

Foreign Secretary launches new International Development Strategy

- Foreign Secretary publishes International Development Strategy to respond to a world increasingly affected by geopolitics
- the UK will use aid and investment to create global economic growth and challenge dependency on malign actors to offer honest alternative for low- and middle-income countries
- the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) will prioritise bilateral programmes to ensure money is spent on key priorities including educating girls and providing life-saving humanitarian support

The Foreign Secretary Liz Truss has today set out her vision for the future of UK international development. The strategy, which builds on a proud record of global leadership on development, will challenge dependency on malign actors, offering choice and bringing more countries into the orbit of free-market economies.

The strategy will help address increasing global challenges, delivering investment, supporting women and girls, getting humanitarian assistance to those who need it most, and continuing our work on climate change, nature and global health.

Development will be at the heart of the UK's foreign policy which uses all the levers available – including development, diplomacy, investment, trade, defence and intelligence – to deliver on our foreign policy objectives.

The strategy will use British International Investment and other tools to provide honest and reliable finance to help low- and middle-income countries take control of their futures, giving them an alternative so they are not burdened with unsustainable debt with strings attached. This approach will help deliver the Clean Green Initiative, supporting countries to grow their economies sustainably.

The Government will also use the strategy to rebalance the aid budget towards bilateral programmes. This will give the Government greater control on how money is spent allowing a focus on priorities and improve lives around the world.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

In an increasingly geopolitical world, we must use development as a key part of our foreign policy. Malign actors treat economics and development as a means of control, using patronage, investment and debt as a form of economic coercion and political power. We won't mirror their malign tactics, but we will match them in our resolve to provide an alternative.

The new strategy, launched today, will ensure that our international development work brings benefit across the globe and here at home. Our strategy will deepen economic, security and development ties globally, while delivering jobs and growth in both the UK and partner countries.

The International Development Strategy sets out four priorities where the UK can meet the needs of countries around the world:

- delivering honest, reliable investment, through British Investment Partnerships, building on the UK's financial expertise and the strengths of the City of London and delivering the Prime Minister's vision for the Clean Green Initiative – supporting countries to grow their economies sustainably.
- providing women and girls with the freedom they need to succeed. We intend to restore the bilateral budget to help unlock their future potential, educate girls, support their empowerment and protect them against violence.
- stepping-up our life-saving humanitarian work to prevent the worst forms of human suffering around the world. We will prioritise humanitarian funding levels at £3 billion over the next three years, to remain a leader in crisis response.
- taking forward our work on climate change, nature and global health. We are putting the commitments of our Presidency of G7 and COP26, and our COVID-19 response, at the core of our international development offer.

Our new approach to development will:

- spend more on country and bilateral programmes rather than through multilateral organisations, empowering the UK to deliver more aid directly to where it is needed. By 2025, the FCDO intends to spend three quarters of its aid budget allocated at the 2021 Spending Review bilaterally.
- use world-class British expertise to support partner countries through providing advice, exchanging lessons and evidence of what works and building partnerships across government, research, business and civil society.
- cut back red tape and excessive bureaucracy around delivering aid and give Ambassadors and High Commissioners greater authority to get programmes delivering on the ground quickly. We will reduce the time it takes to approve a business case from many months to less than six weeks.
- sustain our commitment to Africa and ensure our development programmes in the Indo-Pacific remain a critical part of our ambition to increase our focus on the region.