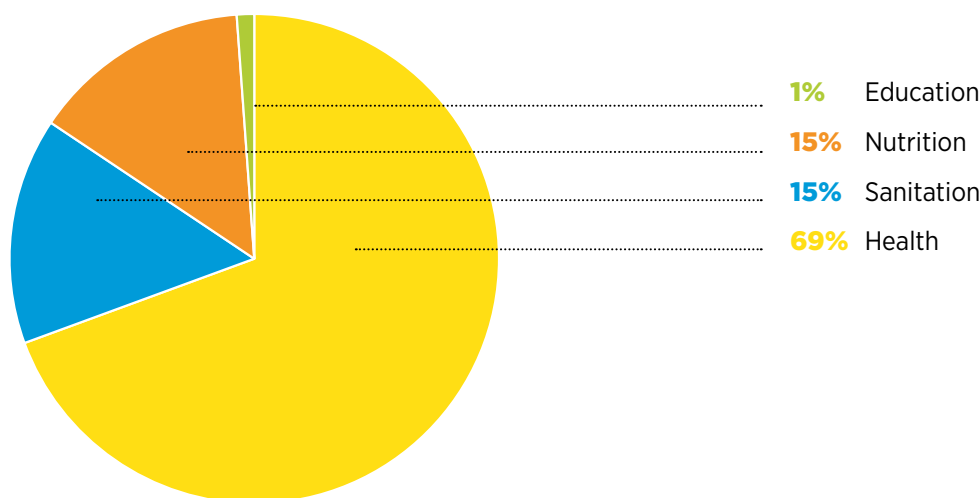
Moreover, none of the strategic documents or frameworks guiding Germany’s development policy or

its assistance programmes made any mention of early childhood development as a coherent cross-sector initiative. For instance, BMZ’s action plan for Germany’s development co-operation activities related to children – Agents of Change: Children and youth rights¹ – makes no mention of the very early years. This period of a child’s development is also not highlighted among its health and education commitments.

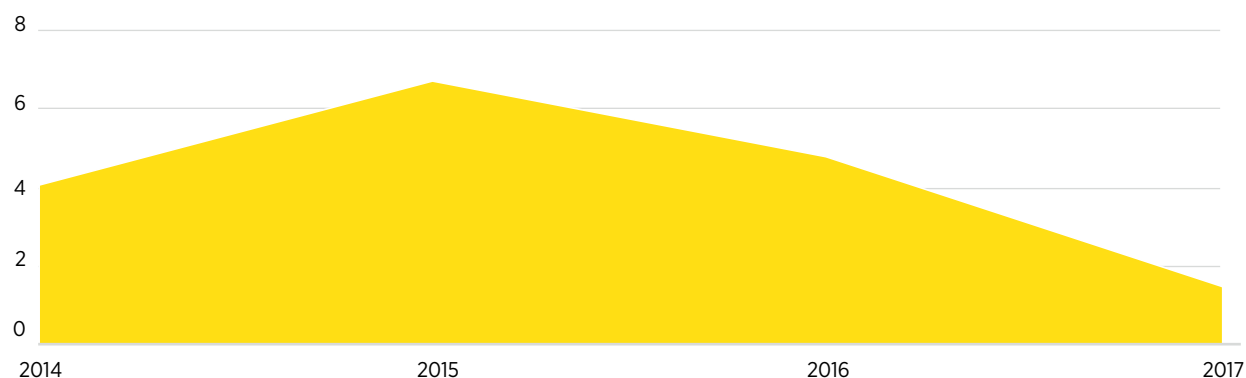
Supporting early education and pre-primary
Germany disbursed only 0.2% of education spending in 2017 on early education; in recent years this percentage has been declining dramatically, indicating that Germany is regressing in this area. Germany ranks in seventh position (out of nine donors) for its poor effort in distributing a portion of its aid earmarked for education to the early education subsector.

An examination of Germany’s early education ODA at the project level found that aid is often disbursed to very small-scale interventions spread across many countries, and that it lacked any strategic approach. Of the government’s interventions in 27 countries for the period 2012 to 2016, the exception was one multiyear project in Peru. This project received two-

FIGURE 1 Breakdown of early childhood development ODA across different ECD domains. 2017 constant US\$ disbursements, based on DAC figures



¹ The Peru project and the overall approach to working with NGOs appear to be substantiated with this note on approaches: <https://www.bmz.de/en/issues/Education/formaleGrundbildung/approaches/index.html>.

FIGURE 2 German disbursements to early education, 2013-2017 (disbursements, US\$ constant 2017)

Source: OECD Creditor Reporting System. Accessed May 2019

thirds (67%) of the overall German ODA spent on early childhood care and education (ECCE) between years 2012 and 2016, significantly raising the level of Germany's disbursements to early education for this four-year period. Since the project completed aid levels have again dropped off (Figure 2).^c

Of all the 2012 to 2016 projects analysed for this review, only one project based in Nicaragua – Basic life skills and pre-school education by inclusive approaches for disabled children and youth – was identified as overtly targeting children with a disability. This represents Germany's entire commitment to early childhood education for children with disabilities. The BMZ's 2015 Education Strategy, Creating equitable opportunities for quality education², prioritises basic, vocational, and higher education in fragile and conflict-affected situations. However, it does not make specific reference to the early developmental years; neither does it address the most marginalised children, such as those with disabilities.

Health, nutrition and sanitation

The German government identified health as a priority sector in its 2017–2021 Coalition Agreement.³ However, compared to other donors, far less emphasis was placed on child-related interventions in the sectors of health and nutrition. That said, in 2017 Germany was the third-largest donor in terms of their total contribution to the health and nutrition sectors. Nonetheless, because of Germany's low spending on early childhood development within the scope of their total ODA allocations, it is ranked eighth among donors assessed in this study.

In other words, less funding has been directed towards approaches that openly support early childhood development. A detailed examination of the current aid projects revealed that none of the projects recorded within "health spending" in the 2016 and 2017 datasets – consisting of more than 1,200 projects – contained any early childhood components.^d

^d A word search was conducted across all projects using the terms "early childhood development", "early childhood" and "ECD" – no results were returned.

Within the same data set, a search was also conducted for disability-inclusive child programming (i.e. not only focused on the early years).^E Only 11 countries or projects^F made any mention of addressing the health/nutrition needs of people with a disability, and only two of these targeted children (all age ranges). In other words, there were no overall early childhood outcomes identified in projects, nor spending more specifically aimed at supporting disability interventions.

^E The word search included “disability”, “disabled”, as well as programmes for early identification, such as “ECI”, “early childhood identification” and “assessment”.

^F Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Djibouti, Vietnam, Armenia, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Jordan. Of which two countries – Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka – had children explicitly named as a target population.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH REPORT AND DONOR PROFILES

Light for the World and their partners conducted a detailed analysis of the aid disbursements, which 10 donors have committed to support early childhood development. Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, UK and USA are the six bilateral donors reviewed for this report together with four multilateral donors namely, the European Union, World Bank, UNICEF and the Global Partnership for Education. Particular attention is paid in the research to donors’ commitments towards children who are vulnerable or at risk of being marginalised or delayed in learning due to a disability. For this reason, donors’ strategic frameworks were also analysed, in addition to their aid spend.

Light for the World and their partners have provided input to the donor profiles.

COMPENDIUM OF ADVOCACY TOOLS

This Donor Profile is one of 10 advocacy briefs for ODA advocacy. There are also four recipient country profiles for national advocacy, as well as a Global Report and a user-friendly checklist to support the design of inclusive ECD programmes which seek to support the most marginalised children.



A Methodology Note providing more information on the process of analysis along with all the tools may be accessed at: www.light-for-the-world.org/inclusive-eecd-investment

Conclusions

German development assistance appears to disregard the very early years. Even in the health and nutrition sectors where most donors have a focus on child and/or maternal health, there are a lack of programmes. The German government needs to make a greater effort to make early childhood development part of its strategic approaches. It would be a first step in the right direction to reflect this in the publication of its new global health strategy.

Moreover, Germany must increase financing for early education; given the size, far-reach and importance of German aid globally, and more specifically the education sector, a small allocation towards early education could make a huge difference to the aid available in many countries.

Recommendations

The German government should:

- Increase early education and pre-primary funding, aiming towards 10% of the total education aid sector budget in the longer term.
- Reflect a better focus on the early childhood years in all strategic frameworks, and particularly in the upcoming global health plan.
- Set time-bound targets to make all ODA projects, which potentially support ECD, disability-inclusive.
- Use pre-existing financing in health, WASH and nutrition to support pre-existing systems and platforms to embed a greater focus on the benefits of early childhood development.

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1. German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. *Development Policy as Future-Oriented Peace Policy*. BMZ; 2017.
2. German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. *BMZ Education Strategy: Creating Equitable opportunities for quality education*. BMZ; 2015.
3. Bundesregierung D. *Koalitionsvertrag zwischen CDU, CSU und SPD (Coalition contract between CDU, CSU and SPD)*. 2018.