

Healthier, Safer, More Prosperous

The Case for British Leadership
in International Development



Conservative Friends of
International Development



Save the Children

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Introduction

As the UK seeks to define its new role on the world stage, thinkers from across party lines are considering what the foreign policy agenda of a 'Global Britain' should look like. At this moment of reflection, and ahead of Save the Children's annual reception at Conservative Party Conference, we are delighted to provide a platform to Conservative parliamentarians who believe that a Global Britain is a compassionate Britain, and that the case for leadership in international development is grounded in our values and our national interest, as well as the interests of the world's most disadvantaged people.

The essays that follow cover a wide range of international development policy – from the case for a new development bank to the importance of protecting civilians in conflict – and while they represent the views of the authors alone and not of our organisations, it is exciting to see that there is such continued strength, breadth and depth of thinking on international development amongst Conservative parliamentarians, and a strong commitment to the UK's leading role in this area.

We are hugely grateful to the authors for sharing their thoughts with us.

Caroline Squire

Director, Conservative Friends of International Development

Kevin Watkins

Chief Executive, Save the Children

September 2018.

UK Aid can do more than respond to humanitarian crises – it can help prevent them

Will Quince MP

There is often a scepticism amongst the British public about international aid; cynicism that their money is being used to fund foreign governments or wasted on pointless projects. Much of this is rooted in assumptions which are long out of date, yet there is consistently support for intervention when tragedies occur and disasters strike, such as the ongoing Rohingya refugee crisis.

Britain is a superpower in international aid, not least because of the generosity of the public in these situations. There is no better way to see the impact which our aid has than to witness it first-hand: last September I visited the Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh. I met a lady whose house was burnt, her husband killed and her son murdered before her eyes. She walked for five days with her remaining children and what possessions she could carry to the camps. As I spoke to her, she held her eight-month-old baby, who looked about four months old because of malnourishment. She was desperately trying to feed her baby as we spoke, but her own malnourished body could not produce the milk to do so.

Having seen the devastation and suffering caused by this tragedy, I am proud that the UK is a leading donor to the humanitarian response in Bangladesh. We have committed £129 million to the crisis since August last year, including the announcement in May of an additional £70 million of humanitarian support to help ensure the thousands of persecuted Rohingya people are protected as the cyclone and monsoon season begins. This new aid is providing

additional medication, sturdier shelters, food, clean water and support for women to give birth safely. Our support is also funding a large vaccination campaign against cholera in and around the Cox's Bazar camps.

Over recent years humanitarian crises have increased in both number and severity. Since 2010, the proportion of its budget which the Department for International Development has allocated to humanitarian response has increased significantly from 6% to around 15%. If we are to deliver the value for money which the public expects from their aid money, then we cannot simply react to disasters as they occur – we need to invest to try and prevent them from happening in the first place.

One key area of prevention which the Department for International Development works on is vaccinations – an investment which saves a child's life every two minutes. Through the UK's funding of Gavi, a public-private partnership that provides subsidised vaccines to children across 73 developing nations, we have supported the vaccination of 640 million children and saved 9 million lives from preventable diseases. Between 2016 and 2020, Gavi will be delivering our target of immunising 76 million children with the goal of saving 1.4 million lives.

Investment in vaccinations also delivers a substantial return. An analysis undertaken by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health found that when looking solely at the costs of the illnesses prevented, such as treatment and lost productivity, the return on investment for every pound spent on vaccines was around £16. When this was widened to look at the broader economic impact of illness, including the value which people place on healthier lives, the return on investment increased to around £44 for every pound spent. Further studies have found that the projected coverage of vaccination programs accrue more economic and health benefits to the poorest in developing countries than the richest.

Another example of investing in prevention is the UK's partnership with the World Bank and Germany for the Centre for Global Disaster Protection. Natural disasters are not always surprises, and while around half of the costs associated with these incidents are covered by insurance in high-income countries, in lower-income countries less than 5% of the costs are covered. Moreover, as DFID minister Lord Bates stated in his speech to the International Insurance Society Global Insurance Forum, spending £1 on work to prevent floods or droughts can save around £3 on humanitarian assistance. The purpose of the Centre is to support developing countries in their disaster planning through investing in science and research into systems which will work for the poorest countries, providing training to help countries understand how to manage risk and make more informed decisions, and bringing together experts to design financial tools for disaster planning.

Through proactive investment in the prevention of humanitarian crises, whether it is vaccinations or the development of the Centre for Global Disaster Protection, we are seeing a step-change in our approach to tackling these issues. By spending money now, we can reduce the likelihood of these tragedies occurring and save more lives.

The public's affinity with the work funded by our aid budget often comes from seeing responses to crises on their TV screens, but we must be better at making the case that prevention is better than cure and the most effective work often goes unseen.

Why the architecture of Britain's development commitment matters

John Lamont MP

Rightly, the case is often made for the impact of British aid for the world's most vulnerable people, and its role in helping the world's poorest countries to stand on their own two feet. It is a case that cannot be made often enough – as the Prime Minister said on her recent visit to South Africa, since 2015 UK Aid has immunised 37 million children, put almost 11.5 million children in school, and given more than 40 million people access to clean water or proper sanitation. The difference made by the UK taxpayer for the world's poorest people is staggering, and it is detailed eloquently by other voices in this collection.

It is important to champion and defend the 0.7% commitment on these terms, because its impact is its value. However, focussing solely on results does not make the full argument in favour of an annually calculated aid-spending target, secured by legislation and internationally agreed rules – there's a more pragmatic political case to make too.

The size of the aid budget is a regular target for critics, and it is frequently assumed to be bigger than it actually is. 0.7% of GNI will of course go up as well as down as total GNI does. This means we will never be over-committed to aid when we can't afford it, our generosity is proportionate to our means. It is right that we always look at how this money is being spent and make sure it goes as far as possible to help those most in need, however calls to reduce aid spending in favour of domestic priorities miss this point; the budget only increases when our ability to fund other areas increases too.

Arguments are made, even by supporters of the UK's role as an aid donor, that the 0.7% commitment is arbitrary, and that legislating for it is unnecessary. Indeed, we should concede that the fact that the commitment is 0.7% of GNI (rather than, for example, 1% or 0.5%) is, in 2018, largely academic.

However, this does not negate the importance of retaining a clear red line – and upholding this existing, internationally accepted line ensures stability. The target forces a binary decision on any UK government – do they keep the promise not to, in the words of former Secretary of State Andrew Mitchell, “balance the books on the backs of the poorest people in the world”? This line means that there can be no gradual deterioration of the aid budget, no ‘death by a thousand cuts’ reducing spending while retaining the rhetoric of a country committed to aid. Instead, the commitment to aid has to be a simple ‘for’ or ‘against’ decision and the legislation that enshrines it gives parliamentarians and the public a say in the matter.

The aid budget is not like other government budgets. The level of funding needed to end extreme poverty could never be met by the UK alone, so there is not a question of whether the funding is sufficient, as with domestic resources. This makes it necessary to treat it differently from other budgets, and the 0.7% target, and associated legislation, takes it out of the politics of annual allocations to turn it from a scale into a choice.

It is often said that the UK is an ‘international development superpower’, and the 0.7% commitment's place in this is crucial. Successive British governments' determination not just to be a leading aid donor, but to legislate for it, sets a powerful example and makes a statement about the country's role on the world stage. Indeed, as a leading member of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee, the UK plays a crucial part in setting the bar high for other countries, both on the quantity of their aid and for the

rigour with which they approach the rules that govern how they can spend it. The number of countries reaching 0.7% is growing, and both France and Ireland have recently set out their intention to follow Britain's lead in doing so.

The commitment's impact in terms of soft power is not limited to building relationships with developing countries. It is critical in keeping global standards high but also cementing the UK's status as a key player. In fact, this is a case that has recently been made to select committees by three former UK Permanent Representatives to the United Nations – Sir John Sawers, Lord Hannay of Chiswick, and Matthew Rycroft, who have said that the UK owes a significant proportion of its influence at the UN to its credentials as a leading aid donor. If 'Global Britain' is to be a reality as the UK leaves the European Union, then it must be built on the UK's strengths, and the example we set with aid is one of the most powerful tools at our disposal in building global influence.

As a Scottish MP, I am proud of the role in which Scotland plays in the UK's international aid programme. Run from the joint headquarters in East Kilbride, there are many examples of Scottish charities doing great work with the support of UK Aid.

The benefit of British aid is clear – it not only saves and changes lives, it also ensures that the UK looks beyond its borders to help those in need. The value of the 0.7% target is in drawing a line that forces a decision for governments – do they commit to this approach or don't they – and in providing the global leadership that ensures British influence in the world.

Britain should be the champion of women and girls in war zones

Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

Armed conflict disproportionately affects women and children. In recent years conflict has changed, shifting from battlefields to populated areas in cities and towns. Thus, women and children are ever more vulnerable and according to Save the Children, today more than 350 million children live in conflict zones where they are at high risk of being sexually abused, killed, injured or recruited. That is one in six children.

However, it is not only the immediate impact of conflict, the breakdown of law and order has many other negative effects. Conflict causes rates of domestic violence to soar, so even if women are not caught up in conflict they are often being abused behind closed doors. In countries such as Afghanistan, it is estimated that almost 90% of women suffer from domestic violence. I attended a symposium in Kabul last year where I heard an Afghan psychologist talk about how the implications of the high levels of violence in the family detrimentally affect society and create a further challenge to achieving peace in the long term.

That is why through my work as the Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Women, Peace and Security, we have demonstrated that in order to successfully deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals, we must put women and children at the heart of British development and foreign policy.

The Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative, of which I am a member of the Steering Board, has addressed tackling sexual violence in armed conflict, which is today used as a weapon of war.

In Iraq, I saw first-hand the difficulties faced by women there and the high levels of sexual violence committed by Daesh against the Yazidis. The need for Daesh men to be held accountable for these crimes remains vital for delivering justice for women and girls, and for ending impunity.

Yet the crisis of accountability is a key theme in the protection of civilians. Attacks on civilians like the recent school bus attack in Yemen that killed 40 children, and the violence experienced by the Rohingya community last year that involved rape, murder and forced displacement, highlight the urgent need to end impunity for perpetrators and improve protection for civilians.

Despite the world's progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, there is more work to be done to ensure that women and girls are better protected in conflict. The Government has a proud reputation of leading on civilian protection issues such as the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative and its involvement in the global campaign to ban landmines.

As a NATO member, permanent member of the UN Security Council and the penholder on women, peace and security as well as the protection of civilians at the UN, Britain is uniquely placed to champion this agenda globally. The Government's renewed focus on the international rules-based order is welcome and provides an opportunity to embed this agenda at the heart of Global Britain.

Britain is already a world-leader in responding to crises. Our aid makes a difference for millions of children and their families around the world, helping save lives and boost our global influence at the same time. However, there is more Britain can do to lead the work in championing the protection of women and children, and help put an end to the abuse, exploitation and impunity that so many face today.

The first step is to update the Government's strategy on protection of civilians which the UK Permanent Representative, Karen Pierce, recently announced at the start of the UK Presidency of the Security Council in August. This was also a recommendation in the Foreign Affairs Select Committee's recently published report on Global Britain and humanitarian intervention.

A joined up cross-government strategy that brings together the skills and expertise across the Department for International Development, the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defence is essential. If we are serious about tackling the protection of civilians crisis and the prevalent impunity for atrocities, then we will need full support from across Government.

Above all, we need to ensure that women and girls in crisis situations are communicated with, listened to and their needs addressed. Too often in the past they have been ignored. It is essential that women are included in peace processes – without their voices being heard there will not be peace and security for all.

We have come a long way but there is still a long way to go. I hope that Global Britain will continue to play a leading role in driving forward progress on protecting women and children in conflict.

We should be proud of aid's impact but ambitious to achieve more

Paul Scully MP

In September 2017, I was one of the first UK MPs to walk through the Kutapalong refugee camp in Bangladesh at a time when 400,000 Rohingya refugees had fled for their lives from Burma into one of the poorest parts of one of the poorest countries. When I returned six months later with the International Development Select Committee, what had quickly become the world's largest refugee camp was home to 700,000 scared, tired, traumatised people, predominately women and children who have seen and been victim to the most atrocious crimes. UK Aid has been at the forefront of the humanitarian response, providing £129 million over the last year for food, shelter, clean water and medication through a range of UN agencies and large NGOs.

Although some people question why we give aid, they can usually appreciate the moral position of helping our neighbours in immediate need, such as when we assist countries and communities recover from natural disasters. In this instance, this man-made tragedy has been well supported by members of the public picking up the phone and donating directly too. The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) appeal raised an incredible £28 million mainly from people who had seen the media coverage which captured the horrifying nature of this situation so well.

Nothing prepared me for the stories that I heard from people there who had seen their young children beheaded or castrated; their sons stabbed; their daughters raped. People showed me the bullet wounds in the backs of their legs sustained as they fled from their burning villages towards the border that the Burmese military was determined to ensure they crossed, never to return. We are fully

involved as a country in pushing for a lasting resolution to this long-standing conflict but in the meantime, we must step up as one of the largest economies in the world and support people who are suffering simply as the result of where they were born.

As a member of the select committee which scrutinises the Department for International Development (DFID), I have also looked closely at the situation surrounding Syria alongside the debate that has engaged Parliament about refugees. The UK remains the second largest donor in support of Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries, supporting hundreds of thousands of Syrians on a day to day basis, keeping them out of the hands of human traffickers and away from the perilous journey across the Mediterranean.

Our committee has spent a lot of time looking at DFID's work in education across the globe. Whereas the UN's original Millennium Development Goals included the worthy aim to achieve universal primary education, the successor Sustainable Development Goals moved to a more substantive outcome, to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all. The former just relies on getting children to school; the latter is more meaningful, expecting those children to learn with a purpose. This is the sort of pragmatic approach that was always needed to ensure that international aid can be spent well.

In Uganda I saw teachers regurgitating lessons that had been written down on a tablet without a care as to whether the children were listening or taking in anything that was being said – they weren't. That isn't good enough and should not attract support from the UK taxpayer. But I also saw great teaching in Uganda and Kenya with school leaders having a deep understanding of issues that can keep students engaged in school and learning. They understand how ensuring the supply of sanitary products, properly lighting areas to give girls security after school, addressing the risks of predatory behaviour that so often lead to early marriage and young

pregnancies, all help keep students in school. We take so much of this for granted. Among the outlying areas in Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya, these things are the difference between keeping someone in school with the prospect of a job, or a life in servitude, possibly 'beaded' by an older Samburu warrior relative which too often leads to appalling abortions, female genital mutilation and early marriage.

Our government's commitment to spending 0.7% of gross national income on overseas development assistance often comes under attack. Sometimes it seems that the development community bristles at such criticism, writing off complainants instead of making a positive case both for our moral and humanitarian responsibilities and for the positive benefits for the UK taxpayer. "Charity begins at home" is a powerful, simple debating point that we need somewhat more than four words to rebut.

Our response to the plight of the Rohingya should offer a powerful example of the effect of how the UK steps up to help the most vulnerable people in the world. DFID's work in Syria clearly demonstrates how we can support hundreds of thousands of people closer to home rather than the much lower figure that we would be able to relocate. We have seen across the EU the effect of the 'pull' factor by the opposite approach taken by Angela Merkel in inviting one million refugees to Germany.

Effective aid can ease immigration pressures both through addressing forced migration at source and economic migration through improving governance, the economy and living conditions of countries like Bangladesh. This helps in removing some of the 'push' factors which start the well-trodden path to Europe and the UK from a number of such countries.

Encouraging better governance and improving both access to education and raising educational standards can start to tackle security issues at source rather than waiting for problems to come to our shores.

Ever-increasing air travel and our globalised economy means that our successful intervention into the Ebola crisis and our ongoing support in the fight against malaria and tuberculosis, both of which are becoming increasingly resistant to drugs, keeps us safe. Whilst malaria in the UK was prevalent in the 17th Century, it had all but disappeared from the UK by the beginning of the 20th Century. We cannot take our successes for granted.

At a time when more of us are starting to lift our heads and look out to the world, our international aid is an important cornerstone of our soft power. Alongside our language, culture, institutions like the British Council and the BBC, our aid and DFID's leadership in development is welcomed in every corner of the world. DFID's involvement in a project can leverage so much support and investment, such is the respect held for our aid experts.

For these reasons we should be more proactive in sharing the success stories of UK Aid, what we can achieve and what more we can do. Penny Mordaunt has been a strong leader in this since becoming Secretary of State. Her five pledges for UK Aid offer compelling reasons to follow her lead – boosting trade and investment with developing countries; helping developing countries to stand on their own two feet to build sustainable health and education systems that they invest in themselves; readiness to cut funding from organisations that do not deliver on targets we set; spending aid directly to tackle the issues that matter most to the British people; and finding new ways to help other departments make their spend more effective. All of these are aimed at showing taxpayers their money is not only spent well but that it cannot be spent better.

This is how we can and must make the case for effective aid. Let us be proud of what we achieve, vigilant to make sure we continue to get real value for the taxpayer and ambitious in what more we can do for both the poorest in the world and the UK itself through international aid.

Britain must show it is on the right side of history in Yemen

Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP

Every day, Cabinet Ministers – and hardworking civil servants – are balancing twin imperatives: protecting British citizens and improving the lives of some of the world's most desperate people.

For the most part, these imperatives complement and even enhance one another; responding to the deadly Ebola outbreak in 2015 was clearly the right thing to do and the smart thing to do. UK Aid and British expertise saved countless lives and stopped this deadly virus reaching our shores.

And of course, tackling the extreme of international poverty make us safer in the UK too. All of British development policy serves the British national interest; it is mutually beneficial: 'a win-win'. However, I fear that the British Government's response to the conflict in Yemen does not pass this test.

This is not a reflection on the tremendous impact of UK Aid, which is keeping millions of children alive during the world's largest humanitarian crisis. Nor is it a slight on the brilliant men and women desperately trying to negotiate peace – and deploying all their diplomatic clout to ensure vital goods can enter the country. But it is becoming increasingly clear to me that our complicity in this conflict is undermining these phenomenal efforts.

The war in Yemen has been raging for over three years. In this time, daily life in Yemen – an already poor and troubled nation – has become unbearable. Violence, hunger and disease plague the lives of millions of ordinary citizens, who are caught in the cross-fires of this brutal conflict.

Both sides in the war – the rebel Houthi-forces and the Saudi-Emirati Coalition, working on behalf of the Government of Yemen – continue to show a staggering disregard for human life. In just nine days this August, 131 children were killed. This includes 40 children who were killed when their school bus was targeted by an airstrike. They were travelling home from a picnic wearing their UNICEF backpacks – a beautiful symbol of our global commitment to help all children in conflict. The next day, these children were either dead or digging graves for their friends – a devastating symbol of the complete collapse of this commitment in Yemen.

This airstrike was carried out by our allies, the Saudi-Emirati-led coalition. The bomb was made by the US. And yet, our government is still to condemn this attack. We are told – as we have been told for the past three and a half years – that instead, they are having a private word; urging the Coalition to uphold International Humanitarian Law and improve its targeting behind the scenes.

I understand what is driving this. Saudi Arabia is a crucial ally. There is no doubt that our security relationship with Saudi Arabia is saving the lives of UK citizens, and that our economic relationship is creating British jobs. But I believe that we are selling ourselves short.

In order to change behaviour, actions must have consequences. This is a universal rule; if actors think that they can get away with a certain behaviour, or it remains in their interests, then they will not change. At present, with the public support of their UK allies, there are few consequences for the Saudi-Emirati-led Coalition when they bomb children.

I refuse to believe that Britain – a founder and one of the largest members of NATO, a founder and permanent member of the UN Security Council, and the author of the Convention on the Rights of the Child – does not have the global clout to influence our allies and urge them to rein in their activities.

When we decide not to speak out, even when we know the action is plain wrong, we are grossly underestimating our strength – and underestimating the extraordinary potential power of Global Britain.

This is something many of our European allies have already realised. The State Department made numerous statements following the school bus attack. And a congressional defence spending bill signed by Donald Trump includes a clause requiring the Secretary of State to certify that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are taking steps to prevent civilian deaths. An uncomfortable and depressing silence from the UK diminishes us all.

It is time for the UK to make clear it will no longer support what Saudi Arabia is doing in Yemen and redouble efforts to urge all parties to agree to an immediate cessation of hostilities followed by negotiations. This is a pivotal moment to demonstrate post-Brexit Britain's global values and global strengths.

If Global Britain is to be a force for good in the world, we must stand up for these values and for good, old-fashioned British common sense. If we fail to act, we undermine all our efforts to deliver prosperity and security to the world and will be remembered on the wrong side of history.

UK leadership in tackling malaria epitomises Global Britain at its best

Andrea Jenkyns MP

When the world works together, we can achieve extraordinary things. This is most pertinent in medical advancement and healthcare. Take polio for example. Cases have decreased by more than 99 per cent since 1988, from over 350,000 cases to just 22 in 2017. Now we must do the same for malaria.

I recently travelled to Kenya with Malaria No More UK to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of malaria and how we can beat it. Sadly, the human cost of the disease was most evident on Siaya County Hospital's children's ward. Doctors and nurses were treating several young children that were unconscious with severe malaria.

Statistics show that a child dies every two minutes from Malaria, and it was heart-breaking to see that, often, by the time families travel to their nearest health facility, it can be too late. As a mother myself to a young toddler, to witness a baby needing to be resuscitated due to this terrible disease brought tears to my eyes.

However, in Siaya County, volunteers have been trained to diagnose and treat malaria in their own communities, thus thankfully preventing complications and deaths.

I saw first-hand how this approach is saving lives. On a home visit, I saw how simple it is to test and treat malaria if the right medicines are made available. It took 20 minutes to test three-year-old Rollins, and within the hour Rollins had been treated and was on the road to recovery.

Despite malaria being treatable and preventable, it still claims almost 500,000 lives every year and is the world's oldest and deadliest disease. There has been a significant reduction in cases and deaths, but now, for the first time in a decade, progress has stalled and there is a risk of resurgence.

One of the biggest threats to progress is the development of antimicrobial resistance, which my own father died from following a routine operation. Resistance to artemisinin drugs, the most powerful drugs currently available to treat malaria, has now been found in five countries in South-East Asia.

Britain has been at the forefront of the malaria fight through political leadership, funding, and science and research, like the new insecticides at Liverpool's Innovative Vector Control Consortium and GSK's development of the world's first vaccine against malaria. With this experience and resource, the UK is in a unique position to demonstrate leadership in the fight against malaria.

The UK also has strong economic, political and cultural links with many of the countries most affected by malaria, not least through membership of the Commonwealth. Ninety per cent of Commonwealth citizens live in malaria endemic countries. We cannot end this killer disease without Commonwealth action.

In April, Commonwealth countries signed up to halving malaria by 2023. If realised, the impact would be immense: 350 million cases would be prevented, and 650,000 lives would be saved. The UK Government holds the privileged position of Commonwealth Chair-in-Office for the next two years and must use this opportunity to work with Commonwealth members to maximise progress. UK leadership in tackling malaria epitomises Global Britain at its best, a nation that is an outward looking force for good in the world, leading the way in tackling the great challenges facing the world's poorest people.

Ill health, such as that caused by malaria, is one of the greatest barriers to the prosperity of individuals and nations. Malaria deprives millions of children of school days, adults of their income, and businesses of their workforce. Malaria destroys lives and livelihoods and can hold back a country's GDP by as much as 1.3% per annum. Between 2000 and 2015 an estimated £524 billion was lost from global GDP as a result of malaria.

A healthy, educated population is a precondition for economic development and growth. By maintaining a focus on malaria elimination, the UK can help to reduce poverty experienced by the world's poorest people and unleash untapped economic potential in malaria-affected countries, which would also further our own national interests.

A report published by EY in 2017 estimates that UK trade with the 13 most malaria-affected countries could have been up to £765 million higher in 2015 but for the effects of malaria. As the UK strengthens ties with the Commonwealth and seizes opportunities to forge a new set of trade and investment relationships post-Brexit, driving progress towards a malaria-free world will address a significant barrier to economic development and ultimately increase our own scope for international trade.

Investment in malaria prevention and treatment also offers real value for money, delivering \$36 of social and economic benefits for every \$1 spent.

We can be proud that political and financial leadership at home has played a pivotal role in cutting global malaria deaths by over 60% since 2000, saving almost 7 million lives. With renewed commitment, the UK can continue to lead the world on consigning this devastating disease to history, and creating a safer, healthier and more prosperous world for us all.

Tanzania showed me why our aid budget is in everyone's interest

Gillian Keegan MP

"I'm a nomad, I'm not wanted anywhere". These were heart-breaking words from a 15-year old Burundian girl who I met in the Nduta refugee camp in the far west of Tanzania. The young girl and her sister are unaccompanied minors, their parents presumed dead having disappeared when the family last tried to return home from a previous stay in a refugee camp. I have travelled throughout the African continent for business over many years, but never seen this side before. This was my first visit to a refugee camp and you couldn't fail to be moved by the plight of the people trapped in these conditions. They really are trapped, as refugees they are not officially allowed to leave the camp, nor permitted to work. It is a kind of holding place, where lives are on hold for many years.

The camps I visited are supported by the international aid community, including the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR). The work done by aid agencies is essential to protect the most vulnerable people from attack, and to ensure young people can continue their education to develop skills which will enable them to earn a living later in life. Perhaps the real skill of the aid workers is providing hope in what must often feel like a hopeless situation.

Tanzania is a relatively poor country and 25 million Tanzanians still live on less than \$2 a day, but it hosts around 400,000 refugees. International aid has been vital to providing the funds to host such large numbers of refugees and the UK has been the second largest humanitarian donor to Tanzania in recent years. We are fortunate that our country is not neighbour to warzones from which people are

fleeing, so I am proud that we help those countries that are to share some of the burden.

This is why it is important, alongside dealing with the humanitarian crisis, that UK Aid also supports development that benefits the host population, many of whom live below the international poverty line in Tanzania's case. The focus of DFID's work in Tanzania has been to support access to education and our funding has enabled nearly 700,000 children to get access to decent schooling that focusses on results. UK Aid has also ensured there is access to clean water and sanitation as well as improving nutrition and access to modern family planning services.

I have always been an instinctive supporter of international aid to help the world's most vulnerable people during their time of need, but as a businesswoman, I also recognise it can be a strategic driver to reduce corruption whilst creating economic opportunities for individuals and businesses. Now as an MP and Co-Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, I'm learning more about how the UK is leading global efforts to end extreme poverty and tackle the big global challenges of our time. Not just helping poor countries but ensuring that the world meets the targets it set for itself in 2015, achieving sustainable and equitable growth.

The size of the challenge in countries like Tanzania should not be underestimated; with mass migration just one factor in a country that is struggling to develop economically and provide employment for its own population. To achieve this, UK Aid is helping over 750,000 farmers get their produce to market and is increasing the capacity of Dar es Salaam Port by two thirds. Economic improvement is a key component to ensure that development is sustainable, as is building trusted institutions. We should not pretend that this is a zero-sum game for us – a stable and prosperous Tanzania benefits the UK as a trading nation.

The UK also helps Tanzania fight organised crime, as it is a major transit point for heroin being transported from West Africa to Europe. The anti-smuggling scheme is vital for the development of the nation, but this too helps protect Europe and the UK, hampering the efforts of drugs cartels.

Of course, overseas aid is not without its critics, and rightly so. As in many areas of Government spending, there are examples of things going wrong, and money wasted or misdirected. Yet, despite what you read in the papers, the UK is one of the most widely respected aid donors in the world, and UK Aid is the most heavily scrutinised part of the Government's budget, even in the often unpredictable environments in which programmes operate.

The British people are generous, and time and time again show they will not turn their back on those in need. However, they rightly want to ensure their money is spent effectively. Misspent aid ultimately harms the world's poorest the most, and continued scrutiny of aid is vital. Value for money for the British taxpayer is also value for money for the world's poorest people, so prudence is in everyone's interest. Having seen first-hand the positive impact of overseas aid in Tanzania, I am hugely proud that we do what we can to lift the poorest people out of poverty, develop the least developed countries and lead the world by our example.

The UK must lead the way on protecting children in conflict

Victoria Prentis MP

It is over three years since we saw some unforgettable photographs in the media: the body of the little boy lying face down on the Turkish beach and the long line of refugees walking through the fields of Eastern Europe.

It was the images we didn't see which worried me most: the remains of the fifty people who suffocated to death in the refrigerated food delivery truck found in Austria, and the people left behind in Syria: too old or too young to cross the sea or walk 4,300km across Europe. Having long been a vociferous supporter of targeting aid to those who remain in the region, to discourage them from making the dangerous journey, I launched my "Singing for Syrians" initiative that year. The idea is simple: schools, churches, community groups – anyone can get involved in any way they like, whether it is organising their own event or just passing a bucket around at a singalong in the local pub. Hundreds of events have taken place since 2015, and we have raised hundreds of thousands of pounds for the Hands Up Foundation.

As the conflict in Syria continues we see new pictures: the photographs of innocent people suffocating in chemical attacks in Douma and barrel bombs repeatedly used on medical facilities. Air strikes in Idlib continue, threatening the lives of nearly 3 million civilians in the area. As headlines focus elsewhere, it is easy to forget about the most vulnerable who remain in Syria. But they rely on us to remember.

Children who have survived the war so far suffer from both physical and mental injuries. At the very least, nightmares and panic attacks set off by the sound of a bang, or the slamming of a door. Not only will the

children bear mental and physical scars for the rest of their lives; they also miss out on the basic education so essential to their development. When Save the Children arranged for me to travel to Jordan, I visited the Za'atari refugee camp – the second largest camp in the world – and met the children lucky enough to benefit from some formal education through the global Syrian aid programme, to which the UK Government has contributed.

The war in Syria is now well into its eighth year. It has denied a whole generation of children the chance to educate themselves to become the people the country so desperately needs to rebuild itself. Charities like the Hands Up Foundation are doing some vital work on the ground, paying medical salaries and funding schools. The David Nott Foundation gives Syrian surgeons the opportunity to undertake Hostile Environment Surgical Training. It remains hard to see how a country can be rebuilt following even a brief civil war. So much harder still, when so few doctors, nurses, teachers and civil servants have been home grown.

Syria is not alone in the problems it faces. All around the world, civilians are being attacked with growing impunity. Last year, a civilian was forced to flee his or her home because of war, violence or persecution every two seconds. From Afghanistan to Somalia, Yemen to South Sudan, the number of children living in a conflict zone has gone up by more than 75 percent from the early 1990s to more than 357 million in 2016. That amounts to around one in six of the world's children.

The UK Government has shown real leadership in protecting children so far, playing a key role in the “No Lost Generation” initiative in Syria and reorienting our education support to ensure that we reach displaced children in South Sudan, spearheading work preventing sexual violence in conflict and committing to reform the humanitarian system. In April this year, we endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration to underline our political support for the protection of schools during military operations and armed conflict.

Changes in policy and practice can make a real-world difference for children and their families. But the urbanisation of war, growing use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas, and more protracted and complex armed conflicts means there is so much more to do.

It is in all our interests to protect the next generation who hold the key to a prosperous, stable and secure future. A joint report by RUSI and Save the Children published earlier this year identified a range of opportunities for us to share policies proven to be effective at protecting civilians and their strategic benefits. We must acknowledge the specific threat to children of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, and call on all parties to conflict to avoid their use and take measures to reduce their impact, including updating the UK's own civilian protection strategy.

We should lead the way by training our own troops and those of our allies in civilian protection, particularly around the issue of explosive weapons in populated areas, to set an example as a champion of civilian protection on the world stage, while using our diplomatic clout to support robust accountability measures for those who breach international law.

The UK now has an opportunity to build on its leadership in civilian protection to set a global standard for the safety of children in conflict. I am encouraged by the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee's ‘Right to Protect’ report, which calls on the Government to update their protection of civilians strategy, with a focus on explosive weapons. With pressure building, I am hopeful the Government will act on their advice. Reaching out to protect the most vulnerable, upholding the rule of law and helping those who have fallen to get back on their feet again reflects who we are as a nation. As we prepare to leave the European Union, our unbeatable combination of defence, diplomacy and development stands us in good stead to make a lasting difference. The world's children deserve our attention.

Why a new development bank would benefit Britain and the developing world

Jeremy Lefroy MP

Although the United Kingdom does not have a development bank, there is one which was set up in London – France’s Agence Française de Développement (AFD), now one of the world’s largest. It was founded in 1941 during the darkest days of the Second World War by the French Government in London, and was first known as the Central Fund for Free France.

I believe that now is the time to found another development bank here, this time for the UK to fund development, both at home and internationally.

When we leave the European Union, we will no longer be members of the European Investment Bank (EIB), which is currently based in London and in which we have been a major shareholder. The EIB has helped to fund many major investments in the UK, including the Thames Tideway Tunnel, the Midlands Engine (partly in my own constituency), Merseytravel’s new trains, and it has guaranteed €200 million in loans to northern SMEs. It is essential that the private and public sector continue to have access to such substantial long-term funding on reasonable terms, which is often not available from the commercial sector.

Internationally, one of the most important challenges in the near future – alongside protecting the global environment – is the creation of decent jobs and livelihoods for the more than one billion young people who will need them during the next ten to 15 years. Most

of these jobs and livelihoods will be in the private sector or family enterprises in developing countries. They will need access to capital and the development of public infrastructure - without these, young people from Africa and beyond will continue to undertake dangerous journeys to seek opportunities that they do not have at home.

Job creation and economic development is often better achieved through returnable capital (loans or equity) than through grants. The former have two advantages.

Firstly, they ensure accountability over a longer period. A grant may typically last for two to five years, after which an evaluation is carried out and often support is terminated. Rarely does DFID or any other grant-making agency go back 10 or 20 years later to assess the long-term impact of the money which was granted. The performance of the work supported by loans or equity will be assessed regularly and corrective action taken where necessary. Hence long-term success is more likely, though by no means certain; and 20 years later the impact can be readily assessed.

Secondly, the funds are returnable, and therefore can be used again if and when repaid. Grants are ‘one-off’. As an example, the International Development Association (IDA – the World Bank’s fund for low income countries) is replenished every three years. About 36 per cent of the \$75 billion for 2017-2020 is coming from donors; but nearly 30 per cent was recycled funds which had been repaid by the borrowing countries. If all the money had initially been granted, these recycled funds would not be available.

There is another advantage that a development bank has and a grant-making agency generally does not – the ability to increase investment through raising bonds based on its balance sheet. AFD does this regularly.

I strongly advocate that the UK establishes a development bank both to support medium and long-term investment in UK projects and businesses, replacing the EIB; and to commit more of our existing international development assistance to loans supporting the creation of jobs and livelihoods. The Government and Parliament have already moved in this direction on equity capital by substantially increasing the taxpayer's investment in CDC (formerly the Commonwealth Development Corporation) through the international development budget.

The International Development Committee (on which I served from 2010 to 2017) recommended that the Government look at the establishment of a UK Development Bank for our work with developing countries. As the UK leaves the EU, and the EIB, there is even more reason to do so.

There are a number of arguments which I have heard against the establishment of a UK Development Bank. The first is that the UK already subscribes to multilateral development banks such as the World Bank, the African and Asian Development Banks. That is true. However, the UK has a limited (though valuable) say in the operation of those banks. That is why other countries such as France, Germany, Brazil, Japan and others have their own development banks. In addition, those banks could not fund UK-based projects.

The second is that the UK Government does not favour such 'independent' financial institutions owned by the taxpayer. The last few years will surely have proved the opposite. The Government has established the British Business Bank, focusing on investment and lending to SMEs. It also set up the Green Investment Bank, although it then (wrongly, in my opinion) sold it.

The final argument is that a Development Bank will require additional taxpayers' money to establish, which we cannot afford. That need not be the case. The initial capital for the bank could come from

the return of the UK's capital in the EIB and from our international development budget, as has already happened in the case of CDC. Once established, the UK Development Bank would then be able to issue bonds on the basis of its balance sheet.

The UK is a world leader in finance and in international development. Yet with the departure of the EIB, we will be losing a major financial institution. A UK Development Bank will not only replace that but give us an opportunity to demonstrate expertise and innovation, while ensuring that we meet some of our own needs for development capital as well as those of low-income countries. This Bank will be owned by the taxpayer and, if well managed, will be an investment that will benefit UK citizens as well as the world's poorest people for decades to come.

A more popular aid budget would be a more effective one

Rt Hon Sir Desmond Swayne MP

One measure of a more effective International Development policy would be to establish it as source of pride for taxpayers, rather than one of complaint. For a constituency MP, foreign aid remains high on the list of a litany of grievances that separate many voters from politicians and undermine faith in representative democracy.

My experience as a minister was that we never really made the case for international development as an important vehicle with which to project our power in pursuit of our vital national interests. So often we took the line of least resistance, accepting that the public generally disapproved of foreign aid, and so refraining from rubbing their noses in it by trying to tell them more about it.

Even our diaspora Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities remain largely unaware of the scale of assistance we provide to Pakistan and Bangladesh as our two largest bilateral aid budgets. This is really vital work, and the importance of these places to the UK goes far beyond those with heritage there. Ensuring a prosperous and stable Pakistan is critical not only for the future of millions of Pakistanis, but also the stability and security of both the region and the UK. Similarly, in Bangladesh, our support not only helps to ensure that the poor are not left behind by the country's economic growth, but in the last year or so we have done an enormous amount to assist the country in hosting the hundreds of thousands of Rohingya people fleeing persecution in Burma. Our aid work is a key part of keeping regions like South Asia stable, and keeping Britain safe.

We designed a campaign to inform Pakistani and Bangladeshi Brits about the impact of their taxes in the countries of their ancestors, but

it had to be cancelled because of restraints on government publicity in the approach to the 2015 election. Despite the work and expense, it never resurfaced. If we are to build a consensus behind our aid budget we should start by focussing much more on this sort of work, making the case for the benefits of UK Aid to those who can best relate to it. Spending £14 billion annually, at a time when domestic budgets are under such restraint, without seriously attempting to secure public support is a high-risk policy in a democracy.

The absence of a serious communication strategy in support of our chosen policy has meant that the only time that the public hears about it is in response to 'horror stories' about wasted expenditure. However distorted and sensationalised that reporting often turns out to be, in the absence of a comprehensive case in support of the policy, it merely reinforces the prejudices that taxpayers hold against it.

In addition to a serious effort to make the case for international development assistance there are two more operational points that would significantly assist in getting the public behind it.

First, to remove the Treasury's requirement that DFID's administrative costs are capped at 2%. It is this constraint that drives so much of the reliance on consultants and contractors to deliver aid projects. Though much of this reliance is entirely proper, it means that DFID, whilst minimising its own administration costs, is effectively funding the overheads and administration costs of NGOs and private sector companies, and feeding a toxic debate about inflated fees, salaries and profits.

Second, we should concentrate our development aid budget where it is more obviously in pursuit of our wider policy objective of prospering in a more stable world. Economic development has to be our main effort, as in the end international development comes down to one thing - it is all about jobs.

It is the lack of economic opportunity, the lack of livelihoods, whether caused by instability, violence, poor governance, or any other impediment to investment, that drives those who have the wherewithal to escape, often with the assistance of the despicable criminal trade in human misery, in pursuit of a better life elsewhere.

Linking our aid effort more conspicuously to dealing with the forces that drive the deeply worrying wave of human migration would demonstrably address a matter of great public concern. At the same time, it would reduce the scope for 'niche' projects going awry and bringing the entire development enterprise into disrepute.

A more popular international development effort would also be a more effective one.

Plastic pollution is a poverty issue, and Britain can make a difference

Vicky Ford MP

Last year, Maria das Gracas' house flooded eight times, repeatedly devastating the lives of her family and the wider community. In response to this perpetual problem her community is now taking action, working with partners of the international development NGO Tearfund to sort and collect the plastic and waste that clogs the river running through the neighbourhood, improving people's lives and preventing it from getting into the ocean too.

Marine plastics have rightly emerged as a major environmental concern over the last year since Sir David Attenborough and Blue Planet II hit our screens. However, marine litter is a symptom of a broader waste crisis: rapidly escalating waste generation in poor countries with little or no solid waste management. A recent international expert meeting concluded that more than half of the plastic entering the oceans comes from these countries. MPs who took part in the "Give Up Plastic for Lent" challenge earlier this year were overwhelmed with support from constituents who want to see the UK play its part in helping to find solutions.

Plastic pollution is not just a crisis for marine life. According to the UN, more than 2 billion people currently have no waste collection service. And even when solid waste is collected in developing countries, the reality is still often open dumping. This waste ends up being burned or dumped including in waterways and drainage channels. The health impacts are severe: blocked drains are a major cause of flooding, dumped (single-use) plastics are notorious for providing mosquito breeding grounds, and diarrhoeal diseases in children are twice as common in communities without waste

collection. Furthermore, fumes from burning cause an estimated 270,000 premature deaths every year and contribute to climate change. The resulting pollution also affects livelihoods, particularly in tourism and agriculture.

At present, extending waste management services to all is a low political priority for the international community. Consequently, municipal authorities lack the money and institutional capacity required, with existing collection schemes plagued by poor governance. Collection costs alone frequently surpass available financial resources at municipal level, and where partial collection schemes exist, they tend to prioritise wealthier areas and civic spaces, excluding those in poverty.

Communities in many countries have developed innovative grassroots approaches, but the 'public good' nature of waste management makes it challenging to scale up these solutions without additional finance or public sector support. Waste-pickers in particular, number around 20 million people.

These problems have been compounded by rapid growth in waste streams, including (often non-recyclable) single-use plastics. Multinationals are pioneering the use of micro-sachets in developing countries such as India, where more than half the shampoo sold is now packaged in non-recyclable micro-sachets. Similarly, PET plastic bottles (made from polyethylene terephthalate) have replaced once ubiquitous bottle deposit schemes in many developing countries.

With burgeoning waste streams and very patchy waste collection, large amounts of waste are inevitably subjected to informal burning or dumping, including into the oceans.

A comprehensive solution will require action on behalf of companies, donors and developing country governments. Developed countries' aid budgets can play a crucial role.

By working together donors and developing country governments could extend waste services to all 2 billion people who currently lack them. By increasing global aid to waste management from its current 0.3% to 3% and using proven low-cost community-based approaches, all 2 billion people could be reached. This would more than halve the amount of waste going into the oceans and save lives: a win-win for people and planet.

As for the UK's role, historically, approximately only 0.1% of the UK's aid budget has been allocated to waste management projects. However, ahead of the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in April this year, the Prime Minister announced extra funding worth £61m which was divided between DFID, DEFRA and the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy.

The amount of money spent directly helping people in poverty will be small initially, although this represents a good example of cross-government coherence that could tackle upstream issues related to multinational companies taking responsibility for addressing the sheer amount of plastic being produced, and downstream issues related to clearing up the resulting mess.

For this money to make a real difference the government must continue to learn from what has worked already, including prioritising assisting local governments in developing countries to improve governance; helping establish coordinating bodies that represent all the different actors involved in waste management from waste-pickers to multinationals and scaling up proven, low-cost community-based recycling projects. It is also vital that all government departments spending ODA demonstrate through clear measures how their work will improve the lives of people in poverty, like Maria.

British development policy must help unleash the potential of women and girls

Baroness Jenkin of Kennington

If we look at the countries where population is growing fastest, where unemployment is highest and where tensions are greatest, we see a common factor: female illiteracy. Education for girls is an issue of equality and justice, but it is also an issue of development.

The correlation is astonishing. Look at the high birth rate in countries of sub-Saharan Africa and you will find female illiteracy running at 50%, 60% or sometimes even 70% plus. Education gives women power over their own lives, and the opportunity to make their own choices, rather than being forced into early marriages.

It really is that simple. The current situation is not just a moral outrage; it is directly contrary to the interests of world peace, prosperity of country and community, health and happiness that such a huge proportion of our population—so many women and girls—should be unable to participate, alongside their brothers, in the economic life of their country. Female education is the tool that helps tackle so many challenges in the developing world. Societies where women can read, write and do maths as efficiently as their male counterparts will be healthier, happier and more prosperous. They will be in stabler populations and smaller families and, therefore, there will be fewer alienated and maladjusted young men whose egos require them to think of women as childbearing chattels.

This ambition and focus on women and girls is at the heart of the UK's overseas policy—a policy shared by both Penny Mordaunt at DFID and by the Foreign Office. It is not just a campaign for fairness and freedom, but has much wider repercussions for the progress of developing countries—not just overpopulation and poverty but the threat of war, disorder, terrorism, climate change and the loss of habitat and species. Mankind is conquering so many of today's challenges—from famine to disease—but, if we are to solve them sustainably, we need to prioritise the education of girls and easy access to contraception so that they can have control over their own bodies and their lives. Twelve years of full-time education is not the only answer to the world's problems, but it is a jolly good start.

The McKinsey Global Institute estimates that equality in the job market would yield an extra £20 trillion to global GDP by 2025. I have no feel for what £20 trillion looks like, but it is a heck of a lot of money and a life-changing, even world-changing opportunity.

Along with thousands of men and women, earlier this year I attended the International Women's Day March in London, organised by Care International. Marchers from all backgrounds, all political parties and none were there to support all kinds of causes. Many were marching because of their anger at injustice, at girls being denied an education, angry that half the women in the world have experienced physical or sexual violence. Many on the march were angry that 12 year-olds are even today being forced to marry, and that those young teenagers are becoming mothers before they are ready and often die in the process. Still today in 18 countries women need permission from a man to have a job. Around the world millions of girls, and here in the UK an estimated 24,000 girls, are at risk from FGM, and it was a privilege for me to walk during that march with the inspirational and brave anti-FGM campaigner Nimco Ali, who has spoken out about her own experience and is determined to do what she can to prevent others suffering as she did. Many on that march were concerned

that the World Economic Forum report found that the gender pay gap internationally is widening for the first time in decades. All were frustrated at the wasted talent and potential.

The UK can ensure that its world-leading international development efforts do something about these injustices, to give girls the same opportunities as boys, wherever they're born, and the Conservative Government has done much to put women and girls front and centre in DFID's work. It is essential that we continue to prioritise them for their own sake, and for the difference that we can make to development by unleashing their potential.

Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. In the UK and around the world, we give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. We do whatever it takes for children – every day and in times of crisis – transforming their lives and the future we share.

CFID works to promote effective international development and Conservative values. We aim to encourage enterprise, opportunity and aspiration for every family, no matter where they live; to foster a UK international development policy that tackles the causes and consequences of absolute poverty; and to encourage our members to speak out about the value delivered by Britain through effective aid, free trade and conflict prevention.

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