

# CONCORD AidWatch Report 2024

## Call for consultant(s)

### April 2024

#### Background

CONCORD Europe, the European Confederation of NGOs working on sustainable development and international cooperation, is launching a call for external consultants to work on the 2024 AidWatch report. Each year since 2005, CONCORD publishes the annual AidWatch report on the quantity and quality of European Official Development Aid (ODA). The report is considered a major research and advocacy tool for CONCORD members as it helps to hold the EU institutions and national governments accountable towards the ODA commitments and the coherence of international cooperation.

The ODA modernisation process started by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) in 2012 has resulted in important changes in the way ODA is counted thus widening the net of what DAC members report as ODA. As a result, funds are increasingly being channeled away from genuine efforts to support partner countries. To capture these developments and understand if ODA still holds to its original definition and purpose, last year CONCORD carried out a methodological review to develop the 2023 AidWatch. This resulted in financial flows to meet four criteria i) they are flows to countries and territories on the OECD DAC list of ODA recipients or to multilateral development institutions ii) they are provided by official agencies iii) they are concessional in character and iv) their primary objective is “the promotion of economic development and welfare of partner countries”.

This new proposal also allows CONCORD to provide a single framework to assess ODA inflation by deducting flows not meeting these criteria from the total ODA reported amounts.

More results on the methodological review can be found in the [2023 AidWatch report](#).

#### Timeline

The work should be carried out between **mid-May 2023 and the end of August 2024**, when a final draft of the report should be presented. Consultants are expected to deliver a first draft by the end of June the latest. The 2024 AidWatch report should be launched in Brussels around mid-October.

## Job description

The main tasks of the work would consist in:

- Conducting desk research to strengthen the analyses on how ODA is/isn't contributing to the economic development and welfare objectives of partner countries and continue the methodological review carried out last year;
- Developing a concept note for the 2024 AidWatch report compiling ideas of data analysis to strengthen the point cited in the points below, among others;
- Organising focal group calls for quantitative and qualitative data collection from CONCORD's members and selected CSOs from partner countries to capture their thoughts on the coherence and impact of EU ODA at the country and community level;
- Developing, based on the outcomes of calls with members and the reflections included in the concept note and guidelines from CONCORD Secretariat, the structure of the 2024 AidWatch report;
- Conduct the data analysis for the 2024 AidWatch report based on the structure agreed and using the OECD DAC preliminary figures published in April 2024 as the main sources for data analysis;
- Developing a questionnaire for quantitative and qualitative data collection from CONCORD's National Platforms. This task will be done in consultation with CONCORD's Financing and Funding for Sustainable Development (FFSD) workstream, more precisely with the members of the FFSD policy group and the AidWatch National Platforms focal points;
- Designing the structure of the country pages and consolidating the drafting from National Platforms;
- Conducting consultations with CONCORD members on different aspects of the report when needed and under the guidance of the Secretariat;
- Developing a first draft of the 2024 AidWatch report by the end of June 2024 the latest;
- Integrate CONCORD Secretariat, members and partners' feedback to develop a final draft of the 2024 AidWatch report by the end of August 2024.

Please note that due to the nature of this task, **we strongly suggest the involvement of a team of consultants. We recommend a minimum of two consultants**, with one focusing on the data analysis and crunching, while the other can help improve the report's storytelling with the main goal of making the report easier to read and more accessible to those unfamiliar with the technical aspects of ODA trends and operations.

**Applicants are nevertheless invited to submit only one profile** if they think it would be enough to cover the expectations for the report or **would be happy to be teamed up with another consultant**.

## 2024 AidWatch report

### Background

As a CONCORD flagship report, AidWatch has monitored the quantity and quality of the EU and its Member States ODA annually since 2005. In this sense and like in previous years, the 2024 report will analyse the ODA levels of EU Member States and the EU in 2023. The report will go beyond the quantitative analyses and assess the quality of ODA from a Civil Society Organisation (CSO) perspective. Indeed, according to the messages under the new AidWatch communication and advocacy strategy developed in 2023: ODA is one of the most powerful tools for enabling both governments and civil society to support those left furthest behind. However, it's not just the quantity of ODA but its quality that will ensure this and EU Member States must ensure that ODA is channeled to address the root causes of inequalities.

The 2023 AidWatch can be considered a turning point compared to previous editions as it moves away from the *4Es approach* (enough, employed correctly, effective and equality-focused ODA). It also builds its analysis on a renewed methodology but several aspects would need to be further developed to strengthen the analyses of how ODA is/isn't contributing to the economic welfare and development of partner countries and meeting or not meeting the needs at the country and community level.

Analysis of inflated ODA figures will continue to be a core part of the report as CSOs and CONCORD members consider it a crucial area for more pressure and advocacy towards EU Member States to revert the effects created by the DAC modernisation process.

The 2024 AidWatch also represents an opportunity to frame the analyses on EU Member States trends to finance international cooperation and CSOs action in partner countries under the broader context of the ongoing Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) negotiations for the 2027 budget cycle. To stimulate and support discussions with relevant EU Member States and EU Institutions on funding to and through CSOs, CONCORD published last October 2023 the study [Who holds the Lion's share? A closer look at Global Europe funds for CSOs.](#)

Echoing the so-called "*geographisation*" of the current EU Commission and DG INTPA, the 2024 AidWatch report should explore if ODA allocations from EU Member States are holding to this *geographisation* or are falling short in addressing urgent challenges in a geopolitical context characterised by increasing inequalities, more conflicts and record-high levels of debt repayment from countries ranking at the bottom of the Human Development Index (HDI).

In line with the new CONCORD's internal strategy for 2023-2026, the 2024 AidWatch will continue to reflect on and challenge the practices but also the narrative used around ODA. The 2024 AidWatch should continue to be a useful tool to defend more policy coherence for sustainable development and equality in international cooperation.

## Objectives

The AidWatch report is both an accountability and an advocacy tool. The report aims to keep the EU institutions and national governments accountable for their ODA commitments - both in terms of quantity and quality.

From an advocacy perspective, the AidWatch analysis and messages aim to influence international cooperation policy at the EU and Member State levels. The report will be released by mid-October, this timeline will allow national platforms to carry out an informed and effective advocacy vis-à-vis their governments to influence the negotiations on national budgets. At the EU level, the report represents an important contribution to shed light on the use of ODA by EU Member States, linking it with the MFF negotiation and with the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument -Global Europe (NDICI – GE) implementation.

The 2024 AidWatch will be launched in a new political cycle for the EU, which means its findings and analyses will be crucial to advocate for more and better ODA during the first year of freshly renewed EU Institutions. In this context, it is crucial to deliver an AidWatch report with strong political messages.

## Format

We aim to keep the report brief and sharp. Unlike past editions, CONCORD would like to structure the report around key messages, improving its narrative storytelling.

The report will continue to include the individual country pages (which will be prepared by the National Platforms). The AidWatch consultant will review all country pages and add more references to the country pages as part of the introductory messages, with timely and relevant links between trends at the EU and Member States levels.

## Methodology

To give a more accurate picture of donors' efforts to reduce poverty and inequalities, the AidWatch methodology discounts the following items from net ODA flows:

- In-donor refugee costs;
- Imputed student costs;
- Grant equivalent from ODA to loans – also known as excess ODA reported from loans;
- Debt relief;
- Private sector instruments (PSIs). PSIs are a key aspect that will need to be revisited in the 2024 AidWatch edition. In 2023 we partially included some preliminary analysis treating PSIs as inflated ODA given that by the time the report was published discussions to reach an agreement on PSI were ongoing at the DAC. With the new rules approved in autumn 2023, we expect the consultants to update the methodology to calculate PSIs to cover more quantitative and qualitative analysis on PSIs in the 2024 edition.

Please refer to the [2024 AidWatch methodology](#) for details on the financial flows to discount.

A non-exhaustive list of additional aspects that could still be integrated to strengthen the narrative and key messages of the report can be found below:

- The analysis of debt servicing by partner countries;
- The analysis of unpaid ODA since it was first promised by the EU in 2005;
- Analysis of illicit financial flows versus ODA allocations;
- Further analysis of ODA for peace, security and migration;
- Analysis of how and if ODA contributes to reducing inequalities (I-marker and ODA allocations, HDI with inequalities component...);

## Candidate profile

Successful candidates for this offer will respond as much as possible to the following profile:

### Essential:

- Experience in quantitative and qualitative data analysis (including the use of OECD databases preferably).
- Excellent English writing and editing skills; ability to write about complex issues engagingly.
- Excellent knowledge of EU Development Cooperation issues.
- Very good understanding and knowledge of the aid/development effectiveness agenda.
- Experience in coordinating and managing networks or multiple stakeholders would be an advantage.

### Desirable:

- Experience of working in an NGO environment, with complex multicultural networks and under pressure.
- Some experience in communication, with a specific focus on challenging ODA narratives and practice.

## Application process

If you are interested, please upload as one document the following information, in the portal below:

- Your CV outlining your relevant expertise to meet this assignment (1 page max);
- Your proposal on how you will undertake this research, including a suggested number of days and their distribution between the different tasks and phases of the work and your day rate (2 pages max).

**The closing date for applications is 8 May at midnight. Note that proposals will be evaluated on a rolling basis and interviews might be arranged before the deadline. We therefore encourage applicants to send their proposals as soon as possible.**

For any additional information, don't hesitate to contact Lur at his email address [lur.fernandez-salinas@concordeurope.org](mailto:lur.fernandez-salinas@concordeurope.org) before the deadline.

