

Stop all foreign aid payments from the Welsh Government including to "Size of Wales"

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 22 Medi 2025
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Reference: SR25/11930

Petition Number: P-06-1520

Petition title: Stop all foreign aid payments from the Welsh Government including to "Size of Wales"

Text of petition:

The Welsh Government has this year given £775,000 (up from £670,000 last year) to a Charity called Size of Wales, chaired by ex-First Minister Carwyn Jones. According to its annual report filed with the Charity Commission Size of Wales lists it spending to include:

- Securing indigenous land rights in Brazil & Kenya*
- Building 'ecosystem resilience' for orangutans in Indonesia*
- Promoting gender work in Kenya and Peru*
- Building a solar powered boat in Peru to enable Wampi people navigate the river*



1. Background

The petition calls on the Welsh Government to stop all foreign aid payments and provides examples of international development activity carried out by Size of Wales, a Welsh Government delivery partner.

“Foreign aid” and “international development” are distinct terms. The former relates to assistance provided, often in response to emergencies, while the latter generally relates to targeted funding by developed countries towards long-term programmes in disadvantaged and/or developing regions.

2. Welsh Government action

Responsibility for the Wales for Africa programme moved to the First Minister’s portfolio in 2024-25 from the Social Justice portfolio.

The First Minister’s responsibilities cover ‘International Relations including overseas network and Wales and Africa’.

However, the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip has responded to the petition, advising that it was passed to her.

In the response, the Cabinet Secretary explains the use of the grant funding provided to Size of Wales by the Welsh Government and her view on how this contributes to the Government’s aims on global responsibility and climate change. More information is included in section 2.2 of this briefing.

2.1. Foreign aid

The Welsh Government has made financial and non-financial donations to emergency appeals launched in response to international developments, such as natural disasters and armed conflict. For example, in 2022 it donated £4 million to the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal, as well as medical supplies, and £100,000 to the DEC Pakistan Floods Appeal. In 2023, it donated £300,000 to the 2023 DEC Türkiye and Syria Earthquake Appeal and has made two £100,000 donations to the DEC Appeal for the Middle East since the Hamas attacks of 7 October 2023.

2.2. International development

The Welsh Government's approach to international development relates to a key aim of its International Strategy, to establish Wales as a globally responsible nation, and in its long-standing Wales and Africa programme.

The Welsh Government's funding of the Wales and Africa programme began in 2013-14 and [Size of Wales](#) is one of the strategic partners funded to deliver related activity. Further detail is set out in the Welsh Government's [Wales and Africa action plan](#)

In response to the petition, the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice states that the "bulk of grant funding to Size of Wales" has been on the Mbale tree planting programme in Uganda. The Cabinet Secretary's response says that, through "this project, Wales is supporting the delivery of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, to alleviate poverty for those most vulnerable to the effects of climate change".

The Welsh Government set out further detail on its view on the programme's [benefits to the people of Wales](#) in an FOI response in March 2024.

2.3. Size of Wales grant income

In June 2025, the Welsh Government [set out in an FOI](#) that it's provided £4,057,687 to Size of Wales for the Mbale tree planting programme since July 2015. It noted "10 years of records are available due to information retention policies".

However, on 13 August 2025, the Welsh Government issued a [For The Record blog](#) stating that funding for the tree planting programme "over the last 15 years is around £270,000 per annum".

The petition states that Size of Wales has received £775,000 from the Welsh Government "this year". However, the organisation's latest accounts [submitted to the Charity Commission](#) cover the 2023-24 financial year (submitted in January 2025).

[Size of Wales' 2023-24 Financial Statements](#) show grant income of £775,000 from the Welsh Government for the year, which it notes relates to the Education and Communication Programme and the Mbale Trees project in Mbale, Uganda.

In its 2023-24 Financial Statements, Size of Wales also shows grant income of £24,000 from “WG/WCVA”. Size of Wales notes:

Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA), through the Welsh Government’s Wales and Africa Grant Scheme, have provided a grant towards advancing gender equality for climate change resilience and adaptation in Manafwa district, Eastern Uganda.

This would increase Size of Wales’ grant income from the Welsh Government in 2023-24 to £799,000.

2.4. Welsh Government budget allocations

The Welsh Government’s international development budget expenditure line (BEL) funds the delivery of the Wales and Africa action plan, including funding to Size of Wales.

This section explains the Welsh Government’s budget allocations for Size of Wales since 2023-24.

2023-24

During 2023-24 draft budget scrutiny, the former First Minister, Mark Drakeford MS, confirmed that a grant of £550,000 would be awarded to Size of Wales:

...primarily to deliver the Mbale Tree Planting Programme, with some funding allocated to the Bore Community Forest project in Kenya.

2024-25

The funding for the international development BEL decreased by 23.6 per cent in the 2024-25 Draft Budget compared to the 2023-24 Final Budget. Former First Minister, Vaughan Gething MS, said this would affect the Welsh Government’s ability to donate to any future DEC appeal, but specifically in relation to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, and led to the cessation/pause of some Wales and Africa activity (which resumed in 2024).

The Draft Budget allocation for 2024-25 year for ‘Size of Wales/Mbale Tree Planting’ was £450,000.

2025-26

In June 2025, the First Minister confirmed that Size of Wales’ Budget allocation for the current 2025-26 year was £350,000.

3. Welsh Parliament action

The Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee scrutinises the budget allocations for areas covered by this petition and is undertaking an inquiry into the [Welsh Government's International Strategy](#).

The responses to its [written consultation](#) as part of this inquiry included evidence from organisations regarding the Wales and Africa programme budget. In its response, [Size of Wales](#) said of international resourcing:

With current budget restrictions and the cost of living crisis, we are concerned that funding for this work may decrease in the new budget [...] Without sufficient resources, Wales risks falling short of its ambitions to be a globally responsible nation.

[Fair Trade Wales](#) described the resourcing of the Wales and Africa programme as “vitaly important”.

[Welsh Overseas Agencies Group](#) identified communication and transparency around the programme as an area needing improvement. It said that:

limited updates and sporadic online engagement have constrained public engagement and awareness.

It also noted that:

a 10-year report on this programme is still awaited. Without such reports, it is difficult to measure the programme's impact and its alignment with the broader goals of the strategy.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.