



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office

**The Rt Hon. Baroness Chapman of
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Sarah Champion MP
Chair, International Development Committee
House of Commons
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28 January 2026

Dear Sarah,

Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI)

Thank you for your letter of 23 January 2026 following my appearance before your Committee on 20 January.

I recognise the importance of the independent scrutiny of our ODA spend. As I said before your Committee, I value ICAI's reports. We take their reports seriously, formally respond to their recommendations, and adapt in response to them.

However, we are operating in a very different context than in 2020, the year in which the FCDO review quoted in your letter was published. We are significantly changing our approach to international development, whilst navigating the reduction to 0.3% of GNI on ODA. In the context of a significant strategic prioritisation exercise, I am considering the benefits of continuing to fund ICAI against other possible uses of FCDO ODA, while continuing to meet our statutory obligations on the independent evaluation of our ODA spend. I have to ask what the best use of our funding is and what provides greatest value for money for taxpayers in delivering support that alleviates poverty and stabilises countries. This is the responsible approach. As I said to the Committee, I have not made a final decision.

In response to your questions, we are working through detailed decisions on how the ODA budget will be used from 2026/27 to 2028/29, informed by internal and external consultation and impact assessments. Funding decisions relating to ICAI are part of this process. We plan to publish indicative allocations in the coming months.

The FCDO Director General sponsor for ICAI remains unchanged. The current sponsor is Melinda Bohannon, Director General for Global Issues. Melinda met with Jillian Popkins, ICAI's Chief Commissioner, on Friday 23 January.

ICAI fed into the Spending Review process, responding to a commission asking them to model various funding scenarios. I am happy to meet with ICAI, as I expressed to ICAI's Chief Commissioner in my recent (22 January) letter to them, and to receive any information or views from ICAI in relation to their future funding or remit.

I am committed to keeping the Committee updated and welcome any thoughts you have on how we continue to best meet our scrutiny obligations in this changed global context. My office is open to any meeting requests the Committee or ICAI may have.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Baroness Chapman', written in a cursive style.

The Rt Hon. Baroness Chapman of Darlington
Minister for International Development and Africa