

DEBATE PACK

CDP 050 (2021) | 23 March 2021

Government support for non-governmental organisations and churches in developing nations during the covid-19 pandemic

Westminster Hall

Thursday 25 March 2021

3:15pm to 4:45pm

Debate led by Jim Shannon MP

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The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

1. Background

The UK has committed £548 million to the COVAX Advanced Market Commitment (AMC) - the international initiative to support global equitable access to vaccines. Through match funding, the commitment encouraged other donors to commit \$1 billion.

UK response

The Government says this funding will contribute to the supply of at least 1.3 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines in 2021 for 92 developing countries.

Funding to NGOs

The Government recognises the role that NGOs and other charities play in delivering the UK development programme in general, and specifically in responding to the Covid 19 pandemic.

Responding to a question on the role of charities in helping the Government meet its development Objectives ([Overseas Aid: Charities](#)) in March 2021 the Government responded:

“we recognise the unique role played by small UK-based international development charities in understanding and connecting with local communities and delivering support to the most marginalised and vulnerable, including during the latest COVID-19 crisis.”

The UK also provided funding for a Hygiene, Handwashing and Behaviour Change Coalition for COVID-19, through Unilever. In response to a question on this funding from Preet Kaur Gill, [the FCDO responded:](#)

“The UK Government has now allocated over £26 million to provide urgent COVID-19 hygiene support to some of the world's most vulnerable people.

Large UK-based charities (organisations with an average annual income of over £10 million for the last three years) have been allocated £11 million of this overall total. Delivery partners were selected through open competition. The remaining £15 million has been disbursed through non-UK-based not-for-profit organisations and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).”

Gavi

Gavi, the vaccine alliance, [describes itself](#) as a public-private partnership that aims to help vaccinate people – predominately children – against “deadly and debilitating infectious diseases”. Its core partners are the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the World Bank and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Its website also explains that Gavi works with donors who include Governments as well as:

private sector foundations and corporate partners; NGOs, advocacy groups, professional and community associations, faith-based organisations and academia; vaccine manufacturers, including those in emerging markets; research and technical health institutes; and implementing country governments.¹

Rather than replicating the work of these bodies, Gavi emphasises that it relies “on country-based systems and works with partners with widespread field presence to deliver its programmes”. Thus it does not, for example, have a presence on the ground in developing countries. Instead, it explains that “health ministries take the lead working closely with WHO regional and country offices, who provide expert recommendations on vaccine use and appraisal of new vaccines”.²

The Government reports that the funding alliance Gavi works with [faith based organisations](#) and religious leaders to:

“provide accurate and transparent information on, and encourage the distribution and uptake of, COVID-19 vaccines. We continue to assess the impact of Covid-19 on human rights globally, including Christians and members of minority religious and belief communities facing persecution”

Religious organisations

Some commentators argue that religious organisations [have not in general been properly tapped into](#) for the range of benefits and targeted outreach that they can offer to ensure vaccines reach people. They point out that engagement by faith organisations in immunization is not new. Religious actors’ work around [resistance against polio vaccination](#) in northern Nigeria from 2003 to 2004 is one of the [best-documented recent examples](#) of the religious community addressing vaccination resistance and propelling uptake.

Others argue that the church has the [second largest](#) aid network in the world. CAFOD, the Catholic development organisation, says that In many countries, it is the only way of reaching the people who need urgent support. “This was clear during the Ebola crisis in West Africa, and we are putting that experience to work in fighting COVID-19.”

¹ Gavi, [About our alliance](#), not dated

² Gavi, [Operating model](#), February 2020

2. Press and media articles

The following is a selection of articles relevant to this debate.

Please note: the Library is not responsible for either the views or accuracy of external content.

[Pandemic impact on charities continues to be 'uneven' but funding challenges are on horizon, research shows](#)

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NVCO)
15 March 2021

[Religious groups should be engaged for COVID-19 vaccine delivery](#)

Devex
Olivia Wilkinson and Katherine Marshall
09 March 2021

[CAFOD's response to coronavirus in 2021](#)

Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD)
1 March 2021

[The distinctive role of the Catholic Church in development and humanitarian response: 7 ways the Church makes a difference](#)

Relief Web
7 February 2021

[Ties between UN, faith-based groups poised to grow during pandemic](#)

Devex
Amy Lieberman
28 October 2020

[12 ways NGOs are helping the world's poorest during Covid-19](#)

Bond International
9 June 2020

[Seven ways in which religious leaders can help tackle Covid-19](#)

Church Times
Dominic Ole Santeto
28 April 2020

[Covid-19's worst victims will be the persecuted Christians of Africa](#)

Sunday Telegraph (article reproduced on APPG Freedom of Religion or Belief website)
Jim Shannon
12 April 2020

[Charities beg for government help for their survival](#)

Church Times
Paul Wilkinson
21 March 2020

3. PQs

Overseas Aid: Charities

18 Mar 2021 | 169009

Asked by: Anna McMorris

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 5 January 2021 to Question HL11567 on Overseas Aid: Charities, what assessment he has made of the role of small UK-based international development charities in helping his Department meet its seven core development priorities as part of preparing Official Development Assistance budgets for 2021-22; what plans he has to engage with civil society organisations on those budgets.

Answering member: Nigel Adams | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Civil society organisations have a significant role to play in delivering the seven core priorities. We recognise the unique role played by small UK-based international development charities in understanding and connecting with local communities and delivering support to the most marginalised and vulnerable, including during the latest COVID-19 crisis.

We will share further information with civil society organisations to start working through implications of decisions once they are taken, and we intend to work closely with our partners to implement any changes.

Christianity: Oppression

10 Feb 2021 | 147111

Asked by: Andrew Rosindell

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that Christians receive equal access to vaccines and healthcare in countries or regions where they face persecution.

Answering member: Nigel Adams | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK is committed to rapid equitable access to safe and effective vaccines. The UK has committed £548 million to the COVAX Advanced Market Commitment (AMC) - the international initiative to support global equitable access to vaccines. Through match funding, the commitment encouraged other donors to commit \$1 billion. Our commitment will contribute to the supply of at least 1.3 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines in 2021 for 92 developing countries. First COVAX deliveries are anticipated to begin at the end of February.

Gavi and its alliance partners plan to work with faith-based organisations and religious leaders to provide accurate and transparent information on, and encourage the distribution and uptake of, COVID-19 vaccines. We continue to assess the impact of Covid-19 on human rights globally, including Christians and members of minority religious and belief communities facing persecution.

On 16 November 2020, the Minister of State responsible for Human Rights, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, virtually attended the Ministerial to Advance Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) in Warsaw and reaffirmed the UK's commitment to promoting FoRB, particularly during the pandemic. We will continue working with our partners to support global efforts to combat the outbreak of Covid-19 and its effects on the most vulnerable, including those from religious minorities.

Developing Countries: Coronavirus

19 Jan 2021 | 910996

Asked by: Alex Cunningham

What recent assessment he has made of the effect of the covid-19 pandemic on poverty rates in the Global South.

Answering member: James Duddridge | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

COVID-19 is likely to have resulted in over 140 million additional people living in extreme poverty – around 2% of the global population – and many more will have temporarily fallen below the poverty line. This is a seven-year reversal in progress to reduce poverty.

The UK is one of the largest donors to the COVID-19 international response, committing up to £1.3bn of new ODA to counter the health, economic, humanitarian impacts, and to support the global effort to find and equitably distribute a vaccine.

Coronavirus: Vaccination

14 Jan 2021 | HL11698

Asked by: The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the communique from the Primes of the Anglican Communion on 12 November about equitable COVID-19 vaccine access, what plans they have to use faith communities globally to encourage the distribution and uptake of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK is committed to rapid, equitable access to safe and effective vaccines, treatments, and tests globally. We have committed up to £548 million for the COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC), which is the international initiative administered by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance to support global equitable access to vaccines. Our commitment will support access to COVID-19 vaccines for up to 92 developing countries by contributing to the supply of 1 billion doses in 2021, and vaccinations for up to 500 million people.

Gavi and its partners plan to partner with faith-based organisations, including working with religious leaders, to provide accurate and transparent information on COVID-19 vaccines, and encourage the distribution and uptake of the vaccine when rolled-out.

[Overseas Aid: Charities](#)

05 Jan 2021 | HL11567

Asked by: Lord Boateng | Party: Labour Party

Her Majesty's Government what representations they have received from the Small International Development Charities Network on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the continuing viability of such charities; and what plans they have to meet with representatives of the Network.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The FCDO has received a number of MP's letters requesting a response to their constituents who have expressed support for the Small but Mighty campaign championed by the Small International Development Charities Network. The FCDO currently has no specific plans to meet representatives of the Network. However, as an organisation, we attach immense value to engaging with civil society organisations which, like the FCDO, are at the forefront of delivering aid. We will continue to engage directly with organisations that share our objectives in international development and contribute to delivering UK Aid to poor and excluded communities around the world.

[Overseas Aid: Charities](#)

05 Jan 2021 | HL11566

Asked by: Lord Boateng

Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the (1) funding, and (2) operational sustainability, of small charities working in the field of international development.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The FCDO recognises that this is an uncertain time for the charity sector and we continue to work flexibly with civil society partners to respond to the pandemic, maintain delivery of essential programmes and manage the impacts on organisations and staff. We have kept informed of the level of risk to the sector by the BOND survey of its members. Many charities have benefited from the existing measures announced by the Government to support employers and businesses and all charities have also been eligible for the job retention scheme.

[Developing Countries: Coronavirus](#)

24 Sep 2020 | 88377

Asked by: Preet Kaur Gill

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 9 September to Question 82263, with reference to the £24 million provided to charities through the Government's partnership with Unilever, how much was

allocated to (a) small, (b) medium and (c) large UK-based international development charities.

Answering member: Wendy Morton | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Through the UK Government's partnership with Unilever, the Hygiene, Handwashing and Behaviour Change Coalition for COVID-19, the UK Government has now allocated over £26 million to provide urgent COVID-19 hygiene support to some of the world's most vulnerable people.

Large UK-based charities (organisations with an average annual income of over £10 million for the last three years) have been allocated £11 million of this overall total. Delivery partners were selected through open competition. The remaining £15 million has been disbursed through non-UK-based not-for-profit organisations and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

[Developing Countries: Coronavirus](#)

22 Sep 2020 | 88376

Asked by: Preet Kaur Gill

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 9 September to Question 82263, of the £18 million provided to charities through the Rapid Response Facility, how much was allocated to (a) small, (b) medium and (c) large UK-based international development charities.

Answering member: Wendy Morton | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Through the Rapid Response Facility (RRF), the UK has allocated £18 million to provide humanitarian assistance to some of the world's most vulnerable people during the COVID-19 crisis. This funding has been allocated to Action Against Hunger, CARE, Christian Aid, GOAL, Humanity & Inclusion and Norwegian Refugee Council. These organisations are large and medium-sized charities.

Further information about RRF projects can be found on the Development Tracker website:

<https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/projects/GB-GOV-1-301150>

[Developing Countries: Coronavirus](#)

01 Sep 2020 | 76829

Asked by: Preet Kaur Gill

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much her Department has disbursed to multilateral institutions in response to the covid-19 pandemic; and how much of that aid has reached the Global South to date.

Answering member: Wendy Morton | Department for International Development

The UK is playing a leading role in the international response to the Covid-19 pandemic, pledging up to £774 million of UK aid to help developing countries (the 'global south') address the immediate and longer-term impacts of the crisis. Of the £774 million, £220 million has gone to UN agencies in the UN's Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP), such as the World Food Programme and UN Refugee Agency, as well as humanitarian organisations such as the Red Cross and international NGOs. DFID is also adapting its programmes across its country network to respond to COVID-19 and address the needs of the most vulnerable, as outlined in the GHRP. This funding will help address urgent needs in vulnerable countries, accelerate progress towards a vaccine, reinforce infection control and help the poorest countries address the economic impact of the crisis.

On 4 June, the UK hosted the Global Vaccine Summit, where world leaders, foundations, corporations and organisations pledged \$8.8 billion for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. The UK remains Gavi's largest donor, having pledged £1.65bn for 2021-25 to help strengthen health systems in the global fight against COVID-19 and immunise a further 300 million children in the world's poorest countries against other deadly diseases. We are a leading donor and shareholder to the multilateral development banks, which have announced financial packages totalling more than £200bn. Given the unprecedented high demand for rapid finance, the UK has doubled its pledge from £2.2bn to £4.4 billion to IMF loan resources for concessional lending to low-income and vulnerable developing countries, and pledged up to £150m to the IMF Catastrophe Containment Relief Trust for the poorest countries to receive debt relief on IMF repayments.

We will continue to work closely with our multilateral partners and fora such as the G7 and G20 to galvanise the global fight against Covid-19 and shape the multilateral response to ensure it addresses the needs of the world's poorest and most vulnerable.

[Overseas Aid: Minority Groups](#)

23 Jul 2020 | 75213

Asked by: Andrew Selous

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department has taken to develop practical programmes of assistance which take into account the specific contexts and needs of vulnerable (a) religious communities and (b) other groups.

Answering member: Nigel Adams | Department for International Development

The UK is firmly committed to the protection of ethnic and religious minorities. We work to ensure that the specific contexts and needs of vulnerable religious communities and other vulnerable groups are taken into account when practical programmes of assistance are developed.

DFID undertakes interdisciplinary analysis to ensure that religious groups are factored into all of our country programmes. The situation of

minority communities is taken into account when assessing those most in need of protection and assistance. This includes when a community is being targeted or is otherwise vulnerable because of their faith. We actively consult civil society including faith-based organisations to understand how best to support vulnerable groups.

Vulnerable religious minority groups will experience crises such as COVID-19 outbreaks differently. Crises are likely to reinforce their marginalised position in society, their experience of discrimination, violence and stigma, and further limit their access to essential support and services. For this reason, guidance was circulated across DFID highlighting that inclusion must be central to our response and the specific contexts and needs of vulnerable religious communities and other vulnerable groups should be taken into account when developing practical programmes of assistance.

On 8 June, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State responsible for Human Rights, hosted a roundtable to hear from faith leaders and faith-based development organisations about the specific challenges minority faith communities are facing during this COVID-19 pandemic. We will continue to work closely with partners to ensure that vulnerable religious communities and other vulnerable groups are being supported through our programming.

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Non-governmental Organisations

22 Jul 2020 | HL6673

Asked by: Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they are having with international development related non-governmental organisations; and how they plan to incorporate the experience of such organisations into the future policy of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

Answering member: Baroness Sugg | Department for International Development

UK and international NGOs play an invaluable role in our fight against poverty. We will continue to engage closely with them as we shape the new Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, which will unite our development expertise and first-class diplomatic service to make the UK a greater force for good in the world.

Developing Countries: Overseas Aid

11 Jun 2020 | HL5239

Asked by: Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking with multilateral organisations to ensure that official development assistance, allocated to tackling the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, is reaching people living in the global south that need it.

Answering member: Baroness Sugg | Department for International Development

The UK is working together with international partners including the G7, G20, the UN, the World Bank and other multilateral institutions, to galvanise the global fight against COVID-19.

The UK is playing a leading role in the international response to the pandemic, pledging up to £764 million of UK aid to help address urgent needs in vulnerable countries, accelerate progress towards a vaccine, reinforce infection control and help the poorest countries address the economic impact.

We are a major contributor to the UN Global Humanitarian Response Plan, which is supporting the most vulnerable people in this crisis, including women and girls, people with disabilities, refugees, internally displaced persons, migrants and host communities. The UK has committed £2.2 billion in new loan resources for the IMF's concessional lending operations to make rapid emergency financing available for developing countries, and up to £150 million to the IMF Catastrophe Containment Relief Trust for the poorest countries to receive debt relief on IMF repayments. On 4 June, the UK hosted the Global Vaccine Summit, where world leaders, foundations, corporations and organisations pledged \$8.8 billion for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. This funding will help strengthen health systems in the global fight against COVID-19 and immunise a further 300 million children in the world's poorest countries against other deadly diseases. The UK remains Gavi's largest donor, pledging an equivalent of £330 million per year over the next five years.

We continue to use our seat at the table to shape the multilateral response and ensure it addresses the needs and priorities of the poorest and most vulnerable.

[Covid-19: Support for Charities' Response](#)

10 June 2020 | 677 cc277-278

Asked by: Dehenna Davison

What steps her Department has taken to support UK charities in their response to the covid-19 pandemic in developing countries.

Asked by: Ms Karen Buck

What support she is providing to international NGOs based in the UK to help those organisations respond to the covid-19 pandemic.

Answered by: Wendy Morton | Department for International Development

Charities and non-governmental organisations are crucial partners for DFID and play a critical role in ensuring UK aid reaches the most vulnerable. We have used schemes such as our rapid response facility to send £45 million of special funding to them. We want them to deliver some of the rest of the UK's £764 million coronavirus response. Where our charity partners are struggling, we have introduced a special procedure to make sure they remain our partners for the long term.

[...]

Asked by: Ms Karen Buck

Many happy returns, Mr Speaker.

UK-based international charities are under unprecedented pressure at a time when their services are most needed, with the latest research indicating that more than half have cut back on their overseas programmes and nearly half, particularly small organisations, are at risk of not surviving for another six months. Will the Minister ensure that the review of their work begins by the Government dealing with those with the lowest transparency scores and tackling programmes that do not put poverty reduction at the heart of their work?

Answered by: Wendy Morton | Department for International Development

I ought to wish you happy birthday as well, Mr Speaker. That was rather remiss of me.

The hon. Lady makes a very important point. Civil society is an important policy and delivery partner for DFID and I absolutely recognise the work it does. Our continued partnership will be critical in ensuring that UK aid reaches those most in need as a result of covid-19. There are a number of funding schemes and programmes that DFID has recently announced and allocated, including a new £30 million UK Aid Direct funding round that is open specifically for small and medium-sized charities based both in the UK and internationally to support the global response to covid-19.

[Developing Countries: Coronavirus](#)

09 Jun 2020 | 53621

Asked by: Wendy Chamberlain

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, which charities and NGOs have received Official Development Assistance to help tackle covid-19 in the global south; what funding each of those charities and NGOs received; and what facility they received it through.

Answering member: Wendy Morton | Department for International Development

NGOs are key policy and delivery partners for DFID and we are committed to working with the sector to meet the challenges posed by COVID-19. CSOs including NGOs and charities deliver roughly one quarter of DFID programmes around the world. A total of 40 charities and NGOs are receiving funding from the Department for International Development's (DFID) £20 million humanitarian support package, announced in April, or the £100 million global hygiene partnership with Unilever, unveiled in March.

DFID is providing £24.4 million as part of our Unilever partnership to Action Aid, The African Medical and Research Foundation, PSI, Save the Children, Oxfam, WaterAid, International Rescue Committee, World Vision, Water & Sanitation for the Urban Poor.

Through DFID's Rapid Response Facility, £18 million of DFID funding is supporting Action Against Hunger, CARE, Christian Aid, GOAL, Humanity & Inclusion and Norwegian Refugee Council to provide healthcare, water and sanitation, food and shelter to meet the basic needs of some of the world's most vulnerable people during the COVID-19 crisis.

Through the Humanitarian 2 Humanitarian network and its host Danish Refugee Council, £2 million of DFID funding will support 14 partners to manage information on the virus and share this with global partners, and to communicate facts to communities across Africa, the Middle East and beyond. These partners are: Fondation Hironnelle, Ground Truth Solutions, the New Humanitarian, CDAC Network, ACAPS, CartONG, Humanitarian OpenStreetMap, Map Action, Evidence Aid, Sphere, Red R UK, Humanitarian Academy for Development, Atlas Logistique and Insecurity Insight.

In country a significant proportion of existing DFID programmes are implemented directly through NGO partners and we expect NGOs will play a significant role in our country level COVID response. Many NGOs will also receive funding as part of DFID's significant investment in the multilateral response to COVID-19. Collating the full list of organisations in receipt of funding for COVID-19 work from existing programmes or as downstream partners would take a disproportionate amount of time to extract.

[Developing Countries: Overseas Aid](#)

08 Jun 2020 | 52321

Asked by: Preet Kaur Gill

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether she plans to introduce a stabilisation fund for international non-governmental organisations to continue to deliver aid to people living in extreme poverty in the global south.

Answering member: Wendy Morton | Department for International Development

Civil society organisations (CSOs) are key partners for DFID in our response to COVID-19 and we have pledged new funding specifically for CSOs to support our work to tackle the virus. This includes funding allocated through the Rapid Response Facility and significant funding through the DFID Unilever COVID-19 Hygiene and Behaviour Change Coalition. A new UK Aid Direct funding round has also been launched, some of which has been set aside for rapid access by existing UK Aid Direct grant holders who are able to respond immediately to COVID-19. In addition, International Non-Government Organisations will receive funding through multilateral organisations as downstream partners as part of the UK's response. As DFID's country network adapts programming to respond to COVID-19, country teams are considering how they can do this through partners, including through CSOs.

We are working flexibly with existing civil society partners to respond to the pandemic, maintain delivery of essential programmes and manage the impacts on organisations and staff. DFID is also offering support to

all suppliers, including civil society, in line with the provisions of the Cabinet Office Procurement Policy Note and associated guidance for grants. This allows for relief on services and goods provided in the UK, to DFID aid programmes as a last resort and on a case-by-case basis for DFID contracts and grants. UK-based CSOs are also eligible for the Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

NGOs are fundamental parts of DFID's work. Given DFID's support for them runs so deeply through everything we do, there is no plan to create a specific fund.

Developing Countries: Water

04 Jun 2020 | 52563

Asked by: Fleur Anderson

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what discussions she has had with non-governmental organisations on improving water, sanitation and hygiene access in the response to the covid-19 pandemic.

Answering member: Wendy Morton | Department for International Development

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are major partners for delivering DFID water and sanitation programmes and accounted for about a third of the results achieved over the last ten years. The UK has pledged new funding for civil society to support the international COVID-19 response, including £20 million for international NGOs. Since the onset of the pandemic DFID has increased our work with NGOs on water, sanitation and hygiene. Nine NGOs are now funded under a new partnership with Unilever on the COVID-19 response. I personally met NGO heads, including the WaterAid CEO, for discussions on the COVID-19 response last month.

Developing Countries: Coronavirus

12 May 2020 | 43767

Asked by: Fleur Anderson

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much funding her Department has allocated to support international health NGOs to continue pre-existing immunisation programmes in developing countries during the covid-19 pandemic.

Answering member: Wendy Morton | Department for International Development

It is vital that routine immunisation programmes continue throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. If immunisation coverage is not maintained, we will face far worse public health emergencies around the world if measles, polio, yellow fever, cholera, and other deadly diseases spread in the absence of routine immunisation. That is why the UK's commitment of the equivalent of £330 million per year for the next five years to fund Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance's work is so critical. This will help fund the immunisation of up to 75 million children in the world's poorest countries. Gavi is an alliance, working hand in glove with

international health organisations such as the World Health Organization and UNICEF. The UK's commitment of £400 million to polio for the next four years will support not only the vaccination of over 450 million children every year against polio, but also broader health systems that are currently proving essential to the COVID-19 response in many countries. Polio vaccinations will continue to be delivered where possible during the pandemic.

Developing Countries: Coronavirus

12 May 2020 | 43741

Asked by: Anna McMorrin

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to ensure logistical strategies are in place to help ensure the timely distribution of vaccines to international NGOs working on the ground in low-income and fragile states.

Answering member: Wendy Morton | Department for International Development

My Department is at the forefront of global efforts to ensure that Covid-19 vaccines are available to everyone who needs them, including in low-income and fragile states. On 4 June, the UK will host the Global Vaccines Summit (GVS2020) alongside GAVI who are uniquely placed to ensure safe, effective and affordable COVID-19 vaccines can be rolled out at scale to ensure equitable access. The UK is the leading donor to GAVI and we recently announced the equivalent of £330 million a year for five years, covering the business planning period 2021-2025.

Developing Countries: Coronavirus

01 May 2020 | 39724

Asked by: Preet Kaur Gill

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps she is taking to add flexibility to existing grants to NGOs to enable them to support countries affected by covid-19 in the Global South.

Answering member: Wendy Morton | Department for International Development

DFID is engaging with supply partners to address the challenges posed to them and DFID-funded projects by COVID-19. We will work collaboratively with supply partners to find pragmatic solutions to support both our partners and continuation of our programmes where appropriate.

DFID is offering support to suppliers and partners where this is appropriate, in line with the UK government position and will apply the provisions of the Cabinet Office Procurement Policy Note and associated guidance for grants, which allows for relief on services and goods provided in the UK, to DFID aid programmes as a last resort and on a case-by-case basis for DFID contracts and grants.

4. Other Parliamentary material

4.1 Statements

[Covid-19: International Response](#)

Statement on the UK's support for the global effort to tackle the coronavirus pandemic.

06 May 2020 | 675 cc565-602

4.2 Debates

[International Covid-19 Response: Innovation and Access to Treatment](#)

05 Nov 2020 | 683 cc561-577

[Covid-19: International Response](#)

18 May 2020 | 803 cc926-967

4.3 Early Day Motions

[UK aid, covid-19 and the additional vulnerability of religious minorities](#)

EDM 765 (session 2019-21)

Jim Shannon

21 July 2020

That this House expresses deep concern about the increased vulnerability of Christians, and all citizens belonging to religious minority groups, to discrimination and persecution as a result of the covid-19 pandemic; particularly notes the incidents of Christians and members of other religious minority groups facing discrimination in the distribution of aid during the covid-19 pandemic; welcomes the reassurances given by Ministers that guidance has been circulated across the Department for International Development highlighting that inclusion must be central to the UK response and that the specific contexts and needs of vulnerable religious communities and other vulnerable groups should be taken into account when developing practical programmes to tackle COVID-19; further welcomes the statement that the Department for International Development is working closely with its partners to ensure that they are rigorously assessing vulnerability and needs (including those linked with religious identity) ahead of allocating assistance as well as conducting robust monitoring to ensure that aid is reaching those most in need; urges the Department for International Development to confirm processes are in place to ensure that that monitoring is in itself impartial and does not reflect the prevalent societal views of the religious majority and fully recognises the vulnerability of religious minorities; and further urges the Department for International Development to also confirm that local faith leaders, particularly those from religious minority communities, have been

consulted about how best the additional vulnerabilities faced by those minority communities can be addressed during the covid-19 pandemic.

Freedom of religion or belief and the covid-19 pandemic

EDM 572 (session 2019-21)

Jim Shannon

8 June 2020

That this House expresses great concern about the increasing stigmatisation and persecution of religious or belief minorities in countries around the world in response to the covid-19 pandemic; condemns the spread of misinformation and hate speech by extremist groups who seek to blame minorities for that pandemic; notes with great concern reports of increasing anti-Semitism and rising hate crimes against those of Chinese descent globally; condemns Government crackdowns on minority rights under the pretence of combating the spread of the covid-19 virus; urges Governments around the world to respect human rights in their responses to the covid-19 crisis and to take necessary measures to protect minority groups; encourages the UK Government's Department for International Development to learn the lessons of the Ebola crisis by engaging faith leaders in its covid-19 pandemic response; and calls on all Governments to release those who are imprisoned for their faith or beliefs because those people are so detained in violation of Article 18 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and are extremely vulnerable during the covid-19 pandemic due to limited opportunities for social distancing and self-isolation in what are often overcrowded prisons.

5. Further reading

[**Covid-19 in developing countries: secondary impacts**](#), Eighth Report of Session 2019–21, International Development Committee, HC 1186, 26 January 2021

[**Humanitarian crises monitoring: impact of coronavirus \(interim findings\): Government Response to the Committee's Fifth Report of Session 2019–21**](#), Fifth Special Report of Session 2019–21, International Development Committee, HC 1160, 26 January 2021

[**Humanitarian crises monitoring: impact of coronavirus \(interim findings\)**](#), Fifth Report of Session 2019–21, International Development Committee, HC 292, 13 November 2020

[**The distinctive role of the Catholic Church in development and humanitarian response: 7 ways the Catholic Church makes a difference**](#), Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), February 2021

[**Tipping Point: How the Covid-19 pandemic threatens to push the world's poorest to the brink of survival**](#), Christian Aid, May 2020

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