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global
Introduction

Today, the countries of the world are more interconnected than ever before. All are affected by challenges such as the global downturn, the need to adapt to climate change, and demographic changes. **What happens in one country has a direct impact on others.**

Yet it is the poorest who bear a disproportionate burden of the effects of international crises and of the mistakes largely made by richer countries. The impacts of climate change are already wreaking havoc on the lives of millions around the world, and the financial crisis is having devastating results for poor communities in developing countries.

Now is the time to step up Britain’s global leadership and contribution to fighting poverty and inequality.

In this manifesto, UK civil society organisations set out the key political commitments necessary for Britain to play its full part in rising to these challenges and ensuring the world meets – and exceeds – the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which are badly off-track. These commitments must be underpinned by a number of principles to support successful action for international development.

We are calling on all political parties and candidates to adopt this vision and commit to our calls.

We ask the next UK Government to deliver on the actions set out in this manifesto.

We ask all politicians elected at the forthcoming polls to hold the Government to account against them.

We ask that the UK continues to improve its own policies on international development and to build on where it is playing a leading and progressive role as a member state of the European Union (EU) and on the global stage.

Nothing less will really deliver for development. And nothing less will keep the promises Britain has made to the poorest people in the world.

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• On 28 March 2009, 35,000 people marched through London calling for democratic, accountable and transparent financial institutions that work for the world’s poor © Glen Tarman/Bond
Key principles of international development

All political parties must commit to ensuring the UK does all it can to bring about a world in which poverty is eradicated, people’s basic needs are met and their rights are realised.

As one of the richest countries in the world playing a powerful role in international bodies, the UK has a particular responsibility to promote justice and equality globally.

All political parties should commit to the following principles of international development:

1. Recognise that we live in an interdependent world: international development is a global effort and is a responsibility of all countries.

2. Promote and support a strong voice on development within government through an independent Department for International Development represented by a Secretary of State.

3. Promote human rights by:

   - Realising the fundamental rights of all people to food, decent work, incomes, health, shelter, water and sanitation, education, social protection and political freedom;
   - Upholding the rights of women and promoting gender equality;
   - Protecting the most marginalised in society, including women, children, disabled and older people, minority and indigenous groups.

4. Respect the will, energy and ability of poor people to drive their own development: empowering poor countries and their citizens to determine their own paths out of poverty.

5. Reform global institutions to make them democratic and responsive to the needs of poor countries and ensure that the UK plays a progressive and pro-poor leadership role at both European and wider international levels.

6. Keep promises to poor people and poor countries embodied in international agreements including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

• A nurse listens to the heartbeat of a foetus of a pregnant woman at a local dispensary in the village of Emukhangu in Lurambi division, of Kakamega district in western province Kenya. © Allan Gichigi/IRIN
More and better aid and debt relief

Our demands – what the UK Government must act on

Aid and debt relief are vital for the poorest countries and have delivered significant increases in pro-poor spending in recent years. However, the quantity and quality of UK aid and debt relief need to increase.

Any UK Government should therefore commit to:

- Spending at least 0.7% of national income on effective aid by 2013 at the latest and cancelling all illegitimate and unpayable developing country debt through the creation of a democratic and transparent debt tribunal.
- Targeting aid for the poorest, most marginalised and vulnerable, particularly women and children, to tackle hunger, ensure food security and improve publicly provided services such as health (including HIV/AIDS, malaria, TB and other services), education, water and sanitation and build effective social protection schemes.
- Delivering aid effectively in coordinated and transparent ways, including through civil society organisations, without economic policy conditions attached (such as trade liberalisation and privatisation) and ensuring strong country ownership of development strategies.
- Maximising the potential of innovative financing mechanisms to generate additional resources to fill current gaps of sufficient volume to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Women collect water at a Rain Water Harvest Project run by a local NGO, the Sindh government and the World Food Programme, which grew out of a UNICEF survey identifying potable water issues in Tharparker District, Pakistan.

© Sumaira Jaja/IRIN
Tackling climate change

Our demands – what the UK Government must act on

The impacts of climate change will affect us all and we need to respond urgently. Climate change needs to be seen in the context of global justice, equity, and interdependence, and in the wider context of environmental sustainability.

Any UK Government should therefore commit to:

• Delivering on an ambitious, fair and binding global deal to keep global warming below 2 degrees Celsius.

• Making deep cuts in our own carbon dioxide emissions of at least 40% by 2020 and more than 80% by 2050, without resorting to offsets, and in addition supporting developing countries towards low-carbon development and a green economy.

• Taking a lead within the European Union to provide sufficient and verifiable new funding and technology transfer to the developing world, bearing in mind that the EU should be responsible for at least one third of the minimum $150 billion needed annually by developing countries by 2020 for mitigation and adaptation.

• Ensuring that this funding is additional to official development assistance (ODA) and channelled through the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) supporting the poorest countries to adapt to and mitigate against climate change, ensuring adequate governance arrangements and taking into account social and political impacts.

• The waters are rising in Bangladesh’s south-central Ullapara region. These women are heading for the nearby flood shelter established by the government. Bangladesh, September 2007. © Shamsuddin Ahmed/IRIN
Making the global economy work for the poor

Our demands – what the UK Government must act on

The global financial and economic system is marked by high levels of poverty and inequality and has contributed to environmental and economic crises.

Any UK Government should therefore commit to:

- Ensuring that trade deals – whether at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) or through the EU – allow developing countries to retain control over their economies, and do not force through deregulation and liberalisation which would undermine development objectives.

- Insisting on fundamental reform of global financial institutions, particularly the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), to ensure that they engage all developing countries more equitably in their governance and decision-making structures, are made fully transparent and accountable and do not insist on economic conditions that could, for example, undermine social protection systems.

- Requiring greater transparency and automatic information exchange for tax havens, and pushing for a transparent international accounting standard that requires companies to report their financial activities on a country-by-country basis with a clear breakdown of economic activity.

- Introducing a UK Commission for Business, Human Rights and the Environment mandated to ensure adherence of UK companies to environmental and human rights standards.

- Supporting the decent work agenda by adequately funding the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and encouraging all developing countries with which the UK works to have Decent Work Country Programmes, and ratify and implement the core labour conventions of the ILO.

*Economic liberalisation and ongoing drought have magnified the effects of the global economic crisis in Syria. Many workers in the textile industry can be laid off easily, sometimes without receiving due payment.*

© Hugh Macleod/IRIN
Good governance and addressing corruption

Our demands – what the UK Government must act on

Poor governance and corruption undermine poverty eradication and development, and exacerbate conflict. The UK Government’s domestic and foreign policy must promote transparency, public accountability and responsible private sector investment. Activities that directly contribute to corruption and poor governance must be ended.

Any UK Government should therefore commit to:

- Using its aid to contribute to expanding the space for citizens and state engagement and increased accountability, including support to parliamentary committees, national human rights institutions, independent auditing, the freedom of the press, civil society organisations, anti-corruption groups and academia.

- Ensuring that the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) and the OECD Anti Bribery Convention are fully incorporated into UK domestic law and establishing an annual, independent audit of the government’s implementation of both Conventions; and encouraging other countries to do likewise.

- Developing a cross-Whitehall strategy for tackling corruption and work closely with other donors and states to tackle the underlying factors which fuel and facilitate corruption.

*A young girl holds her mother’s voting card as she waits to cast her ballot in Sierra Leone’s parliamentary and presidential elections at a polling station in Freetown, 11 August 2007. Many people began queuing at 4am for the start of a peaceful day’s voting.* © Tugela Ridley/IRIN
Responding to conflict situations

Our demands – what the UK Government must act on

Violent conflict is a human tragedy which undermines development and exacerbates poverty. The UK must play a leading role in preventing conflict and promoting international human rights law. Conflict-affected and fragile countries are complex and pose formidable challenges that the UK Government must approach with a long-term view.

Any UK Government should therefore commit to:

• Promoting human security by upholding international humanitarian and human rights agreements and laws including the UN.

‘Responsibility to Protect’, supporting the International Criminal Court, pressing for successful negotiations over a robust and comprehensive global Arms Trade Treaty and implementing UN Security Council Resolutions such as those addressing violence against women in conflict and the protection of children affected by armed conflict.

• Developing a cross-Government strategy for preventing violent conflict and working to joint country strategies across relevant departments, particularly in conflict-affected countries.

• Ensuring that political and foreign policy interests are clearly separated from the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and to make all efforts to protect and promote humanitarian space and humanitarian principles whereby people affected by conflict are assured access to impartial and independent assistance.

• Ensuring that whilst development aid aims at poverty eradication, and in conflict situations is used to promote human security and access to justice, it is not diverted to equipping security forces.

• Displaced people wait to be given food during a distribution organised by the UN and other international agencies in Mogadishu, Somalia, September 2008
© Jamal Osman/RIn
National platforms of the Global Call to Action against Poverty, the world's largest civil society anti-poverty alliance, call on parliamentarians to end global poverty and inequality.

Endorsing organisations include

Action for a Global Climate Community
Action for Southern Africa
ActionAid UK
African Medical and Research Foundation
Amnesty International UK Article 19
Bretton Woods Project
CARE International UK
Christian Aid
CODA International
Computers 4 Africa
Concern Worldwide UK
Consortium for Street Children
Disability and Development Partners
EveryChild
Handicap International UK
Hands Around the World
Homeless International
International Rescue Committee – UK
International Service
Islamic Relief Worldwide
Jubilee Debt Campaign
Jubilee Scotland

Latitude Global Volunteering
Make Poverty History NE
Malaria Consortium
Mercy Corps European HQ
Methodist Church
Methodist Relief and Development Fund
Mother Helpage UK
Muslim Agency for Development and Enterprise in Europe
Muslim Charities Forum
National Union of Teachers
One
One World Action
One World Week
Oxfam GB
Plan UK
POWER International
Prospect UK
Pump Aid
Rainbow Development in Africa
RESULTS UK
Saferworld
Save the Children
Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund
Send a Cow
Sightsavers International
Stamp Out Poverty
Teach a Man to Fish
The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund
The Fairtrade Foundation
The Humanitarian Forum
The Mothers’ Union
TIDAL
Trade Justice Movement
Trades Union Congress Aid
UK Aid Network
UNICEF UK
United Reformed Church
Voluntary Service Overseas
War on Want
WaterAid
Welsh Centre for International Affairs
WILPF UK
World Vision UK
WWF (UK)
Y Care International

Bond is the UK membership body for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in international development.