

## Be a Development Champion!

Guide to taking action in support of international development at summer events

July 2018



**SINCE 1990, NEARLY  
1.1 BILLION PEOPLE  
HAVE LIFTED THEMSELVES  
OUT OF EXTREME POVERTY**

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## About this guide

This guide aims to help RESULTS grassroots advocates take the summer 2018 campaign action in support of international development and UK Aid. You can find advice on planning your event in the May 2018 [Action Materials](#).

We've produced some case studies to help you take this action, which you can order from the RESULTS [head office](#). These can form the basis of conversations with members of the public about what UK aid spending achieves in the world. They may not end up agreeing with you, but it's important that the public knows a bit about what the UK's international development budget (over £13 billion in 2016) achieves.

Especially for those new to the issues, it's important to feel confident about what you're talking about. We don't expect you to be international development experts; however, you'll need to convince people that you have a bit of knowledge, which is where the case studies come in. Each case study is explained in this guide, with further reading about each issue.

For more detailed information on what UK aid is spent on, the Department for International Development (DFID) has a [Development Tracker](#), which is a great place to start.

International development isn't a science and while RESULTS has opinions on many of the issues covered, we don't work on all aspects of international development. We expect campaigners and the public to have their own opinions on many of these issues, and we need to be respectful of the opinions of others even if they don't agree with us!

## Why talking about international development is important

UK aid alleviates poverty and contributes to sustainable development around the globe. It is widely seen as highly effective, and DFID's programmes are among the most transparent in the world.

Most people in the UK believe that we have a moral duty to stand alongside people in developing countries. In 2015, we signed up to the [Global Goals](#), vowing to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030. Aid won't achieve that alone; big global changes are also needed, including reduced inequality, fairer economic systems, and action on climate change.

While there is a long way to go to eradicate extreme poverty, incredible progress has been made. Since 1990, nearly 1.1 billion people have lifted themselves out of extreme poverty. Official development assistance (ODA) from donors such as the UK has made a big contribution to social and economic development in many countries. Yet many people believe that aid doesn't make a difference. With attacks on aid spending in the media, scepticism of aid could increase and put the existing mainstream consensus on aid at risk. This could risk aid programmes that RESULTS has advocated strongly for, such as nutrition and immunisation programmes, inclusive education, and the fight against infectious diseases.

**This summer, we're asking RESULTS campaigners to take on a mission to show the public that aid works, and that it is the right thing to do.** Demonstrating that there is strong local feeling on the issue will help build the political support needed for an ongoing, world-class UK aid programme that focuses firmly on poverty reduction.

## Having good conversations about aid

Decision-makers such as local Members of Parliament need to know that there is public support for UK Aid. You can help people in your community understand what international development really does, and to help make their support visible. Here are some talking points and advice on how to speak about it in ways that have been proven to be effective.

### Having good conversations about aid and development

- Conversations about aid and development should be two-way, acknowledging people's concerns. They may admit that they don't know much about it – your conversation could be the one thing that enlightens them!
- You don't have to be an international development expert, though you do need to prepare what you'll say and have a few examples of real aid programmes. Start with questions to find out their ideas and let them explore what you're showing them.
- People usually accept facts which suit their existing world view. If you meet a convinced aid sceptic, it's unlikely that you'll change their mind. It's far more effective to have a conversation with someone who is prepared to engage with evidence of how people's lives in developing countries are improving.
- While our arguments must always be based on evidence, research shows that starting out with statistics isn't the most persuasive thing to do. Showing how international development helps people become independent, that it is about working in partnership, and based on shared values, is most persuasive. Evidence of progress is important, but only plays a supporting role. Check out [this handy guide](#).

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- Use stories – your own, if you have first-hand experience, or case studies of how aid affects the lives of real people (see over the page). Human stories can easily be related to, and are powerful transmitters of empathy and hope.
- Good conversations take a little time, and you need to build up trust if people are to go away convinced. Focus on a smaller number of high-quality conversations rather than developing a practiced routine that you can deliver in a few seconds.
- Your aim should be for people to leave feeling good about what UK aid achieves, not just knowing facts. Try to find out what change if any the conversation has made to their views.

## Some language tips

- While ‘international development’ is a vague term for people who aren’t experts, ‘foreign aid’ is a term that carries negative connotations for many people.
- ‘People in the world’s poorest places’ is a phrase that avoids stigmatising people as “poor”, but says that they are people like ourselves, just living in poor circumstances.
- ‘Standing on their own two feet’ is a metaphor that brings to life both the goal of international development, and the potential that everyone has within them.
- Phrases such as ‘people deserve the same chances as us’, and ‘level playing field’ address the idea of fairness in ways people can easily relate to.
- “UK Aid” (with a capital ‘A’) refers to the official aid programme of the UK. At RESULTS, we are broadly supportive of this programme; however, we will of course be constructively critical of any programmes that we don’t believe focus firmly and effectively on poverty reduction. For an independent view of the effectiveness of UK Aid, the reports of the [Independent Commission on Aid Impact](#) (ICAI) are a great place to start.

## Case studies

The case studies that follow have also been printed on A3 boards which you can order from the RESULTS [head office](#) for use on stalls and at events – just give us enough notice to post them to you. You can also download a print-ready version from the [action page](#) on our website.

On the first side, we've set out an example of what international development achieves, an issue in the world that we believe needs to be addressed, or a controversy which is sometimes raised.

The second side shows a further aspect of the issue which people may not know about, or a way in which resources are having impact. You can use these as a starting point for conversations, giving them plenty of time to assimilate the information for themselves.

You may want to think about which examples of international development you'd use if you were talking to a more sceptical person. We've deliberately provided some case studies which are controversial, but you might find that examples of, say, public health programmes have more resonance with some people.

You are likely to come across people who use the 'charity begins at home' argument, or who say that we shouldn't give money to countries that have space programmes. It's always a good idea to make the moral case for helping others, and to show that it isn't an either / or when it comes to spending 0.7% of our national income on aid.

## Gavi, The Vaccine Alliance

The UK is a leading donor to Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. This global funding mechanism brings together public and private sectors to create equal access to new and underused vaccines for children living in the world's poorest countries. It pools resources to gain access to cheaper vaccines, reaching more children in the most remote areas.

The creation of Gavi in 2000 dramatically increased the funding available for immunisation. It has contributed to the immunisation of 640 million children, preventing more than 9 million deaths. Since 2011, UK aid has immunised 67.1 million children against preventable diseases through support to Gavi. However, the world is still a long way from reaching global vaccination targets, and 1 in 10 children receive no vaccines at all.



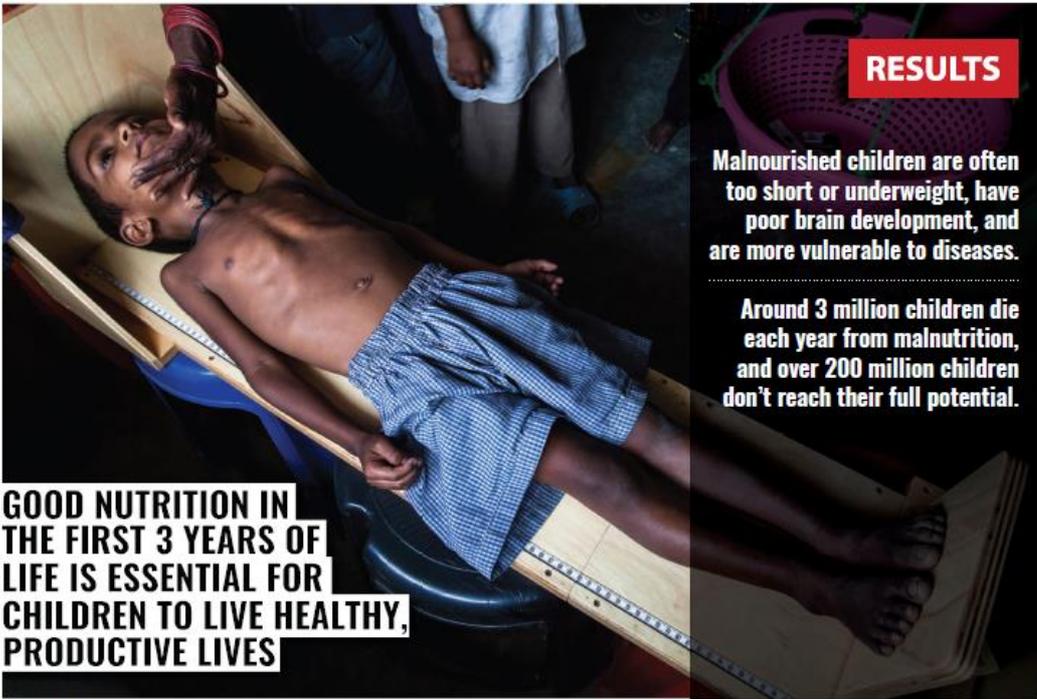
The Center for Global Development wrote [this detailed analysis](#) of Gavi's impact.

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## Nutrition for healthy lives

Good nutrition in the first 3 years of life is essential for children to live healthy, productive lives. Malnourished children are often too short or underweight, have poor brain development, and are more vulnerable to diseases. Around 3 million children die each year from malnutrition, and over 200 million children don't reach their full potential.

Since 2011, UK aid has reached 30 million children under 5, pregnant and breastfeeding women through nutrition programmes. The UK has played a big role in the global fight against malnutrition. In 2013, then Prime Minister David Cameron established the 'Nutrition for Growth' agenda, which raised \$23 billion of new funding for nutrition programmes to reduce child stunting globally by 20 million by 2020.



**RESULTS**

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**GOOD NUTRITION IN THE FIRST 3 YEARS OF LIFE IS ESSENTIAL FOR CHILDREN TO LIVE HEALTHY, PRODUCTIVE LIVES**

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Read [more about undernutrition](#) and what [more needs to be done](#) to tackle the problem.

## The importance of education

Today, 264 million children and young people are not in school; and millions more are attending school but not learning. Lack of a high-quality education is preventing millions of people around the world from escaping the cycle of poverty, especially girls, children with disabilities, and children in conflict-affected countries.

Since 2011, UK aid has supported 11.3 million children in primary and lower secondary education. The UK has been the leading contributor to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), which works with countries to finance higher quality education and improving children's educational attainment.



Read more about [the importance of education](#) and about how [more needs to be done](#) by the UK to support the work of GPE.

## Aid to Middle-Income Countries

More and more countries are reducing poverty and have become 'middle-income' countries, such as India, China, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, and Nigeria, with more set to follow. But economic growth can hide significant inequality, such as in access to health services. Now, over 70% of people living in extreme poverty reside in middle-income countries.

Since 1990, nearly 1.1 billion people have escaped extreme poverty. Aid from donors such as the UK has made a big contribution. Aid won't end poverty by itself, and countries must increasingly fund their own services. Global changes are also needed, including reduced inequality, fairer economic systems, and action on climate change.



An evidence-based policy that [guides the process of transition](#) from donor support is vital. Economic figures aren't enough, and withdrawal or changes to support must take account of health and inequality.

## A communications programme in Ethiopia

Poverty disproportionately affects women and girls, and effective communications programmes can be as important as economic development, to address issues such as child marriage, sexual violence and the importance of education.

Yegna is Girl Effect's youth brand in Ethiopia, tackling issues such as child marriage, sexual harassment, violence and education. Through its radio drama and talk show, TV special, digital channels and music, it inspires behaviour change for girls, boys, their families and communities, by encouraging them to rethink what it means to be a girl in Ethiopia today. Their work came under threat in 2017 following media criticism on what UK aid should and should not be spent on.



You can read more in [this media article](#) which covered the controversy, and about [whether media coverage can hinder aid effectiveness](#).

## Cash transfers for economic opportunity

Simply giving cash to aid recipients, often with no strings attached, has been vilified in the media as a 'foreign aid cash point'. But it has been shown to be a very efficient way of helping communities in urgent need. Funds can be transferred quickly without the need for agencies to buy and transport supplies, often from another country.

Studies have shown that rather than discouraging people from seeking employment, 'cash transfers' can improve school attendance and reduce child labour, boost access to healthcare, improve diets, and stimulate local economies. If the basics people need are available locally, cash transfers can help to revive local markets and build prosperity in the long term.



[This blog post](#) explains the effectiveness of cash transfer programmes, and this post on why [some of the myths](#) about giving out cash aren't true.

## Corruption in Kenya

More than 40% of people in Kenya live below the poverty line and 10,000 children die every year from diarrhoea caused by unsafe water. Corruption is a problem in Kenya but, despite this, aid still has an impact in the poorest and most vulnerable communities. For example, aid from the UK has helped 300,000 of Kenya's poorest children go to school, over 50% of them girls.

Auditing by non-government organisations helps to tackle corruption by ensuring promises are kept on providing local services to the community, such as repairs to water pipes or delivery of health care. Tracking how money is spent ensures that benefits go to the intended recipients. Aid money can also be used to support this process.

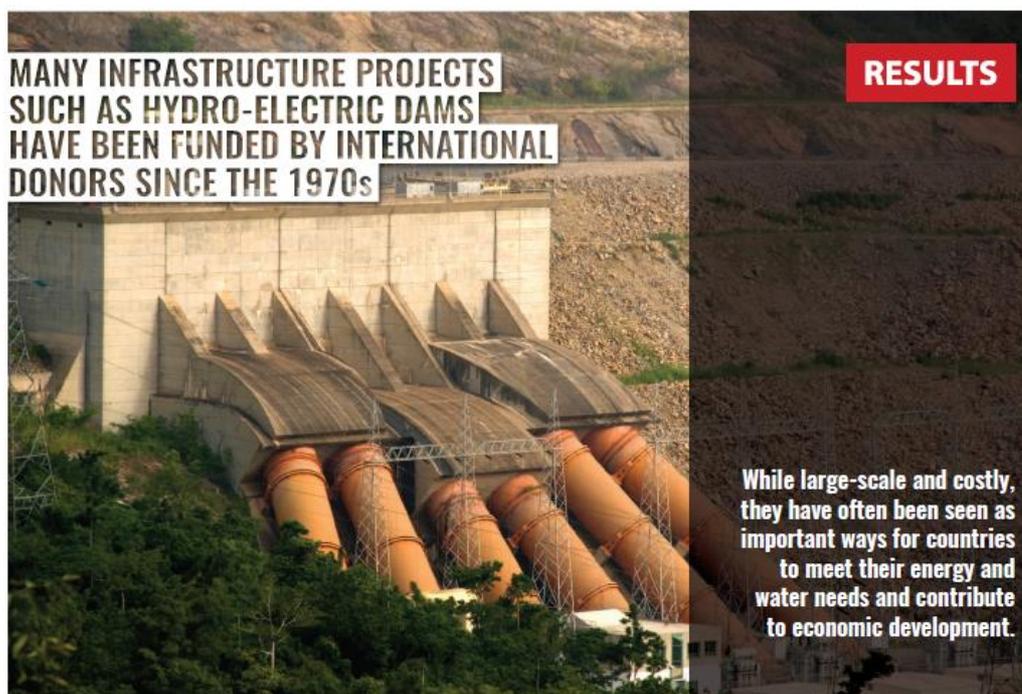


Read more about [public perceptions of corruption](#) and some advice on [how to talk about it](#).

## Large-scale infrastructure projects

Large scale and costly infrastructure projects such as hydro-electric dams have been seen as important ways for countries to meet their energy and water needs and contribute to economic development. Many such projects have been funded by international donors since the 1970s.

Critics have pointed out that large dams and reservoirs have often been built at the expense of rural communities, who have been forced to sacrifice their lands and livelihoods to them, yet have reaped few benefits. Economic benefits of these kinds of investments must be shared equitably.



Read more about [dams in Africa](#) combining national and local development.

## Follow-up

Building support for international development through conversations with the public is vital to building long-term support for UK Aid, but it's also important to show your local MP that such support exists. There are many ways that you can show your MP the public support that exists for international development and UK aid in your constituency. Here are some ideas but feel free to think of your own – the more creative, the better!

- Ask people who come to your stall or event to write a short message on a post-it note or similar, which you can then collect and send to your MP. You could also put these together to create a big board of messages, which creates a great photo opportunity!
- Ask people to write why they support UK aid on a whiteboard and take some photographs on the day (don't forget to always ask permission first though). You could even record some audio or video messages too.
- Why not invite someone from the local media along? This is a great way to amplify your campaign message, reach new audiences and create a buzz! You could share this with your MP so they read all about your event. Post photos or tweets on social media, making sure you include your MP's handle so they can see what you've been up to! Use '#AidWorks' or #UKaid to spread the message further!

**Please let us know about your event and conversations, and any contact with your MP. [Event evaluation form](#).**

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