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[PM steps up UK effort to get every girl in the world into school](#)

New UK funding to give millions of girls around the world the chance to go to school and get a quality education will be announced by Boris Johnson today.

Speaking at the UN General Assembly the Prime Minister will announce £515 million to help get over 12 million children – half of them girls – into school, this will boost economic growth and improve women's rights in some of the poorest countries in the world.

Supporting the empowerment of girls and women is a priority for the Prime Minister, who used his first speech on the steps of Downing Street to underline the pledge he made as Foreign Secretary that all girls should receive 12 years of quality education.

Globally 131 million girls do not go to school, with teenage girls and young women three times more likely than young men to be out of school or work. In Tanzania, one in three girls marry and become pregnant before the age of 18, and more than one in ten girls are victims of sexual violence on their way to school.

But girls' education is a key driver determining a country's economic success. 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, one additional school year can increase a woman's earnings by 20%, and \$28 trillion would be added to global GDP if women had the same role in the labour market as men.

Today's funding builds on the £90 million the Prime Minister committed at the G7 Summit last month for education in conflict areas.

Ahead of an event on education and the Sustainable Development Goals today, the Prime Minister said:

Four years ago the world came together and agreed that every child has a right to an education and a fair chance in life. We enshrined that promise in the Sustainable Development Goals. Right now, we are breaking our promise to the world's children, and to countless girls and young women who deserve better.

On current estimates it will take another eighty years to achieve the equality of opportunity we said we would deliver within fifteen. That means decades of girls who should be growing up to be doctors, teachers, entrepreneurs, and prime ministers having their dreams snatched away from them.

I want girls to achieve their potential. I want that for all girls, whether they were born in London, Lagos, Lima or Lahore. And I want the world to stop wilfully neglecting the enormous benefits that accrue for everyone when girls are given an education and a job.

UK funding will ensure even more girls can fulfil their potential by:

- teaching basic literacy and numeracy
- getting children living in conflict zones including the Sahel into school
- and mobilising an additional \$5 billion of investment for education in Africa and Asia, with a focus on the most marginalised children

This new spending commitment will contribute to global efforts to meet a number of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals – in particular the goal of ensuring equal access for men and women to education.

International Development Secretary Alok Sharma said:

It is staggering that a child whose mother can read is 50% more likely to live past the age of five and twice as likely to attend school themselves.

If we educate girls today we will transform the world of tomorrow and ensure all future generations thrive. That is why the UK is increasing support to give every girl across the world the chance to go to school.

£20 million to accelerate British research into forecasting space weather

British satellites will be better protected through a £20m boost to predict severe space weather events, the PM has announced whilst at the UN General Assembly today (Tuesday 24 September).

Space weather, such as flares or winds from the Sun's surface or geomagnetic storms, can damage our satellites and cause power disruptions, issues to air transportation, and problems across communications systems, such as GPS and mobile phone networks.

The £20m announced today nearly quadruples investment from government into research that can improve systems at the Met Office Space Weather Operations Centre. This will build the UK's knowledge on how to forecast and better prepare for these space weather events.

This new fund will be used to look closely at space weather innovation, measurement, modelling and risk assessment. By predicting when and where space weather events take place, the Met Office can issue warnings and advice that will allow operators to take necessary action, such as manoeuvring satellites and isolating parts of the power network to ensure the least amount of disruption possible.

The UK will also be able to share forecasts with other space weather centres around the world, including the US Space Weather Prediction Centre.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

From solar flares to magnetic storms, space weather can have a massive impact on mobile phones, transport, GPS signals and the electricity networks we rely on every day at home.

The funding announced today will help turn Britain's pioneering research into practical solutions that will protect against any adverse disruption caused by cosmic chaos.

This comes as the Science Minister Chris Skidmore and UK Space Agency confirms at the UK Space Conference in Wales a further £1.3 million towards developing spaceport plans in England, Scotland and Wales, as part of the government's spaceflight programme, LaunchUK. This funding is on top of the up to £7.85 million the government intends to invest in developing facilities and operational capabilities at Spaceport Cornwall with Virgin Orbit. The UK Space Agency has also committed £31.5 million in grants for the proposed vertical launch spaceport project in Sutherland, Scotland, and for Lockheed Martin and British company Orbex to provide launch services from that site.

Once operational, spaceports have the potential to create commercial space launch services in the UK, giving our world-leading satellite industry access to space from UK soil for the first time and creating high-skilled jobs in the surrounding areas.

The new funding will be shared between sites around the country:

- £499,811 to Snowdonia Aerospace for the Snowdonia Spaceport Development Plan, which aims to create a centre for space R&D, training and satellite launch
- £488,000 to Machrihanish Airbase Community Company for the spaceport cluster plan in Argyle, Scotland, centred on an aerodrome with the longest runway in Scotland
- £306,480 to Cornwall Council for an Accelerated Business Development and Research Project at Spaceport Cornwall, supporting its ambition to be a centre for future flight technologies

Science Minister Chris Skidmore said:

Our space sector is incredibly strong and productive, with innovative firms and the UK's world-class university researchers playing a leading role in the new space age.

A truly strategic approach to space is needed now more than ever and we must develop our national space capabilities, while strengthening our international partnerships, to take full advantage of opportunities like satellite launch from the UK and defend against serious threats such as space weather.

Later today, the UK Space Agency and Australian Space Agency will set out their intention to develop a 'Space Bridge' agreement to unlock greater collaboration on space between the two countries' governments, regulators and industry.

The UK and Australia already have a shared space history, with the first British rockets lifting off from Woomera, South Australia in the 1950s. The Australian Space Agency was established last year following close consultation with the UK Space Agency. This new agreement will maximise opportunities even further for trade links and sharing best expertise.

Minister for Investment Graham Stuart said:

Our UK space sector holds some of the most future-focused and exciting businesses in the country. It's great to see so many of them represented at the conference today, alongside trade delegations from around the world.

The internationalisation of space exploration will be transformational and the UK-Australia Space Bridge is the perfect example of how we can facilitate further collaboration between

countries as we all strive for the same goals in research and investigation.

DIT's dedicated space team and its global network of trade advisors are part of a government-wide push to grow investment and exports in the sector.

[UK aid to double efforts to tackle climate change](#)

The UK will double its investment to help developing countries turn the tide against climate change and species loss.

The announcement to double the UK's international climate finance (ICF) spend will be made by the Prime Minister Boris Johnson today at the UN General Assembly in New York.

ICF refers to UK aid support given to poorer countries to deal with the causes of climate change, like preventing deforestation and reducing carbon emissions, and to prepare for its effects, like giving poor farmers climate-resilient crops that can grow in hotter, drier conditions, or implementing early-warning systems in areas vulnerable to flooding.

The new Ayrton Fund launched by the Prime Minister today is an example of the UK's ICF's investment. The Fund will give British scientists and innovators access to up to £1 billion of aid funding to create new technology to help developing countries reduce their emissions and meet global climate change targets.

This announcement means the UK will up its ICF support to at least £11.6 billion over the next five years, between 2021/22 to 2025/26. This represents a doubling of the UK's commitment to spend at least £5.8 billion on tackling climate change to 2021, announced ahead of the landmark Paris meeting, COP21, in 2015.

The impacts of climate change will be felt most severely in the developing world, where 100 million people could be pushed into poverty by climate impacts as soon as 2030, according to the World Bank. This significant uplift in UK aid support will help developing countries pursue low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable development.

Addressing the climate summit at the UN General Assembly, the Prime Minister is expected to say:

Today we are not only raising our ambitions for the level of action

we will take by 2030 – I am pleased to announce that the UK is also committing to double its spend on international climate finance so that other nations can act too.

International Development Secretary Alok Sharma said:

The effects of climate change are being seen all around the world. We have to act now. Doubling our support will benefit the world's poorest countries, preserve our vital biodiversity and protect our planet.

Business and Energy Secretary Andrea Leadsom:

As the first major economy to legislate to end our contribution to carbon emissions, the UK is leading the world in taking in action on climate change. Doubling our support for International Climate Finance, supporting initiatives including accelerating the take up of low-carbon technologies, is all part of our plan to go further, faster.

We will continue to work closely with other countries to step up global action ahead of crucial UN climate talks in the UK next year.

This funding will go towards UK aid projects, including:

- accelerating the development of low carbon technologies and the shift from fossil fuels to clean energy, such as replacing wood-burning stoves and kerosene used by millions of the world's poorest families with sustainable and more reliable sources like solar mini-grids;
- protecting forests and mangroves, which act as vital carbon sinks;
- creating new protected areas and restoring degraded ecosystems, like abandoned land, which were once home to forests, mangroves and other precious habitats;
- helping countries and communities most vulnerable to the damaging effects of climate change to become more resilient and prepare for its impacts, including supporting early warning systems in poor communities vulnerable to extreme weather events like droughts or floods which can give people extra hours, days or even weeks to prepare for an impending humanitarian crisis or disaster; and
- providing smallholder farmers with 'super crop' varieties that are adapted to grow in higher temperatures, can withstand droughts or floods, and have natural resistance to pests and diseases, developed specifically for the most vulnerable countries in Asia and Africa.

The 2015 Paris Agreement represented a landmark shift in the fight against climate change. All countries pledged to reduce their emissions, aiming to limit global warming "to well below 2 degrees". This was matched by a

commitment from developed countries to mobilise at least \$100 billion a year of climate finance for developing countries.

The Paris Agreement established that every five years countries would make new commitments to reduce their emissions and countries would make pledges on their provision of climate finance, this £11.6 billion is the UK contribution to the \$100 billion goal for the next five year period.

The UK is working together with other countries to scale up action on climate change, ahead of hosting crucial UN climate talks in Glasgow next year.

Earlier this month, the Department for International Development published ICF results which showed UK aid supported climate projects delivered by DFID, BEIS and Defra in the last eight years have:

- Provided 26 million people with improved access to clean energy, including those previously living without reliable electricity in the poorest communities in Kenya, Rwanda and Malawi.
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions internationally by 16 million tonnes – the equivalent to taking three million cars off the road for a year..
- Helped 57 million people to cope with the effects of climate change – from supporting poor farmers to grow climate resilient crops, to preserving water in areas facing an increased drought risk, and investing in systems to help save communities vulnerable to extreme flooding and other impacts of climate change.

Today (Monday 23 September) the UK committed the following – which will come from the ICF increase:

- up to £1 billion for the Ayrton Fund to go towards the development and testing of new technology targeted at tackling climate change to help developing countries reduce their emissions and meet global climate change targets.
- £30 million to support the UK's continued work with countries including Indonesia, Ghana and Liberia, to help stop deforestation by tackling illegal logging and helping to promote the legal timber trade.
- £9.6 million for a Just Rural Transition programme, to help poor farmers in developing countries make their agricultural practices more eco-friendly, while protecting the land that they are farming.

PM meeting with President Tusk: 23 September 2019



The Prime Minister met with European Council President Tusk this afternoon at the UN General Assembly.

The Prime Minister underlined that, when the UK leaves the EU on 31 October, his preference is that we do so with a deal and spoke about the non-papers which the U.K. shared with the European Commission last week.

The leaders discussed the progress of the talks between the UK and Taskforce 50 in finding an alternative to the backstop that protects the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement and the single market.

The Prime Minister emphasised that in order to secure a deal we will now need to see movement and flexibility from the EU.

The leaders agreed to keep in touch over the coming weeks.

Published 23 September 2019