

Aid

What is aid?

Aid is the assistance given mainly by wealthy governments to help people in poorer countries. It is given for emergency needs and for long-term projects. Increasingly, aid is being given to support economic development. It is also used to tackle global challenges such as climate change.

Different types of aid

Humanitarian aid: for emergencies like floods, earthquakes, or the ongoing refugee crisis. People are given things they urgently need to survive in the short term, such as shelter, food and medicine.



Development aid: for longer-term problems such as poverty, basic services and adapting to climate change. Money is spent on health clinics, schools, water supplies or rebuilding after conflict.

Who gives aid?

Governments – most aid is given by governments. They can give directly to other governments; to institutions like the EU and UN, or to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) like CAFOD.

Charities – some aid is given by charities such as CAFOD. They do not give money to governments, but directly to local organisations in each country that they know and trust.

Other aid – other kinds of aid are provided directly by individuals, businesses and philanthropic organisations such as trusts.



Wilson loves to take care of the piglets in our project supporting farmers in the high plains of Bolivia.

Why aid matters

Aid helps millions of people whose needs are not fully met by their own governments. Without it, they might not survive, or their life chances could be very limited.

Aid tackles global issues such as climate change, directing international help to poor countries that are disproportionately affected.

Aid can make a big difference to our world. 36 million more children are now enrolled in primary school than in 2000. (UNESCO)

TRY THIS

Discover how much CAFOD spent last year and what % was spent on different types of aid – cafod.org.uk (About us / Open information resources).

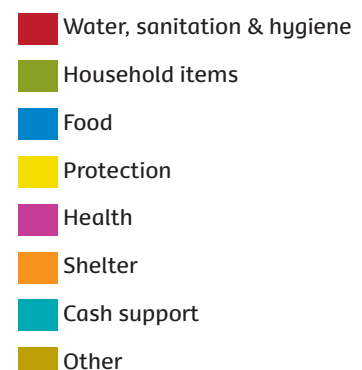
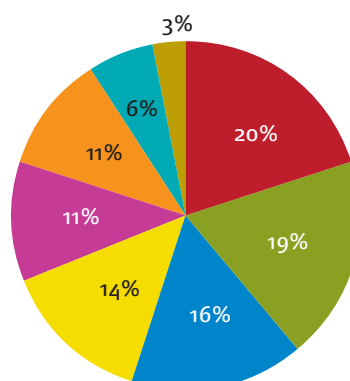
FACT

AID FROM RICH NATIONS TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES REACHED \$146.6 BILLION IN 2017. (OECD)

Aid for Rohingya refugees

The forced exit of over 700,000 Rohingya people from Myanmar since August 2017 is one of the worst refugee crises in the world. The 13 UK aid agencies in the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC), of which CAFOD is one, raised £30 million in ten months.

(Data from DEC)



For and against aid

There are criticisms of aid. These include:

- People and nations become dependent on aid; this traps them in poverty.
- Rich countries give more aid to countries when they can benefit politically or economically.
- Countries that give aid are also responsible for unfair rules and practices that keep people in poverty eg debt burden, unfair trade rules, contribution to climate change.
- Some aid is lost to corruption.
- We need the money to spend in the UK.

In response to the criticisms, CAFOD and others argue:

- Although nations can become aid-dependent, responsible aid is used to help people find a permanent way out of poverty.
- CAFOD and other agencies push their governments to give aid where it is most needed, not where it brings political gain.
- CAFOD also lobbies the government on wider issues such as debt relief, tax reform, tackling climate change and private sector responsibility.
- Wasted aid due to corruption is always a risk. But the amounts lost are small compared with what gets to those in need.
- In the UK we currently spend 7p out of every £10 on international aid. Surveys show that the public generally supports this.

“Where heaven is concerned, what matters is not what we have, but what we give.” Pope Francis, World Day of the Poor, 2017. DISCUSS

Does the UK give enough aid?

Wealthy countries have promised to give 0.7 per cent of their income in aid, yet only six countries have done this. The UK is a global leader, reaching the target in 2013 and making it law (the UK aid budget for 2017 was £14bn). The UK also prompts careful monitoring of how aid is spent. By contrast, the US spent only 0.18% of its income in 2017, although it gives the most in cash terms.

FACT

UK AID HELPED IMMUNISE 15 MILLION CHILDREN IN 2017/18 AND HELPED BRING CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION TO 13.5 MILLION PEOPLE.

(DfID Annual Report 2017/18)

“ There are not two categories of people. There are not some who were born to have everything and leave others with nothing, and a majority that has nothing...”

Saint Oscar Romero

Photo: Tania Dalton. Illustration: Dylan Gibson.
Charity no 1160384 and a company limited by guarantee no 09387398.
All facts current as of October 2018.

The future

The goal of aid is to improve conditions for people living in poverty. We would all love to live in a world where aid was no longer needed and where people and the planet were flourishing.

Aid alone cannot do this but is part of a wider approach, which includes supporting developing countries to raise more tax, benefit more from trade, and be freed from debt burdens that divert their money back to rich countries.

Also, rich nations have promised to give financial help to poorer nations in years ahead as they cope with the impacts of climate change. But some fragile states will always need help, and there will always be emergencies.

TRY THIS

Group activity – If you were Prime Minister, how would you respond to the following situations?

- 1. Natural disasters are happening more often and the UK is asked to respond. But a newspaper reports that some donations for hurricane survivors were siphoned off by corrupt officials in the affected country. What do you do?**
- 2. Some MPs in your party are telling you to reduce overseas aid to spend more on the NHS and schools. What do you say?**



Useful websites

hdr.undp.org

Latest UN Human Development Report

sustainabledevelopment.un.org

dfid.gov.uk

Details of UK government aid

oecd.org/dac

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

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