

## [UK announces funding to boost COVID-19 preparedness in Pacific](#)

United Kingdom Minister for the Pacific, Lord Zac Goldsmith, has announced £1.8m funding (US\$2.3million) under the Pacific Conflict, Stability and Security Fund, to strengthen COVID-19 health sector preparedness and response in the Pacific, including Papua New Guinea, through the World Health Organization.

Lord Goldsmith made the announcement at the start of his virtual visit to the region.

This vital funding will provide critical assistance and build on the good work already underway to strengthen COVID-19 preparedness and response across ten Pacific Island countries including Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea.

British Deputy High Commissioner to Fiji, Paul Welsh, said:

The UK is committed to supporting the Pacific Island nations at this difficult time. This important programme provides critical support to aid Covid-19 response and provide wider social and economic benefits across the region.

The funding is in support of the COVID-19 Pacific Health Sector Plan and the Papua New Guinea Covid-19 Response Plan coordinated by WHO with other multilateral agencies.

Under these Plans, healthcare providers across the Pacific will receive ventilators, patient monitoring systems and other essential equipment and training.

This will boost tertiary healthcare facilities in the region especially in the care and treatment of COVID-19 patients and support national preparedness for the gradual easing of regional travel restrictions.

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## [Kickstart Scheme opens for employer applications](#)

News story

The Kickstart Scheme will create hundreds of thousands of new jobs for young people.

## **KICKSTART SCHEME**

As part of the government's [Plan for Jobs](#), a new £2 billion Kickstart Scheme will create hundreds of thousands of new, fully subsidised jobs for young people across the country.

The 6 month placements are open to those aged 16-24 who are claiming Universal Credit and at risk of long term unemployment. They will be available across a range of different sectors in England, Scotland and Wales. The first placements are likely to be available from November.

There will also be extra funding to support young people to build their experience and help them move into sustained employment after they have completed their Kickstart funded job.

Employers will receive funding for 100% of the relevant National Minimum Wage for 25 hours a week, plus associated employer National Insurance contributions and employer minimum auto-enrolment pension contributions.

### [Kickstart Scheme](#)

Applications are being accepted now from employers or groups of employers – [check the guidance for employers](#).

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**[New Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office will lead global action to ensure world's poorest are](#)**

# protected from ravages of coronavirus and famine

The UK will lead a global call to action to protect the world's poorest people from coronavirus and the increasing threat of famine, the Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab announced today (2 September 2020).

- Foreign Secretary urges countries to step up alongside the UK to fight back against coronavirus and growing risk of famine in developing countries.
- UK announces a new £119m aid package to combat threat of coronavirus and famine as it takes on the G7 and COP26 Presidencies.
- Dominic Raab appoints former Department for International Development Acting Permanent Secretary, Nick Dyer, as UK's first Special Envoy for Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Affairs.

The coronavirus pandemic, conflict, locust swarms and climate change have left 250 million people worldwide facing extreme hunger this year, with parts of Yemen, South Sudan and Burkina Faso on the brink of famine. Without international attention, many more will die from hunger and disease, and the pandemic will continue to spread in developing countries and to the wider world.

As the new Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) is inaugurated today, the Foreign Secretary pledged to use the UK's diplomatic levers and aid expertise to build a stronger international consensus to fight back against the devastating impacts of coronavirus, conflict and climate change.

The UK will commit a new £119 million aid package to tackle the combined threat of coronavirus and famines, which is expected to help alleviate extreme hunger for over 6 million people in Yemen, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Somalia, Central African Republic, the Sahel, South Sudan and Sudan.

Alongside the aid package, Dominic Raab has appointed [Nick Dyer](#) as the UK's first Special Envoy for Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Affairs to work in partnership with other donors, UN agencies, NGOs and foundations to help prevent catastrophic famine.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

Coronavirus and famine threaten millions in some of the world's poorest countries, and give rise to direct problems that affect the UK, including terrorism and migration flows.

Global Britain, as a force for good in the world, is leading by example and bringing the international community together to tackle

these deadly threats, because it's the right thing to do and it protects British interests.

We can only tackle these global challenges by combining our diplomatic strength with our world-leading aid expertise.

As the UK takes on the presidencies of the G7 and COP26, the Foreign Secretary will urge other countries to step up and help the developing world, as it faces a series of devastating challenges.

The UK is already leading the way in the international search to find a coronavirus vaccine and has committed to equitable access for all to a successful vaccine, treatments and tests. It is the largest donor to Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, which is helping to make sure the poorest countries can access any Covid-19 vaccine.

In addition, the UK will continue to use its seat on the UN Security Council to call for life-saving humanitarian access for everyone who needs it and hold countries to account on their international legal obligations to allow aid workers to operate impartially in conflict zones.

The UK has committed to spending 0.7% of our national income on aid, and the formation of the FCDO today will make sure our diplomatic influence and development expertise are combined to the best effect on the global stage.

The ongoing Integrated Review will inform the strategic priorities of the new department, to make sure UK aid and diplomatic efforts are a force for good and support the national interest.

## **Notes to editors**

- The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office pursues our national interests and projects the UK as a force for good in the world. We promote the interests of British citizens, safeguard the UK's security, defend our values, reduce poverty and tackle global challenges with our international partners.
- The United Nations World Food Programme warns that over 250 million people in developing countries could face severe hunger this year. Parts of Yemen, South Sudan and Burkina Faso are at risk of famine.
- Today's aid package is expected to:
- help alleviate extreme hunger for over 6 million people in Yemen, the DRC, Somalia, Central African Republic, the Sahel and Sudan;
- help tackle extreme hunger in North East Nigeria by providing around 240,000 people with food for three months
- reduce malnutrition and child mortality across the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, Nigeria, Mali, Malawi, Bangladesh, Philippines, Indonesia, Pakistan and Afghanistan, through a new partnership with UNICEF to provide life-saving nutrition services to mothers and children; and
- ensure vulnerable Afghans, who have faced shortages because of conflict, drought and the economic impacts of coronavirus, have enough money to be able to buy food for their families.

- The UK has so far pledged £774 million of aid to support the global effort to combat coronavirus.
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## Fishing vessel owners guilty of safety breaches

Philomena Trawlers Ltd and D&G Seafoods Ltd were represented by defence lawyer Paul Rogers at the hearing at Southampton Magistrates Court on Friday, August 28.

Both companies pleaded guilty to charges of offences Contrary to Regulations 5(1)(b) and 5(4) of the Fishing Vessels (Codes of Practice) Regulations 2017. Philomena Trawlers Ltd were fined £1,000 and D&G Seafoods Ltd were fined £3,000 and ordered to pay costs of £8,380.

The court heard how scalloping trawlers Camm Courageous and the Sea Lady, owned by companies Philomena Trawlers Ltd and D&G Seafoods Ltd respectively, went to sea with invalid or expired International Fishing Vessel Certificates on 14 July 2020.

Two days later, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency issued detention notices to the companies. However, both vessels continued fishing and on July 18th they came into the Port of Shoreham with a joint catch worth around £25,000.

The MCA's Regulatory and Compliance Investigations team applied for and were granted court summonses, which were served on 20 July to the representative for both vessels, Mr Christopher Nicholson.

On passing sentence the magistrates said: "This was a technical breach with no apparent criminal intent. Certificates are there for a purpose and those vessels which did not go out fishing without a valid certificate need to know it is the right course of action."

Paul Atkins, Financial Investigations Manager at the Maritime and Coastguard Agency said: "We will always investigate those who disregard the regulations and legislation under the Merchant Shipping Act 1995. The regulations are there to ensure the safety of those at sea.

"Many events involving casualties on fishing vessels are a result of compliance failure, neglect and flagrant disregard for the law. This is completely unacceptable and those who put lives at risk will be investigated and prosecuted where necessary.

"We are committed to ensuring that all breaches of these vital regulations are fairly and robustly investigated."

The Sea Lady has now been released from detention after rectifying their

deficiencies and paying a £30,000 bond. The Camm Courageous remains under detention.

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## [Employers encouraged to sign up for apprentice cash boost](#)

Employers of all sizes are being invited to [apply for generous cash incentives](#) to help them take on new apprentices and get more people into work, Apprenticeships and Skills Minister, Gillian Keegan has announced today (1 September).

Apprenticeships are a great way to get ahead in a wide range of exciting industries, and they will also play a vital role in delivering the skills employers and the economy need to recover after the coronavirus outbreak.

As part of the [Government's Plan for Jobs](#), employers are being offered £2,000 for each new apprentice they hire aged under 25, and £1,500 for each newly recruited apprentice aged 25 and over. This includes taking on an apprentice who has been made redundant.

The cash boost is designed to support employers to cover the cost of recruiting an apprentice such as providing facilities, uniforms, helping with travel costs or to help pay their salary.

Employers who want to take advantage of the offer can apply through the government's award-winning [digital apprenticeship service](#).

Gillian Keegan, Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills said:

We recognise the huge impact coronavirus has had on individuals and businesses up and down the country.

Through our Plan for Jobs we have taken unprecedented steps to protect, support and create jobs, including driving more high quality apprenticeship opportunities to help get our economy moving.

To support this, from today, employers can sign up to receive £2,000 for each new apprentice they take on aged under 25 and £1,500 for those aged 25 and over. This offer will help more employers large and small to invest in the skilled workforce they need to help them recover and grow.

I strongly encourage as many employers as possible to apply now, and take advantage of this generous offer whether it is used to recruit apprentices for the first time or expand their current

apprenticeship offer.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said:

Apprenticeships play a crucial role in developing the skills people need, particularly young people, as they seek work in these challenging times.

I urge every employer, big or small, national or local, to sign up to our offer and support apprentices as we continue our economic recovery. Our Plan for Jobs will create, support and protect jobs across all regions of the UK, and ensure our economy is fit for the future.

This [new cash incentive for employers](#) is on top of the existing £1,000 payment for new 16-18 year-old apprentices, and those aged under 25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan.

To support people, particularly young people, affected by Covid-19 the Government has also announced a range of support including:

- £111 million boost to triple the number of traineeships available across England – the largest-ever expansion of traineeships – to help make sure more 16-24 year olds have the skills, experience and confidence they need to enter the world of work.
- A new £2 billion Kick-start Scheme to create hundreds of thousands of new, fully subsidised jobs for young people across the country.
- £17million is being invested to increase participation in our sector-based work academies, to upskill job seekers to fill locally identified vacancies.
- A Job Retention Bonus – a one-off payment of £1,000 to UK employers for every furloughed employee who remains continuously employed through to the end of January 2021.
- £111 million to support school and college leavers at risk of becoming unemployed to do a fully funded optional extra year of study.

The Government is also providing a [new online and telephone support service for apprentices](#) who have lost their jobs during the Covid-19 outbreak.

The Redundancy Support Service for Apprentices (ReSSA) ensures apprentices can access services that can provide financial, legal, health and wellbeing

support, and help them get back on track and on the path to a new career.