

# Development cooperation of the Czech Republic in 2020 (summary)



Development cooperation and humanitarian assistance provided abroad constitute an integral part of Czech foreign policy. The purpose of the activities is to foster partner countries' potential for sustainable economic and social development and prosperity. Development cooperation enables the Czech Republic to contribute to the reduction of poverty and inequality in the world while promoting its national interests, strengthening its security and laying the groundwork for stronger political, trade and investment relations and for economic diplomacy.

In 2020, the implementation of development cooperation projects was significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to the timely response of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the government, special assistance was provided in priority countries of the Czech development cooperation and in the region of Africa. Restrictions related to the spread of COVID-19 hindered the implementation of planned activities throughout the year. However, when possible, the projects were either adjusted (mainly transferred to the online environment), or re-scheduled to the following year.

## 1) Activities of the Czech Development Agency (total disbursement of 462 326 862 CZK in 2020)

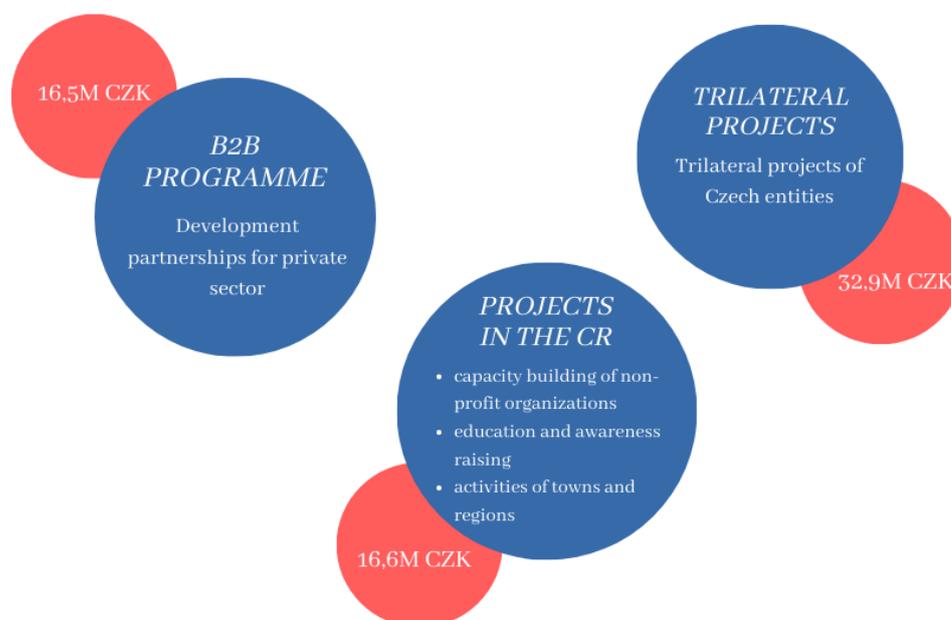
The main focus of the Czech Development Agency (CzDA) is the administration of the bilateral development projects in the priority countries of the Czech development cooperation. In compliance with the Development Cooperation Strategy of the Czech Republic 2018-2030 were the development projects carried out mainly in the six priority countries: **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Moldova, and Zambia**. In addition, bilateral cooperation projects were implemented in Ukraine (Specific Priority Country). In response to the pandemic, CzDA announced a grant call for projects located in Ethiopia and Zambia, focused on supporting medical capacities, ensuring the access to clean water, hygiene and sanitation systems. The topics also included food security and fostering local agricultural production.

Country	Disbursement in 2020
Moldova	85.3M CZK
Ethiopia	76.7M CZK
Bosnia and Herzegovina	66.2M CZK
Zambia	52.5M CZK
Georgia	43.1M CZK
Cambodia	17.6M CZK

Bilateral development activities aimed at specific thematic priorities of the Strategy (*Sustainable management of natural resources, Agriculture and rural development, Inclusive social development, Good democratic governance, Economic transformation and growth*) and were connected to selected sustainable development goals of the Agenda 2030:



## Other instruments of the CzDA (disbursements in 2020)



## 2) Activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for managing local small scale projects, projects in cooperation with other line ministries and international organizations, projects according to government resolutions related to COVID-19 response and activities of transformation cooperation and humanitarian aid. The ministry also ensures the evaluation of programmes and projects of the Czech development cooperation.

### Local small scale projects

The main aim of the local small scale projects is to support the activities of local subjects in developing countries with the contribution up to 500,000 CZK. Despite the difficult

conditions of global pandemic in 2020, **60 small scale projects** were implemented in 39 countries supported with **23,96M CZK**.

### **Strengthening capacities of public higher education institutions in partner countries**

Within the programme, the emphasis is put on mutual mobility of teachers and students, scientific and research cooperation and enhancing managerial capacities and good governance. In 2020, nine projects were supported, however the travel restrictions had direct impact on the implementation. The final disbursed amount reached **7,94M CZK**.

### **Other bilateral development activities**

Donation to the government of **Afghanistan** for development and security programmes amounted to **40M CZK**, same as in previous years. Half of the resources were directed to The Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund under the World Bank for programmes dealing with rural and agricultural development and women empowerment. The remaining resources were provided to the Afghan National Army Trust Fund and Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan.

The **International Development Cooperation Guarantee** programme, launched in 2019 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Czech-Moravian Guarantee and Development Bank, was supported with **50M CZK**. Since the establishment of the programme, bilateral consultations and presentations were held for Czech, as well as international audience. Also in 2020, the process of independent assessment regarding the delegated cooperation with European Commission was finished.

### **Transformation Cooperation Programme**

*Projects supporting human rights and democracy  
(disbursement in 2020: 86,67M CZK)*

The programme was traditionally focused on the priority countries of the Czech foreign policy and the areas where the Czech experience and expertise can be utilized and transferred. Countries of cooperation included Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Cuba, Moldova, Myanmar/Burma, Serbia, Ukraine and Vietnam. An extra support was provided to the civil society and independent media in Belarus, in response to the current situation.

### **Cooperation with other line ministries**

Various projects were implemented in cooperation with other line ministries, e.g. **Transformation Economic and Financial Cooperation Programme** managed by the Ministry of Finance; **Aid for Trade**, trade promotion programme managed by the Ministry of Industry and Trade; **projects of global development education for teachers** (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports) or **Security Development Cooperation Programme** managed by the Ministry of the Interior. The programme of **government**

**scholarships for students from developing countries** at public universities in the Czech Republic has continued (including related healthcare services provided to government scholarship holders under the responsibility of the Ministry of Health).

### **Multilateral development cooperation**

The Czech financial contribution to the development agenda of the European Union accounted for **2/3 of the total official development assistance** provided by the Czech Republic in 2020. Czech Republic was involved in the common response of the EU and member states to the pandemic in partner countries under the **Team Europe** initiative. Also, preparations commenced for the Czech presidency in the Council of the EU in 2022.



The Czech Republic has continued the cooperation with the United Nations (UN), especially with the **UN's Development Programme (UNDP)**. The long-term project “Czech-UNDP Partnership for Sustainable Development Goals” successfully progressed. In January 2020, the Czech Republic began its three-year long **membership in the UNDP Executive Board**. Within the UN, the Czech Republic has also been involved in other programmes, eg. the **UN volunteers** programme (UNV).

### **Humanitarian aid**

*50 humanitarian activities in 29 countries  
(disbursement in 2020: 214,6M CZK)*

A significant part of the humanitarian budget in 2020 was dedicated to **the COVID-19 pandemic response**. The Czech Republic has reacted already in February 2020 through material delivery to China and financial contribution to the World Health Organization. Furthermore, as a follow-up to the government's resolution, five projects addressing the medical and socio-economic impacts of the pandemic in priority countries of Czech bilateral cooperation were supported with 19,9M CZK. Resources were also allocated for material assistance to Italy, Mali and Spain, and towards the end of the year financial contribution was provided to UNICEF for vaccine distribution.

**Besides the pandemic response, the Czech Republic also helped:**

- **During catastrophes** (fires in Australia, explosion in Lebanon, floods and landslides in the Philippines and Vietnam, drought in Zambia)
- **During conflicts and forced displacement** (Afghanistan, Armenia and Azerbaijan, Iraq, Yemen, Jordan, Lebanon, Mali, Ukraine)

- **During complex humanitarian crises** (Myanmar/Burma, Ethiopia, Venezuela – refugees in Colombia and Peru)
- **In strengthening the resilience of vulnerable countries and regions** and decreasing the risk of disasters (Indonesia, Cambodia, Zambia)



*Handover of medical equipment and related materials within the project of increasing the preparedness for crises in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Implementing partner: EGO Zlín*

### Assistance programmes

In compliance with the government resolutions, projects focused on **stabilization and post-conflict reconstruction** were implemented in the following countries/regions:

Country/Region	Disbursement in 2020
Syria	55.4M CZK
Iraq	36.5M CZK
Africa	87.7M CZK

Humanitarian and stabilization assistance was at the core of the programme in **Syria**, given the security and political situation in the country in 2020. Projects were focused on immediate food aid for internally displaced persons, support of medical facilities including the COVID-19 protection and establishing conditions for the return of refugees.

In total 11 projects were carried out in 2020 within the **Programme of Czech participation in the stabilization and reconstruction of Iraq 2018-2021**. Two financial donations were made to ICRC and UNHCR for the support of internally displaced people, refugees and returnees. Other projects, financed as tied donations, used the resources for providing medical equipment to hospitals. Moreover, logistical support was realized within the program's budget.

**Programme Africa** (Programme of activities supporting source and transit countries of migration in Africa 2020-2022) was launched in 2020, with allocated resources amounting to 100M CZK. The disbursed amount of 87,7M CZK was mainly used for activities tackling medical, socio-economic and security impacts of the pandemic.



*Mali – Support of livelihood and food security of internally displaced families in the region of Gourma Rharous  
(Implementing partner: ADRA)*

## **Conclusion**

To a great extent, restrictions related to the pandemic have affected the implementation of planned activities in 2020. On the contrary, the need for assistance in connection with the unprecedented crisis has increased. **The disbursed amounts have reached the all-time high** in case of CzDA administered activities, humanitarian aid and programs in Syria and Iraq.

In the context of active participation of the Czech Republic in international organizations and the upcoming Czech presidency in the Council of the EU, it is not convenient that based on the **share of the official development assistance (ODA) on the gross national income (GNI)** the Czech Republic was in last place together with Greece (among the OECD/DAC donors, in 2020). Also, the decrease of resources allocated to development cooperation and humanitarian aid from the state budget in 2021 is troubling. It remains a challenge to ensure sufficient resources, so that the Czech Republic is able to fulfil, or come closer to, the commitment of providing 0.33 % of GNI to ODA by 2030. Substantial resources will be also needed for recovery and resilience building after the COVID-19 pandemic.