

Press release: UK expands counter-IED support in Africa

With the help of the British Army who are working closely with their Kenyan partners to combat terrorism and save lives in East Africa, the facility is expanding into a regional centre of excellence.

Training will be offered to Kenyan security forces and other African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) troop-contributing nations in the region. Continued UK support will also include £2.3 million a year from the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) and mentoring from the British Army.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

“From supporting counter-terrorist operations in Mali to improvised explosive device disposal training in Kenya, our Armed Forces are helping to build a more secure Africa. By tackling the terrorist threat abroad we are helping to keep our streets safe at home.”

Since 2015, 1,000 military and police personnel from East Africa have been trained by the British Army in identifying and destroying IEDs. Yet, in the same period the use of IEDs has increased by around 300 per cent in Somalia, where casualties are often civilians.

By November 2020, the wing is expected to have developed into a fully-functioning, independent centre of excellence where East African instructors will provide specialised IED disposal training.

The expansion forms part of a new UK-Kenya security agreement which is allowing both countries to keep pace with the changing nature of threats and to renew our cooperation on counter-terrorism, child protection, and regional security. The Prime Minister also announced over £7 million of new UK funding to support AMISOM, as she called on international donors to contribute more to the peacekeeping mission.

Her visit reaffirms that the UK will support the project until it operates independently as a regional and continental centre of excellence.

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Press release: UK aid helps farmers across Africa grow their businesses and protect livestock

- UK support will help tackle killer cattle diseases and grow smaller scale farms into major commercial operations
- Investment in farming is vital as Africa is facing unprecedented population growth

UK aid will transform the agricultural sector in African countries, including research and technology projects to tackle killer cattle diseases and create better paid jobs for farmers.

A profitable agricultural sector is essential to African countries, contributing half of the continent's total export value. The World Bank estimates the sector accounts for 20% of the continent's entire GDP.

And over the next 30 years, Africa will face unprecedented population growth and producing enough food for that increased number of people will be crucial in reducing poverty.

UK aid, through the Department for International Development (DFID), is supporting a number of separate transformative projects to protect the continent's agricultural sector and its small farmers, including:

- new support to the Global Alliance for Livestock Veterinary Medicines (GALVmed), helping to develop seven new vaccines for major neglected tropical diseases and widening their availability across Africa to benefit eight million smallholder farmers. This transformative UK aid research will not only stop diseases from destroying the livelihoods of African farmers, it could also help control livestock diseases on British farms;
- using investor AgDevCo to help small agricultural companies in Africa, including Kenya, attract long-term commercial finance to become profitable operations – allowing them to create jobs, support economic transformation and help countries move out of poverty;
- working with the Gates Foundation to launch a Food Trade and Resilience programme, to support companies who source, process and trade food across African borders, to benefit local farmers and improve countries' resilience to famine and climate shocks;
- attracting more investment into firms that trade with smallholders, UK aid will help bring smaller farmers into commercial supply chains. The Commercial Agriculture for Smallholders and Agribusiness (CASA) Programme will increase the income of over 130,000 farmers by helping SMEs that trade with smallholders to expand and attract third party investment; and
- new research, led by UK-African partnerships across business and science, to develop new technology and innovations that will help to avoid food shortages and make food more nutritious, affordable, and resistant to climate change. The Agri-Tech Catalyst is a UK programme that awards funding for research projects looking to improve food production in the developing world.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

With over three quarters of people living in extreme poverty in rural areas and two thirds of those, mainly women, earning a living from agriculture we know that a healthy and prosperous agricultural sector in African countries is vital not only to ending hunger, but also reducing poverty and growing businesses.

This UK aid support will tackle killer livestock diseases and support innovations to deliver sustainable, nutritious food and create more jobs for farmers, as well as supporting global research efforts and fostering breakthroughs with the potential to benefit UK agriculture and consumers too. This is a win for African countries and a win the UK as well.

By 2050, 1 in 4 people on the planet will be African. Producing enough food for the growing population is a both a huge challenge and a very important opportunity for inclusive economic growth, investment and poverty reduction.

UK aid support to the Global Alliance for Livestock Veterinary Medicines (GALVmed) will save an estimated £400 million by averting the deaths of livestock and improve the distribution network to widen the availability of the vaccine.

Through the CASA Programme UK aid will help bring small farmers into commercial supply chains by attracting more investment into firms that trade with smallholders. The programme will create new jobs by helping SME firms that trade with smallholders expand and attract third party investment.

As new information, evidence and research is shared with business, governments and other donors other smallholders will benefit with these groups upping their investment in smallholder farming.

UK investor AgDevCo will help early stage agricultural businesses to expand and become fully commercial, allowing them to create jobs, support economic transformation and help countries move out of poverty. The non-profit company operates in Sub Saharan Africa, including in Uganda, Rwanda, Malawi and Ghana. The new UK aid support will allow it to expand into Kenya. Its investment objective is to build profitable businesses that contribute to food security, drive economic growth and create jobs.

AgDevCo has already helped 1.6 million people across Africa increase their incomes by working with and developing agribusinesses. By 2025, UK aid support will allow 3.9 million people benefit from greater food security, higher incomes and more jobs.

The Food Trade and Resilience Programme will make it easier for commercial companies to buy from smallholder African farmers, helping to boost the income of 1.8 million farming families by 30%. This will make the lives of poorer communities dependent on agriculture more secure and prosperous.

As Africa has become urbanised, there has been a shift to low-nutrition diets which has a negative impact on health and wellbeing, including educational achievement for children. At the same time, additional steps in the 'from field to fork' process (harvesting, collecting and transporting, processing and packaging) have increased the risk of food shortages and price rises, which are likely to disproportionately affect the poor. This risk is made worse by the growing threat of climate change to crops, such as the higher risk of drought, flooding and erratic rainfall.

Innovations funded by UK aid through the Agri-Tech Catalyst will seek to tackle these challenges, ultimately helping to prevent food shortages, price rises and diet-related illnesses, and end hunger around the world.

- DFID is providing £12.6m to the Global Alliance for Livestock Veterinary Medicines (GALVmed) to develop seven new livestock vaccines for major neglected tropical diseases. Our support will also help establish five distribution networks across Africa and Asia, widening the availability of the vaccines to farmers and increasing their uptake. The diseases targeted by this project have been selected on the basis of which have the most significant economic impact and the lack of alternative suitable products.
- UK investor AgDevCo will enable early stage agricultural businesses to expand and become fully commercial, allowing them to create jobs, support economic transformation and help countries move out of poverty. The UK will provide it with a further £55 million in funding, allowing it to extend its programme. By 2025, this will allow 3.9 million people benefit from greater food security, higher incomes and more jobs.
- The UK is investing £20 million pounds to co-fund the Food Trade and Resilience Programme with the Gates Foundation. The project will provide expertise and advice to make it more profitable for commercial companies to buy from smallholder farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa. This will increase the income of 1.8 million farming families, while helping to build resilience against rising food demand and climate shocks.
- The UK is funding crucial research, led by UK-African partnerships across business and science, to develop new technology and innovations that will help to avoid food shortages and make food more nutritious, affordable, and resistant to climate change.
- The Agri-Tech Catalyst is a UK programme that awards funding for research projects looking to improve food production in the developing world. The UK is providing £10m of additional investment for research projects seeking to tackle the most pressing challenges facing food production systems in Africa, such as low-nutrition diets, the risk of food shortages and the threat of climate change.

[News story: Scottish Secretary discusses economic development in Argyll and Bute](#)

On his two-day visit [Tuesday 28 and Wednesday 29 August 2018], Mr Mundell's programme included:

- Meeting the leader of Argyll and Bute Council, Aileen Morton, to discuss local economic issues and their proposals for a rural growth deal.

- Traveling to Inveraray for a roundtable with a number of Argyll and Bute businesses. They discussed the challenges and opportunities of EU Exit, and the Government's recently-published EU Exit White Paper. Mr Mundell also visited Loch Fyne Oysters and Fyne Ales to discuss the implications of Brexit for their businesses.
- Meeting personnel at HMNB Clyde in Helensburgh, to discuss the economic partnership between the local community and the base, and see newly-refurbished service personnel accommodation in the town.

Mr Mundell said:

I was pleased to have the opportunity to meet Argyll and Bute Council, HMNB Clyde and a number of local businesses to discuss the issues and opportunities for the local economy, and to hear more about the Council's proposals for a rural growth fund.

We also discussed the priorities of businesses as we prepare to leave the EU. The UK Government is determined to get a deal with the EU which works for Scotland and the rest of the UK – one which allows us to continue trading with the EU while also striking ambitious new trade deals around the world.

HMNB Clyde is set to become the home of the UK's entire submarine service from 2020, and the MOD is investing hundreds of millions of pounds in developing the base. In February 2017 the base, the UK government and the local authority Argyll and Bute signed a partnership agreement to ensure that the investment in the military site will benefit the growth and regeneration of the wider community.

Mr Mundell added:

The work of the team at HMNB Clyde demonstrates clearly how Scotland benefits from the UK's armed forces, and how our military contributes to the safety and prosperity of Scotland. The Faslane base makes a huge contribution to the local area, providing skilled jobs, supporting the local economy and contributing to regeneration. This project, which will improve service families' accommodation, is a great example of that strong partnership with the local community in action.

News story: Foreign Secretary attends Gymnich in Vienna

I have come here to Vienna because although the UK is leaving the European Union there are a huge number of issues all over the world where we work very closely together with our European partners whether it is stopping the proliferation of nuclear weapons, whether it's climate change, whether it's the difficult situation in Yemen, Syria, Burma across the world.

There is a huge amount that we have in common and many, many things to discuss. Of course, Brexit will come up, not as one of the main topics of discussion but our priority here is to make sure that there is political will on all sides. We believe it is possible to come to an agreement, we think that is in the interests of the EU as well as the UK but it's going to need a huge amount of effort in the weeks that we have now left to us.

And then the other the other thing that we will be discussing in a lot of detail is the transatlantic relationship. In the UK we believe that we have prospered in Europe with unprecedented peace, economic prosperity because there has been a strong friendship and relationship between the United States and Europe. And of course there are going to be times when we disagree but I think now is a time when we should remember all the things which we have in common with the United States and make sure that we continue that a strong transatlantic partnership.