

Tips and advice for contacting your MP on overseas aid

Here are some of the top tips on suggested actions to help guide your contact with your MP. We've also put this on a flowchart (below).

- The first step is to [find out who your MP](#) is to see where they stand on aid. You can look up your MP on [TheyWorkForYou](#) and click their interests or do an 'advanced search' to see if they have spoken about aid or development in Parliament.
- Include a clear request for action for your MP. This could be to urge your MP to: write to the Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab MP calling on him to protect the 0.7% aid target; vote against any legislation that will reduce the target; and use their voice to speak out about these cuts.
- **Option 1:** Email. If you are writing an email, try to write something personal, and as short and snappy as possible – find our more detailed guide [here](#). Remember to include your address (or at least postcode) as most MPs will only respond to people in their constituency. Follow this up: if you received a reply, have they committed to the action you asked of them? If not, ask them again! If you haven't received a reply, follow them up again and consider phoning instead.
- **Option 2:** Phone call. This is a good option as a reminder nearer the time of a vote. If you are calling your MP's office, make your case for UK aid and ask your MP to act. You could then ask to set up a follow-up meeting if you wish, or send further information afterwards via email. If you spoke with an assistant, ask that your message is passed on and that you receive a written response.
- **Option 3.** Meeting. Check whether you can meet your MP during lockdown; usually MPs hold regular 'surgery' meetings with constituents but since the pandemic, meetings are likely to be virtual. They may have shared this on their website or social media. Contact the MP's office to ask for a meeting, making it clear that you'd like to have a proper conversation and tell them who they'll be meeting and why you want to talk about the importance of UK aid.
- Before meeting your MP, prepare an agenda and familiarise yourself with the online call platform you will use. You can see our guide [here](#) which covers how to prepare for a meeting in more detail. If you are part of a RESULTS UK grassroots group, you can arrange to meet with an MP together. Use this [draft agenda](#) to plan who will do and say what
- Always be friendly, make it personal, tell them how they can help, and remember that you don't need to be an expert – your passion and interest is the most important thing. And after any action, congratulate yourself!
- If you've taken action, consider asking people you know to do the same. They might find [this template email letter action](#) easier – they can modify it to use their own words.
- Here's a ['What actions could I take?' flowchart](#) with suggestions for what might be a suitable next step in your contact with your MP. It is only a guide, and anything you can do is a valuable action – thank you! Please [contact us](#) or speak to your Group Leader if you're not sure about any of the steps.

Talking points

- A decision to reverse the 0.7% aid target would be a U-turn on commitments made in the Government's 2019 General Election manifesto at a time when poverty is already rising.
- The Prime Minister has committed to improve girls' education, and the Conservative manifesto focused on ending preventable deaths by 2030. A cut to the budget is a step backwards in achieving these goals.
- UK aid has made a positive impact all around the world. For example, between 2015 and 2020, DFID supported at least 15.6 million children to gain a decent education, and over 50 million women and children to get better nutrition between 2015 and 2020.
- Based on the impact UK aid has had so far, it is estimated that the proposed cuts would mean over 100,000 fewer lives are saved by vaccinations against vaccine-preventable illnesses. 15.7 million fewer women and children will be reached by nutrition programmes, and 4.5 million fewer children will be supported to gain an education.
- 2021 marks an important opportunity for UK leadership as we embark upon a year in which we will host the G7, UN climate talks and a funding conference for global education. These cuts signal a step back from a global leadership role just as the level of need is greatest.
- MPs across parties are opposing the cuts, and it is vital that any proposed legislation to introduce them be defeated in a parliamentary vote.

Case study - Action Against Hunger, Somalia

The Somali Health and Nutrition (SHINE) Programme prevents and treats children suffering from malnutrition. It is funded by UK aid and implemented by the NGO Action Against Hunger. Read the full case study [here](#).



Mohamed playing with his brother after showing signs of full recovery. Photo credit: Action Against Hunger

Rates of malnutrition in Somalia amongst children are high, with 28% of under 5s classed as stunted (their height is below average). A well-functioning health system is critical to provide treatment and preventative services for life-endangering conditions such as malnutrition. However, the health system in Somalia is under-resourced and fragmented, making it ill-equipped to provide such treatment. The SHINE programme supports children to survive and thrive after suffering from malnutrition and works closely with the Ministry of Health to strengthen the health system.

Mohamed is one of the children who received treatment at the UK aid-funded health centre, supported by Action Against Hunger, in Hodan, Mogadishu. Mohamed was taken to the centre with his mother, Hafsa, after she noticed he was not feeding well and had swelling on his feet, a sign of malnourishment. Mohamed was monitored, given medication and therapeutic milk, and following successful treatment, he was discharged after 10 days. Community Health Workers, who support families in hard to reach places, continued to visit Mohamed regularly. **The UK is a key health donor in Somalia – a cut in UK aid risks collapsing that whole system.**