



World Vision

Ireland

Pre-Budget Submission 2025

Introduction

The world is not acting quickly enough to save millions of children who are on the brink of starvation. The largest global hunger crisis of modern history is unfolding before our eyes, with over 25 million children currently at risk of starvation and 149 million stunted due to the lack of nutritious food.

Child hunger and malnutrition are universal and unacceptable. A life of plenty for every child is possible, yet every day more children go hungry. ENOUGH of the right food and nutrition is still not reaching the children who need it. Every child deserves the food they need to develop a healthy body and mind and every family deserves to be able to put ENOUGH of the right food on the table.

Hunger and malnutrition place a question mark on children's right to life. They rob girls and boys of their potential and condemn them to a lifetime of poor health, the inability to get educated and increased exposure to violence – it is an intergenerational crisis.

As climate change, conflict and inflation continue to increase, so too does the humanitarian need. These compounding factors have resulted in the largest global hunger crisis in modern history and are having devastating impacts on children's health around the world. There has been a systemic failure and it requires systemic solutions. Success will mean feeding the hungry today and avoiding relapses of child hunger and malnutrition crises in the future.

World Vision Ireland's has been responding to the needs of vulnerable children in the world's most fragile contexts for over 40 years, working together and alongside local communities to deliver life-saving assistance, to build resilience in communities and to transform livelihoods. Alongside our partners, we tackle poverty at its roots, with an integrated approach that includes ensuring children are educated, healthy and well nourished, protected and empowered, and live in resilient and prosperous communities.

But now, despite decades of gradual development, international agreements, legally binding obligations and trillions invested, we are losing ground. The world is facing a triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss, a rise in conflict, a rise in inflation, a decline in multilateralism and a rise in authoritarianism. All of these factors are having a devastating impact on the most vulnerable.

World Vision Ireland's recommendations to the Irish Government for Budget 2025 are:

World Vision Ireland Recommendations:

- 1) Commit to achieving 0.7% of GNI on overseas ODA by 2030 with **€292m in Budget 2025**, which is distinct from in county costs, and publish a pathway to achieving 0.7%.
- 2) A minimum of a **10% increase in child-related ODA** investment which has the potential to double the impact of current funding. More funding is essential to adequately address the threats children face and ensure long-term sustainable solutions

As we prioritise leaving no one behind, it is essential that we see children as among those most likely to be left behind. We urge the Irish Government to prioritise **child-focused investment** and use a child lens across the entire Budget 2025.

- 3) To meet the largest global hunger crisis of modern history and counteract the devastating fall in global funding for humanitarian emergencies and development programmes, we must prioritise **nutrition focused funding**.

At the same time, **integrating child nutrition sensitive approaches** in policies, funding and regulations affecting all hunger and nutrition related goods, programmes and services to ensure that our funding is as effective and efficient as possible.

- 4) Prioritise the implementation of the **COP 28 Emirates Declaration** on Resilient Food Systems, Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Action and call for the provision of additional climate finance to enable developing countries to implement their nationally determined contributions and build resilience.
- 5) Dramatically increase the spending commitment to our **climate finance goals to €500 million** per year which is essential if we are to deliver our fair share of our global target.



FUNDING CRISIS

In 2024, over 300 million people need humanitarian assistance and protection from conflict, the impacts of climate change, collapsing economies and extreme poverty. The UN has called for \$48.65bn to assist 187.8 million people in 71 countries around the world. To date, they have confirmed €7.85, a 20% decrease from 2023 and a gap of \$40.8 billion in essential and lifesaving funding.

This gap in humanitarian funding results in UN Agencies, NGOs, community leaders, local partners, mothers and fathers having to make devastating decisions on who receives help and who does not. In a world of increasing conflict, inflation and extreme weather events, organisations are forced to prioritise needs and assess who is suffering the most. The humanitarian system is stretched to its absolute limits and there is no end in sight.

As always, this disproportionately impacts the most vulnerable, and has a debilitating impact on the lives of children. According to UNICEF, almost 1 billion children around the world are multidimensionally poor, which means they lack basic necessities such as nutrition, clean water housing and education. These children often live in catastrophic situations and in relationships characterised by violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation, exclusion and discrimination.

New research by World Vision shows that that every \$1 invested in child-related Official Development Assistance (ODA) yields a staggering \$10 return. Despite this, currently only 5% of development aid directly targets children, and only 7% is spent on programmes that benefit children, despite them constituting 46% of aid-receiving populations. Ireland is well ahead of the average with 32.6% of ODA falling into the Child-focused (17.5%) or Child-related (15.1%) categories. **We recommend that Budget 2025 urgently delivers a 10% increase in development spending targeted to children.**

As the funding gaps continues to grow, we have always welcomed the leadership role Ireland plays and its ongoing support to the world's most fragile contexts with timely, flexible, predictable and multi-year funding for chronic and acute crises. Ireland is in a small group of outliers that continues to increase its ODA commitments and plays a vital role in stemming the financial tide. **We would urge Ireland to recommit to achieving 0.7% of GNI on overseas ODA by 2030 with €292m in Budget 2025**, which is distinct from in county costs, and publish a pathway to achieving 0.7%



HUNGER AND NUTRITION

The triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss, the rapid increase in conflict, rising inflation and an increase in extreme poverty are all compounding factors in the largest hunger crisis we have seen in generations. There is now demonstrable evidence that the world is moving away from the Sustainable Development Goal of ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms by 2030.

Over 25 million children are currently at risk of starvation and 149 million stunted due to the lack of nutritious food. Hunger and malnutrition place a question mark on children's right to life, it condemns them to a lifetime of poor health, the inability to get educated and increased exposure to violence – it is an intergenerational crisis.

We know that there is ENOUGH in this world for every child, no matter where they

live or the crises they face, to have the nourishing food they need to thrive and for families to be more resilient. However, the current food distribution practices are an inefficient and harmful means of providing sufficient nutritious food to people across the world. Most food systems globally are broken and fail to deliver for people and the planet.

To create a fair and just food system that delivers on the SDGs and delivers for the most vulnerable, it is essential that changes are made to food systems in the Global North and Global South alike. **We ask the Government to prioritise the implementation of the COP 28 Emirates Declaration on Resilient Food Systems, Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Action** both domestically and internationally and show leadership on addressing the specific needs of the most-affected groups, which includes smallholder farmers, indigenous peoples and local communities. This will have a profound impact on helping these groups mitigate against and adapt to climate change by introducing climate sensitive strategies and technologies.

At World Vision Ireland, two of our key aims are: for children to be better fed, nourished and resilient; and to have hungry and malnourished girls and boys to be more visible, heard and prioritised in policy and funding. We work closely with all stakeholders and **urge the Government to ensure child nutrition sensitive approaches are embedded in policies, funding and regulations affecting all hunger and nutrition related goods, programmes and services to begin to stem the series of crises.**



CLIMATE JUSTICE

World Vision Ireland's priority is the lives and wellbeing of children. We know that children pay a disproportionately high price towards a climate change they have contributed the least to. It threatens their right to food, their right to education, their right to good health and, all too often, their right to life. The climate crisis is the greatest challenge we face as a sector and the greatest challenge we face globally.

We know the dire consequences of inaction. Too many of the key climate indicators in the SDGs are in reverse and despite decades of international agreements, we are no closer to a global consensus on how to tackle climate change.

Climate change is having an acute impact on the lives on millions around the world, many of whom are already living in extreme conditions. Changes to the climate are forcing them to abandon ways of life which have lasted for generations, increasing displacement and migration and driving people towards cities. Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States account for less than 4% and 1% of global greenhouse emissions, respectively, yet they are home to some of the world's most climate-vulnerable populations and ecosystems.

It is essential we continue to advocate for those who are impacted most by climate change: the marginalised; the disenfranchised; the displaced; and the isolated. Climate Justice is essential if we are to leave no one behind and to create a better, more sustainable future.

We join the call for Ireland to raise its climate ambition both domestically and internationally and **delivery on its fair share of €500 million per annum under existing international climate finance commitments.** Alongside this, we ask that this funding reaches those who are most affected by the climate crisis.

CONCLUSION

The world is drifting perilously close to the precipice. Continue along our current course, move past the Paris Agreement to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels, allow hunger to spiral out of control and the triple planetary crisis to destroy our ecosystems. Or make tangible strides towards implementing all of the commitments governments around the world have already pledged to. While one is the easy option, there is only one answer.

There is an estimated 1 billion children who can be considered multidimensionally poor. As the current and future of this planet, they must be protected and empowered. At World Vision Ireland, we see children as agents of change and their unique contributions can play a transformative role in how we envision policies and outcomes. **We ask that the Government enable and facilitate child participation in relevant decisions on hunger, nutrition and climate policy processes at all levels.**

In many ways, Ireland is seen as an outlier and a champion of humanitarianism and leads the way in best practice. The Government's multi annual, flexible funding model is an aspiration for countries and NGOs around the world. However, with that leadership role comes a responsibility to continue to push others and lead from the front.

As the challenges of hunger, climate change, child poverty and conflict continue, we urge Ireland to recommit to achieving **0.7% ODA** by 2030 with **€292m in Budget 2025**. As these challenges and political pressures mount, it is more important than ever to continue to provide principle, quality and effective ODA to the most vulnerable around the world.

