

COALITION
FOR GLOBAL
PROSPERITY
Britain as a force for good



The Future of Aid

Development in the 2020s

INTRODUCTION



This essay collection brings together the next generation of thought leaders in international development, showcasing the new and innovative ideas we will need to take on the major global challenges of today; from women's empowerment to climate change, and how aid can and should be used to tackle security issues such as terrorism and extremism at their root cause.

As the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated, we live in an ever more interconnected world, where events on one side of the globe will inevitably impact those of us on the other. Whether it be infectious disease, climate change or the spread of extremist views, these global trends do not respect national borders, meaning none of us are safe until all of us are safe. The UK is uniquely placed to lead the way in tackling these global challenges, and we must continue to draw on both our capital and our technical capabilities to alleviate extreme poverty globally, in turn making the world a safer, healthier and more prosperous place for us all.

The authors in this collection delve into the width and breadth of what aid and development could look like in the 21st century, from using conservation to curb future pandemics to the possibility of a global green new deal. If we are to emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic as a stronger, safer, fairer and more sustainable world, we must listen to the bold ideas that this next generation of leaders have to offer.

Lauren Pizzey
Editor, *The Future of Aid: Development in the 2020s*

DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this essay collection do not necessarily reflect the views of the Coalition for Global Prosperity or our supporters. The authors do not necessarily endorse all of the views expressed throughout the essay collection outside of their contribution.

“As we emerge from the pandemic, it is only right that we begin to look ahead to the other issues of our time such as climate change and preventing future pandemics. By continuously learning from our experiences and making the most of our international reach, Global Britain really can achieve its full potential of being an incredible force for good on the world stage”.

Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt MP
Secretary of State for International Development 2017 - 2019



“This collection of essays provides an important insight into the world-leading expertise of the UK in the field of global development, although the recent cut in UK aid spending has damaged our reputation. I hope it is reversed.

The world’s biggest challenges will require us all to come together in order to help the most vulnerable people from climate change, extremism and conflict”.

Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP
Secretary of State for International Development 2003 - 2007

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Nikita Malik

The Role of Aid in Reducing Extremism and Terrorism Abroad

Nikita Malik is a research expert with a background in counterterrorism and countering violent extremism.

Malik has presented evidence from her research globally, including at the Houses of Parliament, European Parliament, the United Nations, and the State Department. She has also worked closely with key national governmental bodies, such as SO15 Counter Terrorism Command, the National Crime Agency, DCMS, the Home Office, the Ministry of Justice, and more. As a result, her work has been widely cited in both corporate and government documents and discussions. Nikita previously served as the Director of the Centre for the Response to Radicalisation and Terrorism at the Henry Jackson Society from 2017-2021.

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 marked the beginning of the United States' "endless wars" in the Middle East. Prior to this point, American combat operations in the region had been generally temporary and short-term. President Biden's recent promise to stop "endless wars" has meant the removal of most combat troops in favour of a more narrowly focused American mission in the region. The recent withdrawal of American forces from Afghanistan means that NATO, including the United Kingdom, has followed suit.

Yet, following decades of intervention by the United States and the United Kingdom in the wars of the Middle East, important questions need to be asked about what a narrowly focused transatlantic mission in the region will look like. Part of this analysis must include understanding the desired end-goals of American and British national interests, and what role, if any, foreign aid will take in achieving these goals in the future.

While thousands of US and UK troops have been withdrawn from bases in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria, these areas remain ripe for conflict and violent intervention from both state and non-state actors. The withdrawal of troops has been mirrored by decisions to reduce foreign aid from the US and the UK. Through a process called rescission, Trump repeatedly called for a 20% cut to foreign aid from the US, only to have the idea rejected by Congress. In the UK, the equivalent of 0.5% of national income was spent as overseas aid in 2021, down from 0.7% in previous years. In 2021-22, the UK will provide £10 billion of Official Development Assistance (ODA).

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When it comes to reducing the threat of extremism and terrorism abroad, foreign aid serves in our interest. Non-state actors are adept at filling gaps to provide resources and financial stability as a means of recruiting new members.

As such, it is important to consider the wider impact that a long-term reduction or rescission of foreign aid may have on national and international stability. The global network led by al-Qaeda has diminished over the years, but the annual threat assessment from the United States intelligence community continues to stress that al-Qaeda still seeks to conduct attacks abroad and remains one of the greatest Sunni terrorist threats to the United States. Adding to the complexity of risks in the region is the presence of the Islamic State Khorasan Province, active along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Like the Taliban, the group may seek to exploit the uncertainty and security gaps left after the withdrawal of international troops from the region.

In 2019, the UK was the third-largest international donor to Afghanistan, after the US and Germany. Previous UK aid in Afghanistan has helped 749,000 children to gain a decent education, of which 290,000 were girls, from 2015-2020. Moreover, foreign aid has provided 6.2 million people with access to electricity since 2004. Programs such as Afghanistan Support to the Peace Process have widely supported peacebuilding activities in the region. Without a presence in Afghanistan, the United Kingdom and the United States will have to increasingly rely on its partners in the region.

Despite the peace agreement signed between the United States and the Taliban in February 2020, the Taliban continue to advance in and attack districts across Afghanistan. The Taliban committed to banning al-Qaeda or any other extremist group from operating in the areas it controls, but a UN report released last year found that the Taliban had failed to break its ties with them. Al-Qaeda has between 400 and 600 operatives active in 12 Afghan provinces and is running training camps in the east of the country. In his speech justifying the decision to shift focus from Afghanistan, President Biden stressed that the United States should focus instead on challenges from Russia and China. By citing the need to build American competitiveness against malign state actors, Biden's new aim is to work with like-minded partners to combat cyber-threats. While the focus on cyber-security may be justified by the impact of Covid-19, and the resulting shift to online life, the threat from non-state actors such as al-Qaeda and Islamic State has weakened but not yet disappeared.

In the United Kingdom, we should be proud of our achievements in using foreign aid to reduce violence, extremism, and the threat of terrorism. In Yemen alone, from 2015-2020, DFID support meant that 6.9 million people were given humanitarian assistance in the form of food aid, cash, and voucher transfers. During this period, more people were reached by DFID humanitarian programmes in Yemen, than in any other country. And the Yemen CSSF Programme and Yemen Peacebuilding Programme helped to support a peace process in Yemen.

In Syria, the UK has spent over £3.5 billion between February 2012 and December 2020 to help people affected by conflict, including in opposition held and contested areas. British aid has provided more than 28 million food rations, 18 million medical check-ups, and 12 million vaccines across Syria and the region. Our support has reached millions of people and has saved lives in

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Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq, and Egypt. Notable UK foreign aid projects in Syria include Syria CSSF: Future Syria Programme, which was used to reduce conflicts and develop resilience in the country.

But perhaps the UK's greatest advancement in reducing the threat of terrorism and violence has been in Somalia. Though the extent of success is hard to measure, DFID funding played a key role in the formation of the new federal states in Somalia, and helping the new states establish themselves as viable governments – paving the way for support from the World Bank. DFID funding helped support the Federal Government of Somalia's Stabilisation Plan for political and development work in districts recently recovered from Al-Shabaab, and in building partnerships with a range of Somalian companies, NGOs, and universities to support Somali-designed grassroots projects in parts of Somalia recently recovered from Al-Shabaab. The Somalia Stabilisation Programme helped to further reduce local drivers of conflict in areas of Somalia recently recovered from al-Shabaab control. The Somalia Counter Extremism Programme provided support to the Federal Government of Somalia to implement its National Programme for treatment and handling of disengaged combatants and was designed to incentivise defections from Al Shabaab by providing alternative paths and viable rehabilitation options.

The withdrawal and reduction in foreign aid, with limited international support on the ground, leaves a vacuum that risks being filled by non-state actors. As well as the achievement of much larger policy objectives like promoting democracy or human rights, peace and security investments enable other states to combat terrorism, counter international crime, and stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction—stopping potential crises before they escalate to the point where they require direct intervention further down the line.

To combat extremism and terrorism in the future, foreign aid remains a good investment.



Dr Niall McCann

How Conservation can Prevent the next Pandemic

Dr Niall McCann is a conservationist and broadcaster focusing on anti-poaching, the illegal wildlife trade, and pandemic prevention. He is a National Geographic Explorer and an award-winning wildlife TV presenter, with programmes on the BBC, PBS, Animal Planet and the Discovery Channel. Niall is the Conservation Director for National Park Rescue and co-Chair of the EndPandemics Alliance, a Trustee of the Royal Geographical Society and the Wallacea Trust, an Ambassador of the British Inspiration Trust and Smash Life, and a member of the Brecon Mountain Rescue Team.

Eighteen months after a new respiratory illness was detected in China, with an outbreak centred around a live animal market in Wuhan, the devastating consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic are clear for all to see. Human memories are short, and as our lives return to normal it is vital that we don't forget about the causes of the disease, if we are to prevent this from happening again. COVID-19, like AIDS, Ebola, SARS and many other diseases before it, was caused by our broken relationship with nature, and if we are to meaningfully reduce the risk of future pandemics, we must place nature – and its conservation – at the heart of our post-pandemic recovery.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a catastrophe the world over, leading to more than three million deaths and wiping an estimated \$11.5 trillion off the global economy. Almost inevitably, the world's poorest have suffered the most, with the World Bank estimating that up to 150 million people will be pushed into absolute poverty as a result of the pandemic, reversing decades of progress on poverty alleviation.

With the rollout of vaccines around the world, there is hope that the pandemic is past its peak and will soon become just another endemic illness, like seasonal flu, that is routinely managed through regular vaccination programmes. As we 'build back better' from the economic and social shock of the disease, international development aid will play an important role in supporting post-pandemic recovery packages in developing nations.

Dealing with the immediate consequences of the current pandemic is a vital and monumental task, but reducing the risk of future pandemics must also be a priority.

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Any post-pandemic recovery package that fails to address the root cause of COVID-19 – and other emerging infectious diseases – will only be a sticking plaster, and it will only be a matter of time before the next pandemic hits us.

Recent research has demonstrated that ~60% of emerging infectious diseases come from animals, and of these, ~71% come from wild animals. The rate of emergence of new infectious diseases has quadrupled in the past 50 years as a direct result of human activity. This is driven by accelerating levels of deforestation and the trade in wildlife, which disrupt natural ecosystems and greatly increase the amount of contact that people and livestock have with wildlife.

Intact ecosystems operate in relative equilibrium, whereby populations of each species are regulated by predator-prey dynamics and other natural forces. When people disrupt forest ecosystems through activities such as deforestation and hunting, the species which survive our interference tend to be those, such as bats and rodents, which naturally carry high viral loads. In these circumstances, where their numbers are no longer constrained by larger predators, these species not only survive but can proliferate due to a phenomenon known as ‘ecological release’. The combination of having more potential disease vectors and more contact between people, their livestock, and wildlife, greatly increases the risk of zoonotic spillover.

The risk of disease transmission is highest where people and livestock interface with degraded natural ecosystems, but can also occur when animals are captured and traded for human use. Wild animals taken from the forests and traded for food, pets and medicine, are often trafficked, stored and slaughtered in appalling conditions, accumulating higher viral loads the further down the supply chain they travel. Markets selling wildlife that is slaughtered on-site, such as the infamous Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market in Wuhan, are a Petri dish for disease, creating the perfect conditions for virus transmission among – and between – species.

All evidence suggests that if we are to reduce the risk of future pandemics, we must change our relationship with nature from one that is predominately exploitative, to one that is predominately protective and restorative. For far too long people have made the mistake of thinking that by funding environmental protection you are automatically eliminating funds from human development, i.e. that environmentalism is zero sum. There has been a slow but steady realisation that human health, animal health and planetary health are all One Health; if we aspire to have healthy and thriving human populations we must have a healthy and thriving environment.

It’s a little-known fact that over half of global GDP is either moderately or highly dependent upon nature. At the most basic level we need functioning ecosystems to provide us with abundant clean water, clean air, protein from meat and fish, pollination services, carbon sequestration, flood mitigation and all of the other ecosystem services that we get, for free, from a healthy environment. We can now add pandemic prevention to this list too.

Traditional nature conservation has an obvious role to play in pandemic prevention by policing ‘risky’ behaviours such as deforestation and the illegal wildlife trade; reducing forest loss and controlling the number of potential disease vectors entering the supply chain.

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But conservationists need to look beyond policing and start innovating. For me, the most exciting area of development in this field is the use of innovative finance to deliver Payments for Ecosystem Services, enabling people to make a living by protecting the environments which deliver a general good for humanity, rather than incentivising them to destroy those very same environments, by only valuing the commodification of natural resources.

In simple terms, an elephant has to be worth more alive than dead; a tree worth more standing than felled; a river worth more clean than polluted. Not only must we change what we pay for, but we must also change how we pay for it. Traditional methods of funding are often slow, inefficient and don't directly engage frontline communities, further incentivising people to seek the quick rewards of resource exploitation. Global funders should take advantage of developments in blockchain technologies to speed up the delivery of funds to the places that need them most, engaging frontline communities directly, and making transactions between donors and recipients rapid and transparent. Innovation around the tokenisation of payments should also be encouraged, to incentivise investment in education, health, wellbeing and other projects for general good. My organisation, National Park Rescue, created a token-based reward system called Sables, which are worth twice their base value if redeemed for school fees or medical bills.

All of this will require a major paradigm shift in how we value and pay for natural resources, and people might ask the obvious – but misplaced – question: who will pay for all of this? I say misplaced, because we are all currently paying for not having done this before. A team at Princeton University calculated that a total spend of around \$26 billion per year – concentrated on reducing deforestation and regulating the wildlife trade, as well as improving livestock husbandry and the early detection and control of disease outbreaks – would substantially reduce the risk of another pandemic. Spread over the next 10 years, this cost would still be only 2% of the economic damage of Covid-19, and would be almost entirely cancelled out by the suite of ancillary benefits from these actions, including boosting ecosystem services, climate change mitigation and poverty alleviation.

The global international development aid budget is ~\$150 billion per year, easily enough to substantially reduce the risk of another pandemic, if allocated appropriately. By focusing more aid on nature conservation, including reducing deforestation and controlling the wildlife trade, international development aid budgets could help protect us from the next pandemic while also adding significant other benefits that will help achieve the UN's sustainable development goals. There are very few silver bullets in life; nature conservation is one such silver bullet.

It is clear to me that nature conservation must be at the heart of international development aid and future pandemic prevention strategies. There is futility in investing in education programmes while allowing the surrounding forests to be degraded, leading to regular disease outbreaks, increased flooding, reduced soil fertility, loss of pollinators, and ultimately desertification and local temperature increases that are already making large parts of the world uninhabitable. If we are serious about using our international development aid intelligently, then protecting and expanding natural ecosystems should not be seen as just a component of aid, it should be the foundation upon which all development aid projects are built.



Lindsay Smith

Taking on Climate Change, one Pound at a Time

Lindsay's first role in the environment sector was less than 6 years ago after a stint working in the advertising sector. Combining a Biological Sciences degree with the shrewd nature of the advertising sector, she started her campaigning career at WWF-UK working on climate change. she went on to co-lead the UKs Net Zero campaign from The Climate Coalition, followed by a series of consultancy roles straddling campaigning and strategic communications with the Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit and the European Climate Foundation. The latest focus of her work has been using strategic communications to drive forward the need for both public and private finance to tackle the loss of nature and biodiversity.

I've got a clear memory of the moment I realised that we'd had a breakthrough with climate action. Summer had drawn to a close for another year, but my sister, brother-in-law and I were sitting outdoors enjoying an uncharacteristically warm October lunch. It was 2018 and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) had released their special report on the consequences of surpassing 1.5 degrees of global temperature rise. My brother-in-law, a games designer that had never once mentioned climate change, turned to me and said, "Pretty bleak that report wasn't it. What are the top things that we can actually do to help?". It was a question I was used to, but not from him. The rallying cries of Greta Thunberg combined with the IPCC report had triggered a new lease of energy within climate campaigners and everyday people around the globe.

And from there it snowballed. David Attenborough used his position of power at Davos in 2019 to call on world leaders and businesses to step up their game. The first global school strikes kicked in not long afterwards in March; impassioned young people took to the streets to reclaim the futures they feared they were losing. The largest mass lobby of Westminster for climate and nature happened that summer, with over 12,000 people engaging in conversations with their MPs, seeking answers and action, and activists blocked roads and shouted that enough was enough. Members of Parliament from all corners of the political spectrum joined forces, led by Conservative MP Simon Clarke, urging Theresa May to make an ambitious Net Zero target a legacy of her time in power. By December 2019 I was trudging back to Coventry for Christmas with my family, jubilant and emboldened with the news that just over 10 years since the UK led the world with a Climate Change Act, the Net Zero target had been made legally binding.

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Since then, momentum has gone from strength to strength. Climate change can no longer be called an issue for the left or right wing. It sits firmly on the radar of the majority of voters, regardless of their political persuasion. But whilst the rhetoric, and in some cases the action behind it, is still coming along in strides in the UK and elsewhere in the world, a dent is yet to be made on mitigating against the wrath of worsening impacts felt across the globe.

We've long known that climate change disproportionately impacts developing countries. Droughts decimate crops and reduce agricultural productivity. Floods wipe out the homes of those that don't have the resources to protect or rebuild. Increases in temperature exacerbate the prevalence of diseases such as dengue and malaria. Just under half of the global population live in rural areas of developing countries where both income and sustenance are often generated from farming the land, fuel is from self-sourced timber, and mangroves maintain fish stock levels and protect communities from coastal erosion.

At a past United Nations General Assembly meeting, the delegate from Botswana spoke of climate-related drought impacting the outputs of agriculture and leading to increases in food poverty within his country. Next, the delegate from Tajikistan described the drastically declining availability of freshwater, worsening with each year.

The importance of approaching solutions to climate change and the destruction of nature in parallel is growing in understanding. The protection of some of the world's most precious places - rainforests, mangroves, peatlands - all have significant benefits for tackling climate change; sequestering vast amounts of carbon and taking the brunt out of coastal storms to protect communities from shifting weather patterns. In the process of protecting these areas, communities are given more long-term security; the knowledge that their food, fuel and income sources won't be gone within their lifetime.

So the question is, as self proclaimed world leaders in climate action, what are the opportunities that the UK government has to make a meaningful dent in the coming months?

There are of course a lot of things that need to be done if we're to make progress towards keeping temperatures below 1.5 degrees and securing a nature-positive future. But having recently turned my hat towards the land use and finance side of the climate debate, I was astonished by the complexity of the work that needed to be done to tackle emissions from the land, and the role of finance in achieving that. As with anything in this world, money is often at the heart of both the problem and the solution. At the end of last year the UK government made strides in the right direction, committing to "end export finance, aid funding and trade promotion for new crude oil, natural gas or thermal coal projects, with very limited exceptions". But whilst the obvious big polluters are starting to be cut off from the UK's wallet, some of the less obvious culprits remain firmly supported.

The global food system contributes a third of all greenhouse gas emissions globally, with some of the bigger corporations that monopolise the space also being responsible for mass swathes of biodiversity loss and human rights abuses. Aid spending intended to boost the economies of poorer nations and support the prosperity of communities often flows from the balance sheets of the UK and other donors, to the pockets of industrial agricultural players.

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The growth of sustainable agriculture and rural development, sidelined by corporate power. Shifting development money away from harm and towards good seems obvious, but it's not yet been done. The Finance in Common Summit hosted by Italy offers a pivotal moment for Ministers to scrutinise the way development banks are spending the money they are entrusted with. G7 countries rightly contribute a vast amount of development funding, and with the UK holding the G7 presidency until the end of 2021, there still remains scope and time for the UK government to lead the way, showcase what being an active shareholder really looks like, and mandate the transition of development spend away from harmful, carbon intensive, nature destructive projects back towards the roots of what it was intended for - social and environmental benefit.

In 2019 it was estimated that over £560 billion a year was spent on agricultural subsidies worldwide, with only 1% of that used to benefit the environment. Debates around reforming the UK's share of these subsidies have been ongoing for a tantalisingly long time - how do you strike the balance between supporting British farmers, whilst reforming agricultural practices to solve the biggest problem of our time? Eventually last year legislation was approved to begin the transformation in the UK, and soon a new Environmental Land Management Scheme will begin trials. But the integrity of the environmental ambition of the reforms must be protected, and the outcomes scaled up. If they are, we could become the first country to create a template through which land managers and farmers could be rewarded for tackling land-based carbon emissions and restoring ecosystem services. We could work with our trade partners, negotiating news deals on the premise of others phasing out harmful subsidies, eventually globalising the approach and tempting more investment from private financiers.

With the rise of Covid-19 last year came the parallel increase in unsustainable levels of sovereign debt. With around half of global GDP estimated to be dependent on nature, murmurings of support for "inclusive, green debt relief" began to gain traction. This in its most simplistic form see's money handed over to support the green recovery efforts of those that need it the most, whilst kick-starting a scale up in international nature and climate finance. With climate finance being a core pillar of the UK's COP26 presidency this year, there's a role to be played in driving forward new and innovative approaches to tackling multiple problems in one fell swoop, backing and using platforms that allow such deals to take place, and vocally championing the outcomes.

Like many people that work towards climate change solutions, there are days where I wonder whether we still have the time to put right all the things we've left nail biting close to solve. And of course, lives have already been lost, habitats have been destroyed and there are species that haven't made it through the turmoil. But ultimately when I think back to that jubilant moment on the train back to Coventry following the UK's Net Zero announcement, bouncing with energy and pride, I feel hopeful that we'll not only solve this one crisis, but that we'll drive forward solutions with the most vulnerable people at their heart.



Jamie is the Chief Executive of UK Music, the body representing the UK music industry. Jamie is an experienced campaigner, a communications specialist and a former political adviser who has held senior roles at the highest levels of Government. He previously worked as a special adviser at DCMS and at the Department of Health and Social Care.

Jamie holds a Bachelor's degree in Music from the University of Nottingham and a Masters in International Relations. He is a trustee of Britten Pears Arts and a member of Council of the Royal College of Music, and sits on the board of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the advisory board of English National Opera, and the Creative Industries Council.

Jamie Njoku-Goodwin

Soft Power as a British Export

When the American political scientist Joseph Nye introduced the notion of soft power in the late 1980s, culture was explicitly cited as one of its primary sources. It was, Nye said, “the ability to shape the preferences of others through appeal and attraction... the currency of soft power is culture, political values, and foreign policies.” Since then, the ability to co-opt rather than simply coerce has been increasingly recognised as a vital part of statecraft, both in domestic and foreign policy terms.

Of course, the use of culture – and in particular, music – as a political tool predates Nye by centuries. Opera was used as a vehicle for political propaganda from the moment of its birth, whether that be projecting the power and influence of its princely Italian patrons in the 17th century, the “propaganda opera” of the late 18th century that championed French revolutionary values, or the aggressive German nationalism of Wagner in the 19th century. The Berlin Philharmonic became a tool of Nazi Germany in the 1930s and 40s, while during the Cold War the US State Department organised international tours of American jazz musicians to project an image of the free world founded on pluralistic values and identities. Since then, every US embassy has had a cultural attaché.

Possibly the most telling acknowledgement of culture's power to promote universal values was the banning of music itself under the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, the use of culture to project values and shape opinion internationally has not been without controversy. Israel's ‘Brand Israel’ campaign and China's Confucius Institute programme have both been attacked as cultural propaganda by critics, and the EU's use of Beethoven's Ode to Joy as its anthem has come under fire for being a “grotesque” cultural appropriation of a great piece of art.

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The UK has, historically, not utilised culture as overtly as other nations. Tony Blair's bid to invoke 'Cool Britannia' and embrace British pop music in the late 1990s is probably the best example of a senior British politician attempting to reap the benefits of mass popular culture. But even this was intended for a domestic audience, not a global one – an attempt to present the new Labour government as in touch with modern Britain, rather than use culture to boost the UK's standing internationally.

However, despite the lack of political patronage, the UK's international reputation has benefited hugely from the global success of its music industry. The 2019 Soft Power 30 Index ranks the UK second in the world when it comes to cultural soft power. In addition to our commitment to spend 0.7% on overseas aid, the report credits the global appeal of British music as one of the things helping the UK punch above its weight internationally. According to the report's authors, "When a country's culture promotes universal values that other nations can readily identify with, it makes them naturally attractive to others... The reach and international cut-through of a country's cultural output is important in building soft power." The report cites current British stars like Ed Sheeran, along with the UK's long history of global music influence through acts such as The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and Queen, as responsible for generating more cultural soft power than any country bar the United States.

The fact that English is a global language gives British music a key advantage when it comes to appealing to audiences globally. That said, language is by no means a barrier to the soft power impact of music. The former Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon points to K-Pop music as one of his native South Korea's soft power assets, in particular the band BTS which he says has become an international proxy for South Korea itself. "It is incredible for me to see tens of millions of fans who love BTS, and, by proxy, Korea, for their innovative artistic abilities in music and dance... This represents a true sea change from foreign populations viewing Korea primarily through the prism of the North Korean nuclear issue or conflict and division."

The impact of digital and social media has made culture an especially potent generator of soft power in the 21st century. The ability to share content across the world in seconds means music has unprecedented potential to reach global audiences at speed and at scale. One in every ten songs streamed around the world is by a British artist – an incredible achievement given the UK accounts for less than one percent of the global population.

Most importantly, music is inherently authentic and its international appeal is typically organic. The global successes of Ed Sheeran, Adele and Dua Lipa have not come about because of direction from Government or active state intervention; rather, they have come from incredible creative talent, and the hard work of the artists and the teams around them. Indeed, many of the benefits of cultural soft power are greatest when they are generated at a distance from the state, and not state directed. The soft power benefits of British music are a by-product of the UK music industry's international success. As Nye argued in 2012, "in an Information Age in which credibility is the scarcest resource, the best propaganda is not propaganda". There is therefore a strong argument that governments which wish to boost their cultural soft power should do so by creating the conditions for commercial success and allowing their creative sectors to thrive, rather than attempting to use or view those sectors as an arm of the state.

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Music and culture more broadly has a proven ability to appeal and attract, and boost a country's reputation internationally. As a country with one of the most dynamic and successful music industries in the world, this has important implications for UK policy-making – both in terms of foreign policy and cultural policy. However, while British music is clearly a huge asset for the UK, its benefits should not be taken for granted. The question for policy makers should be how to ensure the UK continues to benefit from the huge soft power opportunities that our world-leading cultural sectors generate, and what can be done to boost it further.

One of the most important lessons is to recognise that soft power benefits are not and will not be generated by an explicit attempt by the government to use its cultural sector to further any sort of diplomatic or political aim. In the modern age, cultural soft power is typically an organic by-product of global cultural success and mass appeal – it does not come about by state diktat. Indeed, the impression that a certain sector is being co-opted or coerced into delivering political aims by the state risks undermining the success of that sector and damaging the sense of authenticity that is so vital to building mass international appeal.

Therefore, those who wish to boost the UK's soft power should not do so by attempting to co-opt certain sectors; rather, the policy imperative should be to support, protect and boost those sectors in and of themselves, for their own sake, and support them to become globally successful. If the UK music industry continues to be internationally successful, the soft power benefits of this success will be self-generating. The policy imperative should therefore be to ensure the British music industry continues to be globally competitive and commercially successful internationally – a worthy aim in and of itself, but one from which a number of soft power benefits will flow.

So what should this look like? Firstly, we should do everything we can to champion British music internationally and promote UK music exports across the world. The UK is the second largest exporter of recorded music after the US, accounting for one in 10 music streams across the world. Before the pandemic, the UK music industry generated £2.9 billion in music exports. As we look to recover from the impact of Covid-19, it is vital that we support the sectors that were delivering for Britain before the pandemic, and will help drive the economic and cultural recovery after it too.

Political events of the past few years mean UK soft power is more important than ever. After years of increasing global collaboration and integration, the pandemic has catalysed a reassertion of the nation state. Intense competition over resources like PPE and vaccines has seen a recalibration away from international cooperation and towards international competition. In such a context, the ability to co-opt and attract other nations with soft power has a new premium.

Meanwhile, while the UK's exit from the EU was seen by its proponents as an opportunity to be more international and outward-facing, Brexit – rightly or wrongly – has instead been perceived by many globally as an act of isolationism and a retreat from the global stage. This makes Britain's soft power appeal more important than ever. The strength and success of our creative and cultural sectors will be key to our global reputation and influence over the years and decades to come. Now more than ever it is imperative we build and leverage our soft power; supporting and investing in our world-leading creative and cultural sectors is a vital part of achieving this.



Coalition for Global Prosperity

Dr Leyla Hussein OBE

Going Against the Grain: Dissent in Development Discourse

Dr. Leyla Hussein is a psychotherapist, specialising in supporting survivors of sexual abuse. She is an international lecturer on female genital mutilation (FGM) and speaker on gender rights. She is recognised as one of the key experts on this issue globally and is a leading and award-winning international campaigner against all forms of violence against women and girls. Leyla founded The Dahlia Project, the UK's first specialist therapeutic service for FGM survivors. In 2020, she was elected as Rector of the University of St Andrews for a three-year term, making history as the first Black woman to hold the position. She currently works as the Global Advocacy Director and Deputy Team Leader for the Africa-led Movement to End FGM.

In the past, Britain has acted as a driving force for destruction, dispossession, and displacement on the global stage of development. As one of the most fervent colonising nations, Britain has often assumed leadership roles in the perpetuation of harm against an abundance of vulnerable communities. As global citizens, we must remember this history if we are to learn from it and shape the trajectory of progress in the 2020s. After the Second World War, the generally accepted truth became that 'development' should pave the way for conditions characteristic of 'rich' societies, through modernisation, industrialisation, and urbanisation. In my work as a human rights activist, psychotherapist, and campaigner, I constantly strive to maintain a critical approach to these methods of development, because they sideline the needs of the world's most vulnerable populations, time and again. I have chosen to adopt a fundamentally critical perspective in this essay, informed by my own experiences as a woman, a Black person, a survivor of female genital mutilation (FGM), and a survivor of various additional layers of oppressive structures. My experiences have always informed my work, shaping and strengthening my abilities to provide therapy, advance wellbeing resources, and engage in activism effectively. My positionality is the very source of unique knowledge and expertise I can bring to the discussion about the trajectory of aid and development during this decade.

In the present, Britain continuously asserts itself within colonial power structures, prioritising its own wealth, privilege, and international status above peace and human security in other countries. It continues to deny its own role in sustaining institutional racism, evidenced most recently by

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the March 2021 report produced by the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities. It continues to centre the voices of the most powerful, the most socioeconomically blessed, the most light-skinned – and it does this on local, national, and international scales. Most egregiously, it forgets its positionality, its history, and its ability to reinvent itself. As a citizen of the United Kingdom, it upsets me every single day to see the country I grew up in – the country that provided refuge to my family after we were forced to flee the Somali Civil War – participate in upholding a global system of development so hostile to genuine social sustainability and wellbeing for all, no matter their race, income level, age, gender, nationality, ability, social status, or belief system. I know Britain can do better, but I don't know why we haven't.

Recent budget cuts instituted by the UK Government have introduced massive challenges and setbacks to the work that I do as the Global Advocacy Director of the Africa-led Movement to End Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). These cuts were a result of increased fiscal conservatism with regard to development aid, contextualised by the immense strain that has been exerted on all sectors of society by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, in a seemingly endless cycle of repeated history, these cuts represent the newest iteration of the UK forgetting about children living on the African continent, who are most affected by COVID-19, the climate crisis, and the racist global patriarchy. The most vulnerable demographic in the world, female African children, are once again going to suffer the most as a result of the skewed priorities of the descendants of their colonisers. The issue is that this demographic currently has no choice but to rely on the resources provided by highly industrialised, White majority countries. Power imbalances, resource extraction, and violent exploitation have robbed every African country of wealth for which they have still not been compensated. There are a variety of complex issues at play here – from social inequities to economic conditions and colonial relationships. To be adequately addressed, these issues need not just political attention and greater awareness; they need money. Therefore, I will never stop challenging any and all decisions that disadvantage the world's most vulnerable demographics. And I will never stop advocating for investment in the wellbeing of African women and children.

In the future, I hope to live in a world where the emotional and physical wellbeing of African women and children is of prime concern. Their wellbeing has been pushed aside for hundreds of years. In fact, their wellbeing has been directly attacked and devastated by various individuals and governments carefully preserving the status quo that has benefitted them for generations. The way we can move towards positive change and towards a new and improved status quo is by disrupting the discourses and spaces upholding coloniality, White supremacy, and violence, especially against women and girls. We must demonstrate our opposition and we must do so loudly. We must uplift the voices of African women, who have so often been central to advancing productive social changes. For a future in which I no longer have to fear for my sisters, my nieces, my daughter, or my friends, Britain will have to realise its true power: the power to make amends, learn from the past, and transform. For a future in which 'development' means more than unchecked neoliberal capitalism, environmental destruction, and exploitative industrialisation, Britain will have to release itself from the anchor of its imagined identity and adapt to the currents of the 21st century.

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Now, with over a year of a global pandemic behind us (and without a true end in sight if vaccines continue to be hoarded by the most powerful states), we must strive to reflect and learn from our history. We are currently presented with a critical opportunity to reinvent the concept and the culture of 'Britain'. Championing decolonial thinking and amplifying voices calling for a revitalisation of the way in which we conduct 'development' are both long overdue. In a world where 'developed countries' has become a euphemism for the colonisers and 'developing countries' a euphemism for the colonised, we need loud, proud, and decolonial activists and thinkers more than ever. The only way we can ensure the United Kingdom becomes a force for powerful, positive change is if we force leaders, decision makers, and the general public to reckon with their role in the perpetuation of coloniality, racism, and other oppressive power structures. We must coordinate our collective outrage and advocate for better education and social engagement. Otherwise, our efforts to push for 'Global Development', whatever that entails, will be futile. If we are unable to have conversations about the dark side of development and the way in which aid sustains the very issues it aims to alleviate, we will never find a way forward. I know the UK has the capacity to use its privilege as an impetus for inclusivity, and I believe in our collective ability to go against the grain. Redefining what development looks like and ensuring it is truly compatible with global sustainability in all its forms will be the key gargantuan task of the 2020s. When – not if – the UK becomes a 'force for good', I will be the first to give a standing ovation. Until then, I will continue to raise my voice and channel our common outrage.

To succeed in our journey towards global safety and sustainability, we must dissent, we must disrupt dominant conceptions of development, and we must disagree with those who wish to uphold the status quo. The way Britain has done things for hundreds of years, the way we have had to acquiesce – it is no longer acceptable and it does not fit into the future. Britain's young people, Britain's activists, and Britain's marginalised communities are calling for a new outlook on aid and development. It's time for our politicians and social leaders to take notes. Take it from the first Black woman to be elected as Rector of one of the UK's most lauded institutions of higher education: young people are demanding change. In fact, they are leading some of the biggest transformations we have seen for decades. Those who will soon be taking on positions of power and leadership are more in tune to social justice concerns than ever. I find genuine hope in the prospect of a future led by the young people of today. I find motivation in the resilience and the power I have seen in communities affected by FGM and other forms of gender-based violence. I find solace in the work of entrepreneurs, activists, and changemakers I have had the privilege of working with in East Africa. If we were to lend all of these communities our attention more frequently and intently, I have no doubt we would be living in a different world today. Now the question remains: will Britain learn to listen?



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Abdul Muheet Chowdhary

Ending Extreme Poverty by Ending Global Tax Avoidance

1. What Does Ending Global Tax Avoidance Mean?

In today's globalised world, Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) conduct business activities in multiple jurisdictions. To give just one example, Shell operates in 99. The term 'jurisdictions' is important because it is not the same as a country. For example, the Cayman Islands, Isle of Man and Jersey are all jurisdictions and widely regarded as tax havens, but not independent countries.

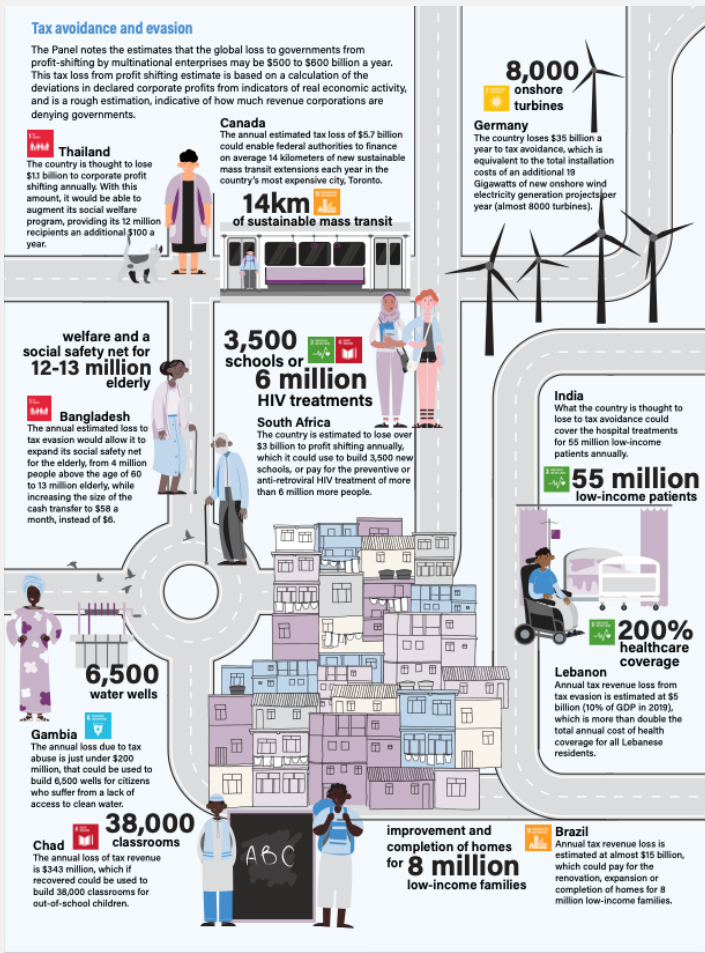
However, some of these MNEs do not pay their fair share of taxes in the jurisdictions where their profits are earned, or in other words are the "source" of their profits. Rather, complex and aggressive tax "planning" strategies are used which exploit gaps and loopholes in international tax rules to artificially shift profits from high tax to low tax jurisdictions, which are mostly tax havens. This is often combined with heavy involvement of secrecy jurisdictions to hide the true owners of wealth behind a labyrinth of shell companies. The latest estimate of the amount of corporate income tax revenue the world has lost as a result of these tax avoidance activities comes from a 2021 report of a UN Panel known as FACTI, which puts this figure between USD 500-600 billion.

Thus, ending global tax avoidance means ensuring that MNEs pay their fair share of taxes in the countries which are the "source" of their profits, especially when these are developing countries.

2. How Will Ending Global Tax Avoidance End Extreme Poverty?

Tax avoidance harms all countries, both developed and developing. But the impact differs. An additional USD 50 million in the national budget may not matter much to Germany but means a great deal to Bangladesh. The deprivation of revenues through tax avoidance undoubtedly hits developing countries harder. Hence, the first and most direct implication is that

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Source: FACTI Panel Report, page 11

countries will have more money to spend on poverty eradication, including by investing in public goods such as schools and hospitals. In its report, the FACTI Panel gives some concrete examples.

The second implication is that it will level the playing field between domestic and foreign companies. When a company such as Amazon or Nike avoids paying taxes, it means it has more funds at its disposal. These additional funds can be used to crush domestic competition through predatory pricing or acquisitions. When local businesses die out or are unable to grow, it also means job losses, further worsening poverty. In extreme situations it can even lead to monopolies or oligopolies, where only a few large companies dominate the market making it virtually impossible for other companies to challenge them. Google's domination of the online advertisement space is a modern-day example of a monopoly.

This vicious spiral of poverty also harms the tax-avoiding MNEs themselves: the people in the jurisdictions they are operating in have less money to purchase their goods or services.

By contrast, ensuring that MNEs pay their rightful share of taxes, in fact contributes to a virtuous cycle of prosperity. Local businesses have a level playing field to compete and the unfair advantage of more funds through tax avoidance is gone. This generates more jobs and consequently more incomes.

Thus, ending global tax avoidance will have a direct impact on ending extreme poverty.

3. Ending Global Tax Avoidance Also Makes Globalization Work for All

The failure to address global tax avoidance has meant the gradual acceleration of the dynamic laid out in the previous section: countries have shrinking budgets, the state's ability to provide a level playing field and a safety net reduces, big companies become bigger, wealth inequality grows, market failures spread across sectors, unemployment rises and poverty increases. This is bound to lead to social instability, and much of the backlash against globalization can be attributed to precisely these dynamics.

Globalization has focused excessively on the free movement of capital, through reducing trade and investment barriers, and opening markets around the world. While this has produced some winners, it has also produced a great many losers, who have articulated their legitimate concerns

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through support for unconventional politics and social movements. Rather than dismissing the voters as crude bigots, it is important to engage with their concerns on imbalanced globalization.

A more balanced and sustainable globalization is one where the fruits of wealth creation are fairly distributed to the society that is their source. It is here that international taxation plays a key role; it provides the redistributive element of globalization that is essential for its sustenance. As capital has become global, so must the institutional architecture to tax it. At present there is no equivalent of a World Trade Organization for international taxation; stronger multilateralism in this regard would give governments more resources to provide relief to the 'losers' of globalization. Citizens would be more likely to support open markets if they knew there was a robust social safety net to fall upon, funded by MNEs paying their fair share of taxes. This is especially important for developing countries, especially small ones, who need the support of international tax multilateralism to be able to take on big MNEs whose revenues may often be larger than their GDPs.

4. Developed Countries Also Benefit from Ending Global Tax Avoidance

It is in the self-interest of developed countries to ensure that the international tax system is reformed so MNEs pay taxes in the developing countries where they make profits. There are several reasons for this.

First, this will mean reduced forced migration. The tragic realities of human caravans in Latin America desperate to enter the United States or the waves of African dead that wash up on the shores of Europe are also failures of their own countries to provide them adequate opportunities. If developing countries were able to collect their rightful share of tax revenues, they would have more resources to carry out developmental activities and provide more opportunities to their people, lessening the incentives for forced migration. It can also be argued that public tolerance in the West for immigration is steadily reducing, which adds to the political pressure to find ways to prevent forced migration.

Second, it would benefit the producers of the developed countries, as they will have more consumer demand from developing countries. As outlined in Section II, ending tax avoidance contributes directly to ending extreme poverty and increasing incomes, aka purchasing power. This can boost demand for goods and services from developed countries, creating a win-win situation.

Third, there are multiple benefits for investors from developed countries. If countries are able to collect more taxes and have more resources at their disposal, this increases their ability to improve the so-called 'ease of doing business', provide infrastructure and enforce contracts. This is beneficial for all investors but especially foreign direct investors.

Returning to the argument in Section II, more tax collection from MNEs improves the playing field for domestic firms. This means higher returns for portfolio investors from developed countries. Normally in the developed countries, markets are saturated with low growth and low inflation, and thus portfolio investors receive lower returns. This is not the case for emerging markets who are growing at a faster rate and where companies have higher profit margins.

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Thus, the equity and debt returns from emerging markets (which are mostly developing countries) are better and these can be even higher if tax avoidance is curtailed.

Lastly, all investors would like to know that the companies they are investing in are not up to any scams or wrongdoing, such as tax avoidance and/or evasion. Hence, a more fair and transparent tax system which reduces the chances of such activities is also beneficial for investors.

5. How Can Developed Countries Help End Global Tax Avoidance?

Through international development assistance specifically, a practical step developed countries can take is to provide capacity building to developing country tax officials. By learning the 'rules of the game' and better understanding how to administer them, developing countries will be more effective at collecting taxes from MNEs. Inspiration can be taken from programs such as Tax Inspectors Without Borders which focuses on audits, the work of the Global Forum on Tax Transparency and Exchange of Information and the South Centre Tax Initiative's Peer Exchange capacity building mechanism where developing countries share best practices with each other. Such interventions can be combined with ongoing poverty alleviation programs to have a stronger impact.

There are several technical areas on which capacity building is needed by developing country tax officials. These are:

- Audit: To confirm the veracity of the MNE's documentation.
- Compliance risk management: To find out which MNEs and transactions are at most risk of non-compliance with tax rules.
- Transfer pricing analysis: To determine whether a cross-border intra-group transaction has taken place at the market price.
- Use of beneficial ownership information: To find out which human beings ultimately own and control companies.
- Use of anti-abuse rules in tax treaties: To prevent tax treaties from being misused for obtaining undue benefits.

In addition, capacity building on implementing the Actions of the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting project would also be helpful for developing countries.

With these interventions, developed countries can, through their international development efforts, seek to end global tax avoidance and build a fairer, more sustainable world for all.



Fatima is a climate activist and social justice campaigner. Much of her work has been spent campaigning and building solidarity with international movements. She has worked for global NGO Avaaz, EU citizens movement WeMove.eu and was one of the lead organisers of the People's Climate March. She has also spent years organising with and supporting the UK Youth Climate Coalition.

Fatima Ibrahim

The UK must do its fair share on climate change through reparations

Five years on from the Paris Climate Agreement, where governments committed to limit global temperature rise to 'well below' 2°C and pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C, estimates put the world on track for as much as a 5°C temperature increase. Despite the collective changes in behaviour over the last year, the pandemic has had little impact on the upward rise in CO₂. A 5.8% drop in emissions in 2020, has been undermined by a strong rebound as economies reopen. This has raised emissions above what they were in December 2019. Adding to that, 2020 tied with 2016 for being the hottest year on record globally, and was the hottest year ever for Europe.

At the same time, inequality is rising almost everywhere across the world – that is the clear finding of the first ever World Inequality Report. Immediately prior to the pandemic, it seemed everywhere you looked insurrections were rocking political systems – from Chile to Lebanon, Iraq to Ecuador. All these protests were brought about by people who have long felt shut out of the wealth of their country, and triggered by another unfair proposal to tax their existence further. The pandemic has only intensified these economic and social disparities.

Inequality and climate change may seem like two distinct issues, but the truth is that there is a straight line between them. Both are fuelled and perpetuated by a global economic system that, at its core, is dependent on exploitation and extraction of human and environmental capacity, leaving our planet and most of its people bereft. The protestors, many of them young people, are reacting to the reality of a future that holds no good fortune. Their generation inherited an economic model that has given big polluters every opportunity to exploit the planet with little consequence, while also allowing them to grow their wealth at an alarming rate; leaving the young, the

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poorest, and racialised communities across the world to contend with lower wages, higher costs of living and increasing climate impacts.

Inequality has not just fuelled the climate crisis; the climate crisis has deepened inequality too. Environmental degradation, extreme weather events and rising temperatures have, according to the World Social Report, made the 'world's poorest countries even poorer' and 'could reverse progress made in reducing inequality among countries'. The link between the two is even more stark when you consider who will and is already bearing the brunt of the climate crisis.

But today, as governments plan to pump trillions of dollars into reviving the global economy, and G7 leaders soon meet to consider how to 'build back better', there is a once in a lifetime opportunity for a global transformation that shapes our world to be fairer, greener and more equal. But to do so would require new thinking.

'[This] is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next. We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world. And ready to fight for it.'

Arundhati Roy, *The pandemic is a portal*

A Green New Deal

A Green New Deal: a proposal for the radical transformation of our economy and politics, inspired by the New Deal reforms undertaken by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the U.S. in response to the Great Depression of the 1930s, is gaining momentum. First conceived of in the UK in 2008 by a group of well regarded British academics and environmentalists as a response to the need for decarbonisation to be done in a way which does not further disadvantage already struggling communities. It has since been championed in the US by Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, and picked up in a less transformational form by the European Union and South Korea.

In the U.K., it is proposed as a national action plan with principles that reimagine what an economy run in the interests of people and the planet could look like. Good, secure, well-paid and meaningful jobs; restoration and protection of the natural world; rapid decarbonisation. These are not just principles to ensure a future as the climate crisis unfolds—they are ideas to create a good future, unshackled from the dominating forces of capital and corporate greed.

But a Green New Deal necessarily sets its sights further than national transformation. It requires that those most responsible for the climate crisis respond by doing their fair share to avert it. That means rapidly and justly decarbonising to tackle climate breakdown, accounting for historic emissions and colonial exploitation of resources and communities. It also means leading a radical global redistribution of wealth and transferring of technology to those that have paid the biggest price for our growth. Without this, efforts at greening economies in the Global North might perpetuate the very problems we are trying to solve.

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Fair Share

As of 2015, countries classified by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change as the most industrialised were responsible for 90% of excess emissions, with the UK being the greatest historic emitter. In contrast, most countries in the Global South were within their fair shares, including India and China.

Disproportionate historical emissions rates is only one part of the puzzle to trying to figure out what a fair share effort to avert climate disaster would look like. Today, the UK continues to be the 6th largest emitter globally. It takes just two weeks for the average person in the UK to have a greater carbon footprint than a person's annual emissions in Malawi, Ethiopia, Uganda, Madagascar, Guinea and Burkina Faso. The world's poor are generating almost no greenhouse gas emissions, many are on less than \$2 dollars a day, and all the while bearing the brunt of climate impacts.

This unfair use of the world's resources, both historically and through to today, requires a response that is both reparative and redistributive. The NGOs War on Want and Christian Aid recently calculated that the UK's fair share of the global effort would be to reduce carbon pollution by a total of 200% by 2030. While that's impossible, the burden exists for the UK to meet its share through the provision of climate finance in the form of reparations.

Reparations

The mainstream narrative on uneven development has actively erased the history of the extractive colonial expansion that made way for the UK's modern economy. Developing countries are not poor because they are poorly managed, they are poor because of a brutal history of exploitation and domination from imperial powers and transnational corporations. Given that, the idea of reparations provides an alternative vision for international aid and development.

Conceptually it is a more honest account of the relationship between developed and developing countries, in turn making direct payments from the former to the latter an obligation rather than a political variable.

It also gives a better diagnosis to the problems of climate change and inequality. By placing blame on an economic system underwritten by extraction, reparations demand a move away from growth as the solution to global poverty but instead looks to redistribution. This means that payments to developing nations must come without the conditions to aid that have often forced governments to work against the interest of the environment, national economy and working classes in favour of economic liberalisation.

Finally, reparations require the cancellation of all debt and for the end of unfair trade, investment and economic policies.

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The Time Is Now

Covid-19 has for at least a brief time reshaped political priorities, but the biggest challenges facing humanity persist. Long before a virus brought our societies to a standstill, the interlinked crises of climate change and global inequality threatened the future. Now we have a once in a lifetime opportunity to use recovery from this pandemic to trigger a global transformation that shapes our world to be fairer, greener and more equal. The question for the UK is: are we willing to do our fair share?



Tom is a Clinical Lecturer in Anaesthesia at the University of Cambridge, and an anaesthetist at Addenbrooke's Hospital. He is an Honorary Advisor to the Tropical Health and Education Trust (THET) as well as sitting on the advisory committee of Cambridge Global Health Partnerships. Tom is the current President of the World Anaesthesia Society, the UK specialist society for anaesthetists with an interest in global health. He has worked with VSO and Lifebox in Ethiopia, and more recently as part of both the Cambridge Yangon Trauma Intervention Project and the NIHR Global Health Research Group on Neurotrauma in Myanmar. His academic interest is in health systems design, based in the Department of Engineering at the University of Cambridge.

Dr Tom Bashford

Healthcare Systems: The Future of Global Health

“So, you will be the head of department...”

These were the first words of my Ethiopian host on my arrival to Addis Ababa as a volunteer anaesthetist in 2011. Early in my training, I was in no position to lead a department of talented non-physician anaesthetists in a public hospital serving a catchment population of 5 million people. I was, however, flattered, embarrassed, and desperate to be useful, and in a weaker moment I might have said “yes”. Luckily, good sense prevailed and we had a full and frank discussion as to what a junior volunteer from the UK can and cannot - or rather should and should not - do in a year's placement. In many ways, this early encounter has set the tone for my subsequent career in global health, in which I have found old models of post-colonial, ‘white saviour’ development to be entirely unsuited to the challenge of improving equity in healthcare. A year living and working in Ethiopia very quickly led me to question many of the lazy assumptions I had formed about development, my own motivations, and the feelings of my local colleagues towards international health efforts.

My experience to date has taught me that partnership is at the heart of global health. Clinicians in low income settings are smart, informed, and expert in their own setting. What they lack is access to ongoing educational and research opportunities, resources, and an infrastructure that supports the standard of practice they aspire to. Their counterparts in high income regions may be highly trained and have access to the latest technology, but be naive to the local challenges which may make their model of care delivery largely redundant. The only way to bridge this gap is through partnership, with a genuine sharing of skills, ideas, and knowledge. This can be challenging for both parties, with expertise on both sides called into question.

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For the past eight years I have worked as part of the Cambridge Yangon Trauma Intervention Project, which links Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and the Yangon General Hospital (YGH) in Burma. This project, funded largely through the UK Health Partnership Scheme, seeks to improve trauma care at YGH by working across a range of clinical dimensions: surgery, anaesthesia and intensive care, nursing, physiotherapy, pathology, and medical education. This is the apotheosis of partnership working: multi professional teams working across different settings for a sustained period of time with bilateral visits and lasting relationships. This is what I now see as ‘best practice’ for global health - a world away from a model where the visiting teams have all the answers.

I have had the good fortune to be interested in global health at a turning point for my clinical speciality. Surgery has famously been described as the ‘neglected stepchild of global health’ and one of the ‘Cinderellas of the global health agenda’. Anaesthesia has fared even worse, described as the ‘invisible friend’ of the neglected stepchild! Increasingly now framed as ‘peri-operative medicine’ to include intensive care and pain medicine as well as the care of patients undergoing surgery, anaesthesia first became widely talked about in global health circles in 2015 with the publication of the Lancet Commission on Global Surgery and the World Health Assembly declaration 68/15, “Strengthening emergency and essential surgical care and anaesthesia as a component of universal health coverage”. More recently, the desperate events of the covid 19 global pandemic have shone a light on the necessity of intensive care in a way few could have predicted. To those of us committed to the speciality, neither our importance nor our anonymity comes as a surprise; in the UK we are one of the biggest hospital specialties yet very few of the general public are aware that anaesthetists are physicians with a minimum post-graduate training programme of 9 years. However, the world has, perhaps belatedly, begun to recognise the disastrous effect when the system of peri-operative care fails to function, or simply does not exist.

Traditionally, medicine has been stratified into particular specialities, studied using reductive scientific approaches. This is analogous to ‘vertical’ programming in international development which aims to address particular discrete issues or conditions. While undeniably useful, this may fail to address those more complicated problems with many interdependent factors. These limitations have led to the emergence of ‘systems thinking’ in both healthcare and development, informed by a range of other disciplines from engineering to agriculture. The need to look at healthcare as a system is increasingly recognised, both by key multinational players like the World Health Organisation, and in national reports such as Engineering Better Care, published in 2017 by the UK’s Royal Academy of Engineering, Royal College of Physicians and Academy of Medical Sciences. More importantly, for me, it has been born out of innumerable conversations with colleagues from all over the world who have seen perfectly rational interventions fail to bear fruit. Training programmes cannot effect change if they rely on equipment, infrastructure, or a working culture that does not exist. Donated equipment cannot improve care if it cannot be serviced, maintained, or operated safely. Imported ideas about ‘best practice’ may be naive to local culture, context, and political landscape.

A further recent change in the global health landscape has been an explicit focus on research, along with the allocation of specific funding for this through Overseas Development Assistance. The Global Challenges Research Fund, the National Institute for Health Research, and the

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Medical Research Council have all established global health research streams which allow researchers from around the world to benefit from the UK's astonishing research infrastructure and experience. It also allows UK academics to begin to tackle global health questions, whether or not this was a part of their previous research experience. This raises the tantalising possibility of bringing together many of the strands already discussed: research done in genuine partnership can address complex system questions, improving services and also generating new knowledge. In addition, the development of research capacity in low-income countries is a powerful tool for motivation and subsequent workforce retention. Good quality research is fundamental to a functional healthcare system, and developing this provides a crucial tool in breaking the cycle of aid dependency. Crucially, seeing the benefits of research incentivises governments of countries of all economic backgrounds to set aside funds to develop their own research capacity.

Since 2017 I have been funded through the NIHR Global Health Research Group on Neurotrauma, based at the University of Cambridge. This has taught me that research needs to be grounded in the context it seeks to understand, but informed by the best thinking available globally. This is where research partnerships come in, allowing researchers from different contexts with different skills to work together on tractable problems. Research is also transformational at the individual level. As one of my friends and colleagues in Burma noted during one of our recent collaborative research projects:

“I thought all of our problems came from a lack of resources. but since we have carried out this research I have seen that there are so many things we can make better without any more money.”

So how do these pillars of partnership, peri-operative medicine, systems and research come together to inform global health efforts in the future? Perhaps more importantly, do they survive the ongoing Covid pandemic? In fact, they are central tenets which should underpin our response to the novel coronavirus and its effect on healthcare around the world. Never before has the interdependency of our health, and healthcare, been so apparent: we are not safe until all are safe. The need for partnership, whether in vaccine production and distribution or in sharing clinical understanding on a global level, appears to me a fundamental lesson which the UK has already learned and should be leading in. Anaesthesia and intensive care medicine have shown themselves to be fundamental to the functioning of healthcare systems across all levels of resource poverty, and the pandemic has highlighted the need to focus less on specific individual elements of care - such as ventilators - and rather on the complex systems in which they sit. Finally, the value of ongoing research has never been more apparent - arguably the only reason the UK has been able to react so quickly to coronavirus has been the established, state-funded, academic infrastructure which was available to be rapidly leveraged.

This gives me some hope - firstly that my hunch that these things are important seems to have held good, but secondly that a continued focus on them will be valuable to multiple areas of healthcare on a global scale over the coming years.



James Rogers

Foreign Aid: Can altruism Meet the National Interest?

James Rogers is Co-founder and Director of Research at the Council on Geostrategy. Previously, he worked at a range of organisations, including the Baltic Defence College and the European Union Institute for Security Studies. He has undertaken research for the Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre at the Ministry of Defence and given oral evidence to the Foreign Affairs Committee, the Defence Committee and the International Development Committee, all in the House of Commons.

The Government's Integrated Review – 'Global Britain in a competitive age' – identifies a deteriorating international environment, one where 'intensifying geopolitical competition' is likely to take hold. This new world will be very different from the one we have become accustomed to over the past thirty years. Indeed, the review states that the challenge over the past few years has been so profound that the old 'rules-based international system', which took shape after the end of the Cold War, has already given way to an 'open international order'. It stresses that the task for the next decade is not so much to develop new rules but to prevent large authoritarian powers from developing their own spheres of influence and closing sections of the international order off or placing them under their own jurisdiction.

Britons have already received a glimpse of the future, and on their own continent. Building on its successes in Georgia in 2008, Russia invaded Ukraine by annexing Crimea and fermenting a vicious conflict in the country's eastern oblasts, such as the Donbass region. This led to the displacement of tens of thousands of Ukrainians. With little regard for Syrian civilians, Russia then used Syria in 2015 as a test bed for its new weapons systems and to extend the Kremlin's geostrategic reach. This exacerbated an already dismal situation and encouraged a further wave of refugees to head for Europe, giving fresh impetus to those supportive of British withdrawal from the European Union (EU). The Kremlin then unleashed a nerve agent on the streets of Salisbury in an attempt to demonstrate the Russian state's extra-territorial reach and ability to liquidate political opponents.

Similarly, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has shown its true colours over the past five years. Gone are the days of the 'golden era' in British-Chinese relations; Chinese diplomats now

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subject Britain and the world to ‘wolf warrior’ diplomacy and threaten the democracy of Taiwan, while Chinese military engineers build and upgrade naval outposts in the South China Sea, which the People’s Liberation Army Navy uses to shove smaller countries out of the way and to assert control over international waters. Meanwhile, the PRC has underway an ambitious ‘Belt and Road Initiative’ (BRI) – described more accurately as ‘globalisation with Chinese characteristics’ – with which Beijing seeks to transform the economic geography of Eurasia through the construction of hubs of Chinese influence linked together by a plethora of communication lines.

In this kind of environment, exacerbated by Covid-19, Britain needs a firmer, more joined-up foreign policy, one that not only embraces the strategic logic of geopolitical competition to uphold British interests, but one that also has a vision for the world. Even before the publication of the Integrated Review, the UK decided to merge the Department for International Development with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to achieve greater synergies and coordination in terms of the country’s overall foreign policy effort – a controversial, but necessary, decision at the time.

The UK cannot go back to its old ways. In this new era, Britain must be as strong and resilient as possible: the open international order’s opponents will only grow more influential if the UK curls up in a ball or fails to develop a robust foreign policy with which to deal with them. Importantly, this means that Britain’s foreign aid programme should not be separate; rather, British foreign aid efforts should be thrust to the centre of the nation’s broader foreign policy and resourced accordingly. In any case, the world’s poorest and most politically repressed people will not benefit if hostile authoritarian states grow more powerful: as they did when the Soviet Union was at its height, their countries will only become testbeds for proxy conflicts and geopolitical intrigue – in the same way that Syria and Ukraine have already.

In the Integrated Review, the Government has already indicated that it intends to develop a new strategy to organise British international development efforts. In the new geopolitical environment, what might this look like?

To begin with, Britain ought to reform – even ‘radicalise’ – the meaning of ‘international development’. The UK pioneered the industrial revolution in the late eighteenth century and became the world’s first modern industrial economy. It was also the first major power to develop constitutional government and parliamentary democracy. For all Britain’s domestic problems, this combination has provided the nation with extraordinary political and economic stability relative to other countries. The UK should be prouder of its national success. It should therefore move away from the inherently materialistic logic behind international ‘development’. This places undue emphasis on economic over political development. While authoritarian regimes have shown that they can develop economically, they have also shown not only how aggressive they can be, but also how unstable they can become when the global economy suffers dislocation. In keeping with its own traditions and history, Britain should expand the meaning of international development to include political development: it should not shy away from defending and promoting liberal democracy.

Second, Britain should not shy away from increasing aid spending – even beyond the 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) target set by the 2015 International Development Act.

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While the Government came under much derision for its decision to temporarily cut foreign aid – or more accurately, Official Development Assistance (ODA) – spending by approximately 0.2% of GNI, this move was a logical, if unfortunate, step to maintain public support for British aid programmes in the economically-dislocated environment during Covid-19. Even with such a steep reduction, the UK, spending £10.7 billion in 2021, will remain among the top five largest national donors in the world and one of the largest relative spenders among its peers on the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC). Nonetheless, as authoritarian revisionists such as the PRC ramp up their own programmes, the UK should not hold aid spending down, particularly once the economy starts to grow again.

Third, the UK needs to be more discriminatory as to whom it provides assistance. It cannot be right for Britain to provide aid to the PRC and other deeply authoritarian revisionist regimes, unless that assistance is calibrated to undermine their power and influence. Despite tens of millions of Chinese still living in abject poverty, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has the material means to address many of the problems afflicting its poorest citizens. It oversees an economy which generates four times more than the British economy; it also has per year a US\$252 billion military, a US\$50-100 billion Belt and Road Initiative, and an US\$11 billion space programme. In a way, any British ODA given to the PRC merely subsidises those initiatives, which help the CCP grow stronger and more powerful.

Fourth, the Government should emphasise the development of infrastructure. Extending infrastructure – such as roads, railways, ports, airports and telecom – is not just about international development; control of global infrastructure is also a fundamental component of a country's international reach. It is no surprise that the PRC prioritises infrastructure in the BRI. Countries with the most extensive communications systems have always been at the apex of global influence. It would be dangerous to allow an authoritarian and revisionist regime like the CCP to gain control over much of the infrastructure of Eurasia through the BRI, just as it would be disadvantageous to the world's poorest people to come under the sway of such a regime. Building on the commitments reached at the G7 Summit in Cornwall, the UK ought to further develop a coalition of free and open countries and coordinate effective pushback against the BRI and ensure that there are alternatives for poorer countries (and also that wealthy countries themselves do not become beholden to the CCP).

Finally, in a world where climate change and environmental degradation is a growing and potentially insurmountable challenge, Britain should ensure that more of its foreign aid budget is spent on environmental sustainability programmes in developing countries, as well as developing new green technologies – a move which, if calibrated carefully, could contribute to 'levelling up' the UK.

To conclude, in the more geopolitically-volatile world of the mid-21st century, Britain would do well to integrate its aid programme into its broader foreign policy. That programme should also be properly resourced, and seen itself – with important modifications – as a key component of the country's global power. With clear strategy and political will, the perceived tension between altruism and the national interest can be integrated and overcome.



Libby Smith

Why Educating Girls Will Change the World

Libby is the Coalition for Global Prosperity's Director of Advocacy and has a background in parliament, public affairs and international development. Libby is also on the Executive of the Labour Campaign for International Development. Prior to CGP, Libby worked at the NGO WaterAid leading on engagement with Government Departments, the European Commission and the UK and EU parliament. Prior to this, Libby worked at the public affairs agency Portland Communications working on high profile clients in the corporate communications and public affairs team. She has also worked in the UK parliament for two MPs.

2020 was a year of disruption for school children across the world. Fortunately, in the UK this will be remembered as a critical yet thankfully temporary interruption to learning. However, for millions of girls around the world this is anything but temporary. At this moment, 130 million girls are not in the classroom. This squandered talent and opportunity not only impedes their life chances but makes us all worse off.

We know that educating girls is the single most powerful way to achieve global progress and development, yet millions of girls are still being denied access to the classroom and progress in this area is stalling.

In fact, in many of the world's most fragile countries girls' education is directly under attack. We have all watched in horror the scenes coming out of Afghanistan these past weeks with the Taliban reclaiming control - who until losing power 20 years ago banned nearly all girls and women from attending school and dished out harsh punishment to anyone who defied them. While Boko Haram, whose name means "Western education is a sin" in the Hausa language, continue to terrorise young women and have been responsible for the abduction of hundreds of girls in northeast Nigeria as well as attacks against teachers and schools.

The international community has strongly condemned such attacks and stated its ambition to ensure all girls receive 12 years quality education. They have even marked the 2020s as "a decade of delivery for education". Yet behind these pronouncements by leaders on the world stage in reality we are seeing severe setbacks with two-thirds of low- and middle-income countries having rolled back education spending and a 40% cut in UK aid to girl's education in 2021.

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While stated ambitions to prioritise girl's education are welcome, these girls require more than words. Now is the time for action, millions of girls are relying on it.

Why are over 130 million girls out of school?

The reasons behind girls being denied an education are complex and differ between countries and communities. Whether it's due to issues such as poverty and war or gender discrimination and child marriage, we must make sure our aid budget is used to not only address the symptoms of gender inequality but also the root causes.

In countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria there are millions of girls who may never get the chance to enter a classroom with child labour, poverty and sexual violence being among the reasons girls are kept out of school.

In Nigeria, only 4% of young women from poorer families in the North West of the country can read, compared with 99% of young women from well-off families in the South East. No parent should have to choose between educating their child and putting food on the table, but this is the reality for millions with families living in poverty often choosing to send their daughters to work instead of school.

When experiencing poverty, many families can see marriage as the best option for reducing family costs and providing their daughter with financial security. In countries such as Niger and Bangladesh, child marriage plays a key role in preventing girls from gaining an education. Niger has the highest rates of child marriage in the world with 77% of women being married before the age of 18. While Bangladesh has the highest rate of marriage involving girls under the age of 15.

When I visited the Bidi Bidi refugee settlement in northern Uganda, I met girls who were desperate to return to school to build a better future for themselves but with attendance requiring a tuition fee many families simply didn't have the means and those that did prioritised the education of their sons. It was heart breaking to know that inevitably some of those young girls I met would never enter a classroom and some would be married off as children with there seeming little alternative to ensure their financial security.

While working in international development I have been repeatedly struck by how it is women and girls who constantly bear the brunt of poverty. Take a lack of access to clean water and adequate toilets. Right throughout the life cycle of women they are the ones most harshly impacted by this. From the risks of childbirth in a hospital without running water, to a lack of access to menstrual hygiene when starting their periods to the risk or sexual harassment and attack when going to the toilets in the bush.

It is also hugely damaging for girls' educational opportunities. In India, 23 million girls drop out of school every year when they start their periods due to schools lacking functional toilets, sanitary products and many still facing discrimination and stigma during their periods.

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While the task of collecting water – often for hours every day - typically falls on women and girls leaving many unable to attend school or work.

While the threats to girls' education are complex and differ between communities, providing a primary and secondary education for girls has a transformative impact on all communities without which you cannot have any meaningful development.

The transformative impact of getting girls in the classroom

It has been proven time and time again that getting girls in the classroom is the single most powerful way to create a safer, healthier and more prosperous world for us all – it boosts economic growth, reduces conflict and improves health. Moreover, it is profoundly the right thing to do.

It is estimated by the World Bank that women and girls could add up to \$30 trillion to the global economy if all girls completed secondary school. Women with primary education also earn up to 19% more than girls with none while those with secondary education earn almost twice as much. When girls are educated, there is more growth, money and jobs for everyone. Everyone benefits.

Educated women tend to also take on a greater economic role within their families and communities and have been found to reinvest 90% of what they earn into their families.

This significant impact also carries on from one generation to the next; educated girls are less likely to marry young and more likely to have healthy, educated children, with each additional year of school a girl completes cutting both infant mortality and child marriage rates.

In fact, a child whose mother can read is 50% more likely to live past the age of five and twice as likely to attend school herself, with a United Nations study finding that if all girls were educated then infant mortality would be cut in half, saving three million young lives every year.

The huge benefits educating girls has on a country's economic growth and on improving the health and life chances of a population cannot be understated. Educating girls really does have the power to change the world.

However, perhaps less well known is the transformative impact girls' education can have on reducing instability and conflict in a country. I was shocked to read that when a country provides all its children with a secondary education, it cuts its risk of war in half. Moreover, communities with educated girls are more stable and can recover faster after conflict, with extremism growing hand in hand with inequality. Educating girls is key to creating a safer, more stable world for us all.

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There is clearly no denying the material benefits of educating girls. However, it's not just that universal education will make us all more prosperous, healthier and safer – though it will. We should educate girls because it is manifestly the right thing to do.

What needs to be done?

It doesn't have to be this way. With the UK hosting this year's G7, Global Partnership for Education Summit and COP26, we have a huge opportunity to push girl's education to the very top of the agenda and secure much needed financial support.

However, we cannot rely on lower income countries to bear this cost alone. In recent years, 24 low-income countries spent more on servicing external debt than on education. This is completely unacceptable and it would be unconscionable if the aid being sent to low-income countries during the pandemic was having to be spent on paying debt payments rather than on healthcare or education as is so desperately needed.

In the midst of the pandemic, we therefore need a two-year debt-payment moratorium which would waiver upcoming debt payments for this year and the next. To do this will require global cooperation and the role of China, which holds over a quarter of this bilateral debt, will be key.

This is the most effective, immediate support wealthier nations can provide, freeing up low-income countries to spend more on public services such as education and healthcare while they fight through the pandemic.

We also need to make sure the root causes preventing girls gaining an education are fully addressed. For example, pushing for strengthened child labour laws and working to offset the direct and indirect costs of girls' schooling, as well as ensuring adequate investment in access to water and sanitation and tackling gender discrimination head on.

Lastly, we need to make sure the pandemic doesn't have a lasting impact on the opportunities for girls to receive an education. Past health and economic shocks have taught us that for many girls in low-income countries, these disruptions to their education can often become permanent. For example, in Sierra Leona school closures during the Ebola outbreak led to a 16% decline in re-enrolment once schools reopened. We must make sure Covid doesn't shut girls out of school forever.

We know that if we educate girls today we will transform the world of tomorrow, making it a safer, healthier and better off place for us all to live. Boris Johnson has rightly stated "Girls' education is the Swiss Army knife that solves a multitude of the world's problems." President Kenyatta has called an educated population "a country's most valuable resource". We have heard the pronouncements at the global summits but the time has now come to get serious and act on universal female education. Political will must be translated into ambitious financing. The stakes have never been higher.



James is a former Infantry Officer in the Regular Army who conducted two tours of Afghanistan; one as a Platoon Commander in Sangin, Helmand and one attached to the UKSF in Kabul. Since leaving the Army he has worked in security and in development roles and currently works for an MP in Westminster. He is still active in the Army Reserve and is the Executive Director of Conservative Friends of the Armed Forces, a membership organisation which highlights military and veterans affairs to MPs and Conservative Party Members.

James Clark

Doctrine, Values and Training: Transforming Defence Operational Capability for Positive Development Outcomes

The success of the British military overseas can be attributed squarely to three principle elements: British military doctrine, philosophy and principles underpinning how Defence is employed; the military's values and standards which provide the moral component to our force and provide the integral guiding framework of every individual's actions or behaviour at all levels; and world class training, which prepares our service men and women for the tasks they undertake - from cleaning lavatories to making life and death decisions. If the UK military wishes to take the "renewed commitment to the UK as a force for good in the world" in the Defence Command Paper seriously, they will have to ensure that these three elements are aligned in order to deliver the Secretary of State's intent. There is undoubtedly, enormous scope for what the Coalition for Global Prosperity have termed "innovative ways in which the UK's Defence and Development forces can work hand in hand to prevent conflict in fragile states across the world". By briefly examining these three areas a number of potential improvements can be identified.

Joint British Military Doctrine is developed at the Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre at MOD Shrivenham with Army Doctrine at the Land Warfare Development Centre at Warminster. Throughout the 2010s, operations with a development and aid component were referred to as "Sustainment Operations" in Joint Doctrine publications. There was more (but not much) in the Army Field Manual published in 2017; "Capacity building forces" (i.e. those with an eye to facilitating or delivering Development Aid) are a specialist capability. "These include those designed to develop the capacity of host nation security forces as well as those able to assist with the physical and organizational infrastructure development." Support to inter-governmental tasks is referred to as stabilisation activity and stabilisation operations were a key component of force generation and deployment in Afghanistan and Iraq.

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The Integrated Review launched in March 2021 refocuses UK global engagement. Of the four overarching elements, the third, “a renewed commitment to the UK as a force for good in the world”, implies a refocus on development delivery particularly in fragile states with an emphasis on “building resilience...overseas”. However, the Defence Command Paper “Defence in a Competitive Age” provides further detail mentioning Military Assistance to the Civilian Authority (MACA) only twice, both with reference to internal UK operations. This seems inadequate to form the bedrock of policy to prepare the UK military to engage with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office to deliver development aid to fragile states. Whilst the counter argument would cite the excellent staff work done by senior and mid-level commanders into specific fields, these briefing papers are internal with limited trickle down to sub-unit commanders.

If the UK military truly wishes to be a force for good in the world, there must be a renewed focus at a doctrinal level on situating the force multiplying effect of targeted, integrated and planned development aid delivery within the wider defence context. Military Assistance to the Civilian Authorities needs to be intellectually ‘beefed up’ and operationally reinvigorated down to the tactical level.

A reassessment of the meaning of mission command is also overdue. A junior commander in the Army, deployed on the ground, can plan and execute operations to recapture a building from insurgents or patrol a route littered with IEDs, from an isolated Patrol Base. For the same commander to pay a local contractor to build a well or dig irrigation ditches requires a long and convoluted process which often gets stonewalled by the Chain of Command or demands the deployment of an overworked under-resourced specialist. Providing junior commanders a doctrinal impetus to focus on development needs would facilitate better understanding, planning and delivery where it matters most. Altering doctrine to include development focus would cascade intent and activity forcing understanding at all levels and driving innovation in integration between defence and development.

The values and standards of the UK military provide the moral bedrock of its actions. Whilst each service defines them slightly differently the core components consist of: Courage, Discipline, Respect for Others, Integrity, Loyalty and Selfless Commitment. In basic training for both Officers and Other Ranks these values are relentlessly extolled, highlighted in the behaviour of leaders at all levels and emphasized through vignettes of winners of the Victoria Cross and unit and Regimental Battle Honours.

History and heroism are drivers of action and behaviour. In order to inspire the next generation of service personnel, an innovative way for defence and development to work together could be to catalogue, simplify and explain integrated operations which resulted in positive development outcomes. Linking to the pre-existing moral framework would pay dividends. British military operations in Afghanistan provided security and stability which facilitated educational establishments admitting and delivering lessons to millions of female pupils who otherwise would not have attended. There are specific examples along with more general data collected from intergovernmental organisations and NGOs. Why isn’t this celebrated? Why aren’t these examples used as recruitment tools? There must be numerous examples of instances where the FCDO and the military have worked together to provide and protect essential services which in turn drive stability.

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They should make the transition from fleeting positive media stories to cherished and celebrated narratives.

The history of the development of training within the British military is too extensive and convoluted to recount here. However, it is fair to say that throughout its history when weaknesses have been identified, adjustments to the training programs of Officers and Other Ranks have been made with the desired consequences. Following both the Crimean and Boer Wars substantial changes were made to anachronistic or inefficient systems resulting in battle winning improvements. All three branches continue this tradition of what is now fashionably termed 'failing forward fast' (though there continues to be much debate about the British Army's perceived failure to adapt to developments in counter insurgency warfare in Afghanistan and Iraq).

The most apt military phrase that fits is "Prior preparation prevents poor performance". What of the UK military's preparation of its troops across all disciplines to engage with host countries and civilian populations in development and aid matters? Drawing from anecdotal experience, there is room for improvement. The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst program made fleeting attempts to engage Officer Cadets about the complexities of active practice with correspondingly limited results. The MACA week or two week long workshops for Junior Officers in the deployment cycle in the 2010s were not well resourced nor mandatory or considered high priority despite the renewed recognition of the "three block war" battlespace in the theatres we were actively engaged in. This needs to change following the strategic shift to pre-emptive work in developing economies and fragile states and away from intervening after those states have collapsed or been overcome.

With the help of the FCDO, NGOs and the third sector, along with corporate knowledge from those who have experience at a tactical level as well as Cultural Advisors (CULADs), there is no reason engaging training packages aimed at both Other Ranks and Officers could not be generated. With additional training for commanders and operators at all levels the dividend in front footed development could positively impact the battle for contested spaces the military so often now finds itself in. The appetite and knowledge are there; the training infrastructure and delivery is not yet.

The UK military is increasingly operating in contested spaces in fragile states. The nature of the task is daunting and exceeds the complexity, if not the danger, of the counterinsurgency environments of the 2010s. Deploying in a pre-emptive reassurance posture is highly advantageous compared with deploying to crisis situations after breakdowns in the functioning of civil society. The positive benefit of delivering well planned and delivered, specific targeted aid to the fragile states the British military are in cannot be underestimated. Through small adjustments to military doctrine, values and training both the MoD and the FCDO could reap the rewards of a better integrated development and aid posture at all levels, re-enforcing the "renewed commitment to the UK as a force for good in the world".



Dominic McVey became a millionaire at 15 selling collapsible mini-scooters from his bedroom and was named a Pioneer for Enterprise by Her Majesty the Queen at 18 years of age. Dominic has gone on to become a global ethical business leader and created Hela Clothing. Hela employs 15,000 people, with revenues of almost \$200 million USD and operations in Kenya, Ethiopia & Sri Lanka. According to Dominic he was able to achieve this, because he put people and community first. Dominic has been an adviser on entrepreneurship to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment of the Irish Government, and has consulted for a wide group of institutions and organisations including the former Department for Trade and Industry and the Department for Education and Skills.

Dominic McVey

UK Aid Budget Cuts Threaten a Decade of Trade Progress in East Africa

Samantha Kalinda is a Quality Auditor working at Hela Clothing, a \$200m international company manufacturing underwear for export, which I helped to establish and am the former Chairman of. Samantha works in Hela's busy factory in Kenya, making high-quality garments. They include global brands such as Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger, destined for US and European markets. The factory is situated at Athi River – a dusty, bustling town 25km from the sprawling Kenyan capital, Nairobi.

Since Samantha got her job at Hela in 2018, two years after I had opened the factory, her life has been transformed for the better. “Life was difficult after I left school. I tried odd jobs such as being a housemaid and working in a hair salon. The pay was very low, and I could hardly afford my rent. Jobs were on-and-off. Employment at Hela changed all that. Now I have a decent life and can pay part of the tuition fees for my younger siblings who are in high school. The factory offers life skills and health programmes, especially for female employees.”

The garment industry globally serves increasingly discerning customers. They expect responsible supply chains and are ready to boycott companies guilty of employment malpractice. I have always been clear that “People are our business. Without our people, we don't have a business,”. Hela now employs 4,300 staff at Athi River, and almost 15,000 globally. Mostly women, some physically disabled. Quality jobs have a huge positive impact on the local economy, where unemployment exceeds 20%.

My decision to invest in Kenya in 2016 was not straightforward. Kenya had suffered for too long from barriers to trade that slowed the development of new businesses.

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We wanted to situate Hela's newest factory at the time where it would find a hard-working, English-speaking labour force, reliable electrical power, backward value chains to suppliers of cotton, buttons and zips, catering, transport and construction services - and a government committed to supporting its investment.

Above all, we needed a location where we could import inputs for manufacturing and export finished goods cheaply and efficiently, in a highly competitive global market. However, Kenya's transport and logistics costs along the Northern Corridor, linking Kenya's seaport of Mombasa to Nairobi and beyond to Uganda and Rwanda were high. This corridor carries two thirds of the region's trade, but penalised companies with costly obstacles. These included delays at ports and customs, consignments getting delayed or lost, complex regulations and laborious paper-based customs and export procedures, unharmonized between neighbouring countries. There were also pernicious non-tariff barriers to trade such as police roadblocks, illegal taxes, bribery, and disputes over Rules of Origin or technical standards.

These problems exist in most African countries. The World Bank's 2020 Doing Business Report shows that the average cost in OECD countries to comply with border procedures is £75, in contrast to £531 in Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2012, it took 16 days for cargo entering Mombasa Port to reach Kampala in Uganda. Yet by 2020, that figure had dropped to only 4 days - knowing this work was being done to massively reduce Hela's costs making the company much more competitive made Kenya a viable investment location. How did this happen?

In 2010, a coalition was formed between the UK Government, the Kenyan government and TradeMark East Africa (TMEA). The UK financed TMEA, a specialist non-profit agency facilitating trade across East Africa, to drive down the cost of trade and improve competitiveness. The wider goal of these Aid-for-Trade reforms, embraced by the WTO, was to spur investment and job creation in emerging economies, so they play an active role in the global trading system. Trade reforms are seen by all parties as an investment that benefits both the UK and East Africa.

The goals might sound lofty, but results of the UK's £120m investment in Kenya have been spectacular. An independent evaluation of TMEA's work estimated cost and time savings to have increased overall exports by £214m and imports by £136m in 2017 compared to 2010. Reforms with the Kenyan government and business made trade faster, cheaper and more efficient. They included:

Practical, small infrastructure works at Mombasa Port such as widening gates, straightening berths, and building by-pass roads to decongest the city of trucks.

Improvements to port productivity, including modern ship-to-shore equipment, and "greening" the port to make it safer and cleaner for handling of hazardous goods.

Investing in a modern electronic customs management system for Kenya Revenue Authority to improve customs clearance, harmonising duties across The East African Community.

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An electronic control centre to track and remove bottlenecks for every truck passing along the 1,500km road corridor. This eliminated overnight the need for costly police escorts to protect convoys of valuable goods.

Improving intermodal logistics at the Embakasi terminal near Nairobi for the Standard Gauge Railway – only the second major new railway built in over a century in Africa. TMEA introduced electronic tagging of transit containers to avoid them getting lost, and coordinated Revenue, Port and Railway Authorities to transfer goods from expensive road transport to cheaper, cleaner rail.

Better dialogue between government and business to resolve bottlenecks and disputes.

As transit times fell, new opportunities for exports emerged – not only for companies like Hela in Kenya, but also for neighbours. Landlocked Uganda and Rwanda, which depend heavily on the Northern Corridor for trade and access to the sea, boosted exports as they became more cost competitive. Jas Bedi, a friend of mine and the Managing Director of Bedi Investments, another leading manufacturer of textiles and garments in Sub-Saharan Africa, often speaks of the benefits the UK government has brought to the region. He says: “The UK’s work through TMEA has had a major positive impact in East Africa. As a regional business, the reduction of transit time from Mombasa Port to Kampala means a lot for us.”

UK-funded Aid-for-Trade reforms also boosted foreign exchange earnings for Kenya’s economy, which grew strongly over the last decade. East Africa has become the world’s second-best performing region in economic growth.

Unfortunately, the gains from the UK’s Aid-for-Trade support are under significant threat from recent cuts to FCDO’s budget. The cuts in Kenya, part of the UK’s global reduction in aid spending from 0.7% to 0.5% of Gross National Income announced in August 2020, has resulted in a 40% drop in UK multi-year support to TMEA. Many trade and business support projects have been curtailed or stopped. There is acute uncertainty about the future of the UK’s support to TMEA.

The cuts are a false economy. The WTO has found that typically, \$1 invested by donors in Aid-for-Trade leads to an increase of nearly \$8 in exports from developing countries. Reforms must be sustained, or investment and growth will be curbed, to the mutual loss of Kenya and the UK as trading partners.

Both countries are reeling from the effects of Covid-19, with borders and corridors closed, lockdowns and other restrictions on free movement of trade and trucks. A Safe Trade programme implemented by TMEA has made borders safer by providing personal protective equipment and Covid-19 testing, now used by 80% of truck drivers on the Northern Corridor, ensuring major importers and exporters like Hela can still operate/ Yet still, the virus threatens to unravel the gains made, just as a new post-pandemic trade landscape is taking shape. Post-Brexit UK signed a bilateral trade agreement in 2021 with Kenya to boost fast-growing markets in East Africa for UK food and beverage, pharmaceutical and other exports, and to secure its imports of quality fresh tea, coffee, flowers and vegetables into UK supermarkets.

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TMEA is also developing a digital trade logistics information system to enhance market access, transparency, efficiency and connectivity between UK and Kenya exporters.

The cuts to ODA undermine this trade agreement.

We should be helping Kenya and other countries to scale up trade across the continent, investing in key value chains, and supporting the implementation of the new African Continental Free Trade Area. When Africa prospers, we all prosper.

President Kenyatta in his May Day speech this year commended Hela for its world class work. Something that was not possible without the dedication of Hela's people, the support of the UK Government and TMEA, as well as Kenya being an amazing host country. This is diplomacy at its best, and is hugely beneficial to the British consumer and to the Treasury.

The transformation of Samantha's life and the security of her job with Hela depended on many things coming together. The UK's consistent support to modernise trade in the region played a critical role. Now is the time for the UK to redouble that investment, not to curtail it.



Luke de Pulford is co-founder and director of Arise, an international anti-slavery charity. In 2020 with leading politicians from eight legislatures, he created the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China, which he also coordinates. He is also co-founder of the Coalition for Genocide Response, adviser to the World Uyghur Congress, a fellow of Hong Kong Watch, and sits on the Conservative party Human Rights Commission. He is well known in the UK Parliament and beyond for his work in defence of human dignity. Luke is a father to three girls and lives in London.

Luke de Pulford

How China is Exploiting our Values Amnesia in the West

It's easy to talk about values without saying much. Everybody does it. Content-free incantation of "our values" has become so common in political life that I'm confident most people are numb to it. Just another phrase confined to the growing scrapheap of Westminster verbiage.

Fatuity aside, this matters. The less people in public office speak about what we believe, and why we believe it, the more politics will become decoupled from the principles which nourish it. Worse, the vacuum left by content-free ethical discourse will be greedily occupied by populists and authoritarians. "Our values" might seem inherent and common sense, but a brief glance at recent history reveals that they're really not. Forgetting our values, forgetting their origins, or substituting them for some vacuous candy floss about 'being nice' will not save us from the rising threat of totalitarian expansionism.

Which brings me to the subject of this essay: Western values amnesia, how China is taking advantage of it to distort the rules based international system, and what the UK Government can and must do about it.

With prosperity and the passage of a few generations, it seems we have forgotten the seismic and devastating events which led to the construction of the UN and other international institutions. We have similarly forgotten that the founding documents of those institutions represent arguably the clearest articulation of our values to date. The Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) was not achieved without considerable controversy. Its preference for a broadly Western, Judaeo-Christian (and arguably anglo-centric) understanding of how to organise a society was noted (and rejected) by some at the time. "It is not for the Committee to proclaim the superiority of one civilization over all others or to

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establish uniform standards for all the countries of the world” complained the Saudi delegate to Roosevelt’s UDHR Committee.

The clear upshot? If you want to know what “our values” are, there’s no better place to look than the key documents of the international human rights system - a system we helped to construct amid considerable dissent, and which asserts aspects of our culture and traditions as universal norms.

73 years after the UDHR and we stand at a threshold, faced with the very real prospect of losing our grip on its custodian institutions. President Trump’s retreat from the United Nations underscores the amnesia. If international institutions are to remain faithful to their founding principles, they have to be maintained. And that maintenance can only be achieved through intention.

Don’t get me wrong, the UN needs reform. But the case for reform is not ipso facto a case for abandonment. These institutions exist, and they enjoy global legitimacy and considerable power. Retreating from them merely invites governments who do not share “our values” to instrumentalise them and turn them away from their founding ethos.

Consider China, for example. China under Xi Jinping represents a country with a very different value set to ours. It is not a democracy. It is a one-party state. It does not respect human rights and does not uphold the principle of individual human dignity. Rather it promotes a brand of ethno-nationalism which has seen millions of Turkic minorities extra-judicially detained, forcibly sterilised, and separated from their families.

It is widely argued now that the US’ retreat from international institutions left a void which China has filled. This represents a direct threat to our values through the institutions to which we have entrusted their custody.

It should be alarming to us that, of the 15 agencies which make up the UN, four are headed up by people who were until recently Ministers in the Chinese Communist Party. These aren’t insignificant institutions, either: the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDP), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) (which, incidentally, has failed to flag security risks associated with Huawei’s attempt to dominate the global 5G market) and the International Civil Aviation Authority (ICAO). The latter is particularly troubling, as ICAO has insisted upon excluding Taiwan from its deliberations, potentially risking public health in the midst of a pandemic.

That’s only the start. China has recently risen to become the second largest cash contributor to the United Nations. This obviously adds to their influence. Were Belarus such a generous contributor, I think it unlikely the United Nations would have taken such strong and speedy action in response to Lukashenko’s human rights outrages.

But in some ways, entryism is the least of our problems. The Belt and Road Initiative - China’s grand plan to invest in emerging economies - has led to a situation where many nations are deeply indebted to them.

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So it's hardly surprising that China easily commands a majority on the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) whenever other states attempt to raise concerns about rights abuses in the Uyghur Region. Every time a member state attempts to raise concerns, China and its allies organise a counter-measure with support from more states. You get the point. These displays of muscle leave everybody in no doubt that any effort to hold China to account through the UNHRC is doomed to failure.

If this doesn't bother you, perhaps the defenestration of the Genocide Convention will. The Convention was the very first human rights instrument of the UN, and arguably the most important of the entire human rights project. After all, preventing genocide was its principal motivation. Today, that Convention is on life support - asphyxiated by a combination of the Chinese Government and the cowardice of nations who would rather avoid its weighty duties.

This matters because the United States Government together with the Dutch, Canadian, Belgian, Lithuanian, and UK Parliaments have all accused the Chinese Government of committing genocide against Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other predominantly Turkic minorities in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. They're not alone. Senior lawyers have concluded that there's a very credible case that the Chinese Government has met the necessary legal thresholds for both Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity.

But nothing is going to happen about it. Other things being equal, such weighty accusations would normally be referred for judicial examination. But there is no route to a court here. China would veto any attempt to refer the situation in Xinjiang to the International Criminal Court, and the International Court of Justice has no jurisdiction for these purposes. End result: China will never be formally accused of genocide. To make matters even worse, the UK's long-standing policy on genocide is to refuse to use the word 'genocide' without a court ruling. But, as I've explained, there's no court to hear the case against the PRC. This contradictory and confusing line was repeated again and again in response to the Genocide Amendment campaign this year, which I was privileged to run.

What is the point of the United Nations if it cannot act to assist victims of genocide? If states can veto their own accountability? Not much, I'd suggest. But allowing disillusionment with the UN to turn into retreat is a terrible mistake which will see authoritarians use those institutions to project their value systems upon the rest of us. As this whistle-stop tour of China's UN strategy has, I hope, shown, it is already happening.

This has been allowed to happen because we have been asleep on the watch. Greedy for Chinese investment. Chained to a doomed vision of a "Golden Era" of relations with China. But it has also happened because we have forgotten our values, and why these institutions were built in the first place. We need to reclaim respect for our values and defend them with all the strategic guile of Beijing.

So here's what the UK should do about it. First, the UK's engagement with the United Nations needs to pivot. Our overarching approach to the UN needs to be: "use it or lose it". And if we are truly committed to the UN, this means crafting a diplomatic approach rooted in the necessity of UN reform. So we need to be seeking to develop consensus around key areas.

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Top of the list for reform is the Security Council veto. We need to develop a formula which Permanent Members on the Security Council would be willing to accept, which reduces the power of individual members to preclude their own accountability. The status quo is intolerable, and threatens a fundamental cornerstone of the rules based system: our commitment to stop ethnic or religious minorities being wiped out.

Second, we need to reform our broken policy on genocide. We are bound by the Genocide Convention to “prevent” and “punish” genocide. Our current policy - waiting for a court judgment before even using the word - means that the UK is hamstrung until (normally) decades after the genocide has concluded (yes, genocide cases take that long). This policy makes genocide prevention very difficult indeed. Improbable, if not impossible. On top of all that, there’s no way of getting a court determination without first reforming the institutions of the UN, so it’s also inoperable. It must now change.

Next, we should be seeking to find a way to alleviate the debt trap in which many emerging economies find themselves by creating an alternative to China’s Belt and Road project. The G7 has stated its desire to achieve this. But making it work will require some exceptionally ambitious thinking and deft multilateralism. We would need to map dependency upon China very carefully, and analyse which nations are unreasonably exposed to China’s economic coercion. We would then need to combine efforts with other like-minded nations to wean countries off their dependency. Doing this in a way which does not appear to be targeted at China won’t be easy. And it isn’t a short term fix. But it might just save the UN Human Rights Council, and free nations from punitive debt and economic bullying that so many are suffering currently.

Back to values. Individual human dignity, democracy, the rule of law, freedom of religion, equality and tolerance are all deeply radical ideas which are not shared by everybody. Only when we truly understand and treasure them will we grasp what is at stake in the international forum. This starts at home. We need our politicians to remind us, and we need the National Curriculum to reflect the centrality of human rights to our people and history. “Being nice” is no answer to the perils facing the rules based international order, and offers nothing distinctively British to the world. With the resurgence of global authoritarianism, and against the backdrop of the Global Britain debate, we have to do better. Time for radical reform, and foreign policy with a memory.

Mavis Owusu-Gyamfi

Innovative ways that we can encourage sustained economic growth on the continent of Africa



Mavis Owusu-Gyamfi is Executive Vice-President at the African Center for Economic Transformation. ACET is an African Think Tank focused on supporting countries to develop and implement sustainable growth strategies that benefits its citizens and improves their well-being. Prior to joining ACET, Mavis was Director of Investments at Power of Nutrition where she helped to grow the portfolio from \$40m to over \$500m in Africa and Asia. Her other roles include Director of Programme Policy and Quality for Save the Children UK and twelve years as a private sector specialist at the UK's Department of International Development. Her last role at DFID was as a Deputy Director and Head of Profession for the Private Sector Development cadre. Mavis is a Desmond Tutu Leadership Fellow with an MPhil from the University of Sussex.

Between 2010 and 2019, Africa experienced relatively fast growth of 3.48% compared to a global average of 2.87%. This was a fall in comparison to the previous decade when average annual growth rate was 5.21%. Despite the growth seen to date, economies on the continent have not been successfully transformed. The continent will only secure sustained economic growth if countries can transform their economies. To transform Africa needs growth with DEPTH – Diversification of the economy, Export competitiveness, improved Productivity, Technological advancement which all drive improved Human wellbeing.

While the health impact of Covid-19 on Africa has been less severe than in other regions, the economic impact has been devastating and the economic and social gains made over the past two decades are under threat. GDP growth in 2020 was -1.9% and it is projected to increase to 3.4% in 2021 which is substantially less than the 5.8% projected for the rest of the world. Poverty rates are increasing, making achievements of the SDGs even more challenging.

Africa's projected slow growth underscores how vulnerable most economies on the continent are. Countries' continued dependence on primary resources and poor transformation record means they lack the resilience to withstand shocks. The African Centre for Economic Transformation's (ACET), African Transformation Index (ATI) shows that Africa's transformation has been on a downward trend. The forthcoming ATI reveals that in 2018 economic transformation on the continent was the same as it was 19 years ago. The downward trend and stagnation in economic transformation is due to three of the DEPTH factors – poor diversification of economies, weak technological upgrading and modest investment in human wellbeing.

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This downward trend was prevalent in fast growing economies such as Tunisia and South Africa that have experienced stagnated transformation for a period of ten years. Countries in the Central African Community are the only ones in the region that made transformation gains - albeit slow and still below the African average.

As countries develop national plans to 'build forward better', they must focus on policies and investments that will enable them to transform their economies. The ACET growth with DEPTH framework outlines how African countries can transform their economies sustainably and ensure they can better withstand future shocks. Furthermore, by transforming their economies, countries will be better placed to convert their growing youth population into a demographic dividend, take advantage of opportunities that might emerge from the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and further enhance the wellbeing of their people.

African countries need growth with DEPTH. To do this, countries will need to foster strong local, regional and international partnerships. The United Kingdom (UK) is one of Africa's largest development, trading and strategic partners. Working across anglophone, francophone and lusophone countries, the UK has long historic ties with the continent and as such is well positioned to assist countries to transform their economies to their mutual benefit. The UK should make this a core part of the Global Britain agenda.

The UK can contribute in four ways:

- Support countries to 'build forward better'. The UK should use its development assistance to finance systemic reforms that improve the investment environment in African countries. The UK, in the past, has successfully supported countries, such as Tanzania and Ghana, to improve its ranking in the World Bank Doing Business Index. Going forward, the UK can lead the process of supporting countries to develop an enabling environment in critical areas such as digital, the green economy, infrastructure, and value added and high-tech manufacturing that will create jobs and have the biggest economic impact in the short to medium-term. This support should include assisting transnational interventions that will enhance national efforts.
- Facilitate donor coordination and assist national governments to strengthen their international partners. Strong partnerships will facilitate effective aid management by governments towards their sustainable growth priorities. The current fragmented aid system is not conducive to African countries' building back better plans. The UK was a driving force behind the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda and is well positioned to lead such a process through the G7 and G20 and by being an effective broker in the multilateral system. The UK will also need to collaborate with the EU on development issues and not dismiss or underestimate the development offer of China, Turkey and other rising donors.
- Support innovation and entrepreneurship. The pandemic has released Africa's creativity in the health, climate and digital sectors. However, this entrepreneurial spirit needs to be nurtured and supported through a robust ecosystem that crowds in the private sector, research, academia, entrepreneurs, finance, and government to facilitate evolution, adaptation and scaling up.

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- The UK should retain its position as an innovative thought leader by establishing innovative financing mechanisms to invest in African SMEs, 4IR industries and areas such as AI, machine learning and big data. Furthermore, the CDC Group should focus its investments in more risky and potentially high return sectors, in small markets and more fragile contexts to demonstrate market viability in these critical growth areas.
- Support African organisations. Pan-African and sub-regional economic and health institutions have been at the forefront of supporting countries to navigate the crisis and are now assisting them to develop their build forward plans. These institutions are critical to securing sustainable growth in Africa – they provide policy advice, technical assistance, financial support and undertake analysis that citizens use to hold their governments to account. The global decline in international development support has negatively impacted a number of them. Africa needs a critical mass of good pan-African institutions to help countries transform their economies and hold governments to account if we are to secure sustainable growth on the continent. The UK can support this process.

Transforming and growing Africa's economies will also benefit the UK. First, an economically prosperous Africa will offer the UK access to a single market of 1.3bn, and rapidly growing, market for UK goods and services. Second, a wealthier Africa is less likely to be conflict prone thereby reducing the burden on UK defence and aid. Finally, as countries get richer, they will realise their ambition of becoming less dependent on aid and focus on building stronger trading partnerships with the UK.



Ryan Henson is Chief Executive at the Coalition for Global Prosperity and has a background in international development, and political campaigns. Prior to joining the Coalition, Ryan worked for CAFOD, the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development, and on human rights policy at the Ministry of Justice. Ryan serves as a Reservist in the Royal Air Force and is a founding trustee of a social mobility charity. Ryan was the Conservative Parliamentary Candidate for Bedford at the 2019 General Election.

Ryan Henson

From Hartlepool to Harare: The case for a British Peace Corps

Aid is about our values. It offers our generation an opportunity to save and transform the lives of the world's poorest people, and thereby build a better world. Aid is also in our national interest. It stops the spread of epidemics, clears landmines, resolves conflicts, and builds free and fair democracies, making Britain healthier, safer, and more prosperous. The pandemic and its aftermath have revealed that none are safe until all are safe. We can continue to shape the world around us, or we can let the likes of China and Russia shape it for us. We choose the former. Therefore, effective UK leadership in international development is needed more than ever.

Appalling allegations of sexual misconduct by aid workers in places like Haiti, mostly perpetrated by men in positions of power against mostly women in vulnerable circumstances, have rightly caused shock, disillusionment, and outrage. Meanwhile, celebrities and aid workers stand accused of having a 'white saviour' mentality, fuelling narratives that development is something white, affluent, Europeans impose without consultation on people of colour from the Global South. And now a landmark social mobility study has revealed that the UK's aid and development world is dominated by the affluent and those born into relative privilege and is therefore unrepresentative of working-class people across Britain.

According to the Social Mobility Commission, 67% of staff from the former Department for International Development (DfID) came from affluent social backgrounds - measured by type of school attended, parental educational attainment and occupation - compared with 54% in the Civil Service overall, and just 37% of the rest of society. DfID's merger with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has not helped much, where 69% are from affluent backgrounds.

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There has been no significant study of social backgrounds of aid workers but given the almost universal requirement for job applicants to possess a university degree and several years' experience even for entry-level roles (necessitating months of often unpaid internships), and with most NGOs based in London, we might reasonably assume the aid sector also struggles to be representative of modern Britain.

A poor approach to social mobility in a sector dedicated to leaving no-one behind is not just problematic on grounds of fairness and equality. Making it harder for people from low-income households and those not living within affordable commuting distance of London to gain employment in international development, risks alienating Britain's aid work from the millions of taxpayers upon whom support for the UK's lifesaving overseas work ultimately depends.

Polling undertaken by the Coalition for Global Prosperity in 2020/21 found just 30% of voters in 'Red Wall' constituencies, who switched their vote to the Conservatives in 2019, believed the UK should directly support developing countries. In contrast, 84% of those polled in more affluent marginal constituencies in the south of England where the Liberal Democrats came second to the Conservatives, believed the UK's leadership in international development set Britain apart from other nations in a positive way.

Diminishing support for aid among the parts of the electorate that now decide elections is a disaster for the people who depend on Britain's overseas aid programmes. Just as important is what developing countries lose from Britain when aid becomes something only the children of middle-class people pursue.

The UK's response to the Ebola crisis in 2014 and 2015 was an example of Britain at its best. The UK led the international response in Sierra Leone bringing together aid workers, NHS staff and our world-class armed forces, from all four corners of the UK. Britain's swift response saved thousands of lives and stopped the disease from spreading to our shores. But it should not have taken an Ebola outbreak to bring out the talents and hard work of people from all backgrounds to support those in need. The resolve and character derived from centuries of trade union solidarity, a healthy scepticism for ideologies and passing fads, respect for Britain's history and place in the world, pride in our country, our flag, and what it stands for, and a determination to ensure our values are shared with those far from our shores – all these things are what make Britain great, and should feature far more in the UK's overseas development work.

The conversion of countless previously lukewarm celebrities proves nothing works quite so well in convincing someone to support overseas aid as taking them to see projects on the ground for themselves. With support for aid and development generally far weaker in working class communities in the North, than affluent ones in the South, and if UK foreign policy is to better connect with those beyond Westminster, then international development needs to start looking and sounding like modern Britain. It is not the case that working-class communities do not care: it is that they are very rarely included, consulted, or represented.

The next generation of aid workers need to be from Hartlepool, not just Harrow.

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As authoritarian states like China and Russia seek to impose their model of development on the Global South, we need Britain's working-class values of community, national pride, and doing our duty by those in need, to shine far more brightly in the world.

To meet these challenges, the UK needs a Best of Britain scheme: an annual 3-month summer programme to train and transport 300 school leavers to the Global South to support aid and development programmes. To support both the diversification of the international development sector, and the diversification of talents, perspectives, and backgrounds to those we seek to help, all participants should be entirely educated in the state sector, and the first in their families to attend university, with at least two thirds living outside London and the South of England.

Modelled loosely on both the American Peace Corps and the Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO), the Best of Britain programme would make for a life-changing 3-months between leaving school, and starting work, an apprenticeship, or higher education. It would offer young people from low income backgrounds an unparalleled opportunity to meet other young people from different cultures – and to be met in turn – while mutually broadening understandings of Britain's place in the world and the lifesaving work undertaken by Britain's leading charities and NGOs. It would also provide a much-needed invigoration of working-class talent into the development sector.

Of equal importance, these bright and talented participants would provide support where it is needed most, while gaining CV boosting skills to impress their prospective future employers. As part of their outreach work, private schools should be strongly encouraged to fully fund local participants, thus ensuring taxpayers' aid money remains focused on programmes on the ground.

Britain is at its best when it acts as a global leader in development as well as in defence and diplomacy. The Best of Britain, staffed by young people from households on low incomes and from areas beyond London and the South of England, would help transform perceptions of Britain overseas, and perceptions of aid at home. It would make an enduring and tangible contribution towards helping some of the most vulnerable people in the world, while making aid and development more in touch with, and representative of, modern Britain.

“Britain stands tall in the world, and our aid commitment is an important part of that. The Coalition for Global Prosperity has an important role to play in demonstrating this, and I support it wholeheartedly.”

The Right Hon. David Cameron
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom 2010 - 2016

"The threats Britain faces today are multidimensional, from terrorism and conflict to epidemics like Ebola or Zika. Leveraging British expertise in both defence and development is crucial to meet these threats and save lives."

The Lord Richards of Herstmonceux GCB CBE DSO DL

"Conflict prevention is always better than conflict resolution. As a military guy, I'm delighted to see money spent on UK Aid. National power is never either hard or soft."

Lieutenant General Phil Jones CB CBE DL

"Britain is a force for good . In Uganda I've seen first hand how the refugee response is transforming lives and educating children."

Preet Kaur Gill MP
Shadow Secretary of State for International Development

"Zeroing in on what works to get girls into school and learning is a matter of utmost urgency. Empowering women begins with Girls' Education, and with 132 million girls still out of school worldwide, we cannot afford to be complacent."

The Hon Julia Gillard AC
Australian Prime Minister 2010-2-13



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