



ODA Disruption – This Requires a Collective Response and Action

Introduction

The landscape of Official Development Assistance (ODA) is undergoing significant disruption. On January 24, 2025, Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced a 90-day halt on most foreign aid grants from the United States, which remains the largest global funder of ODA. This action, alongside a marked decline in ODA contributions by major donor countries like Sweden, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and the Netherlands, threatens people and critical health programs, education initiatives, and environmental efforts.

Just to put in perspective, the UK's decline in health programs alone meant 180,000 deaths per year as outlined by the [Center for Global Development](#). Imagine the combined decline in funding.

To understand the context, significance, and challenges of ODA, [read this analysis](#), outlining ODA's role in global cross border funding, its economic implications, and the challenges posed by these funding cuts.

What can we do?

The path forward calls for three pivotal strategies:

- Don't remain silent and advocate governments
 - Embrace localized fundraising and demand enabling environments to decolonize and diversify aid systems
 - Philanthropists around the world, this is your time to step up
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- I. **Advocating Governments:** Governments must prioritise international aid as ODA contributions continue to decline, with many countries failing to meet the UN's 0.7% GNI target.
 - The Power of collective advocacy: Collective action can drive change [Erica Chenoweth's 3.5% rule](#) shows how a united front can shape policy and societal norms. Civil society must amplify its voice to protect ODA commitments.
 - Taxation over aid cuts: Governments have untapped resources in combating tax evasion and broadening tax bases. These revenue streams could secure vital ODA funds with the right political will. ([see Oxfam's inequality report 2025](#))
 - ODA as an investment: ODA is not just a moral duty but a pragmatic one. Neglecting it risks instability, migration crises, and long-term economic stagnation.
 - II. **Localised and Diversified Fundraising:** Local and diversified fundraising reduces dependency and fosters dignity and empowerment.
 - [Income diversity](#) and risk mitigation: Diversifying income sources from individuals, communities, and private sectors to foundations and trusts, creates resilience and reduces reliance on large donors.



- [Shifting the power through decolonisation](#): Decolonising aid empowers communities to prioritise and control resources rather than centralising decisions in donor capitals.
- **Building constituencies**: Local fundraising is about more than money; it's about building support networks and engaging local people and organizations to create a sustainable income base.
- **Creating enabling environments**: Supportive ecosystems with incentivising laws, capacity-building infrastructure, and technological access are essential for sustainable local fundraising.

III. Foundations and Trusts: Foundations and trusts must fill funding gaps and invest in the future of civil society.

- **Invest in fundraising**: To ensure the survival of civil society organisations, foundations must strengthen fundraising capacity, even using reserves and endowments to create a multiplier effect.
- **Lead by example**: By committing to bold investments, foundations signal collective responsibility and inspire systemic change across the sector.

At Resource Alliance

1. **Join the debate to shape the global response**: The crisis demands urgent dialogue and collaboration. Engage in real time discussions on ODA's future with global changemakers on strategies, advocacy, and solutions. [Join the conversation now.](#)
2. **Access practical resources**: Learn how to drive funding independence in the Content Centre of the Global Community Platform. [Browse resources for strategies on localised giving that work.](#)
3. **Connect & collaborate**: The power of collective action starts with relationships. Join the Resource Alliance Global Community to network, share insights, and co-create solutions. Sign up for free: <https://community.resource-alliance.org/signup>

The moment for action is now. Do share, do act, do lead!