



## **A Labour approach to development: pro-rights, pro-equality, multi-lateralist and directed at redistributing power**

### **LCID Submission to the 'Britain's Global Role' Policy Consultation**

#### **Working across Government to save and change lives:**

Labour has always fought for justice and equality for all both at home and abroad. That must continue. Whilst the world has changed and remains in constant flux, one thing remains constant: Labour values of cooperation and internationalism are the ones to guide us in a globalised world.

Britain's role in the world – and our ability to reduce inequality and help people, communities and countries lift themselves out of poverty and fulfil their rights – is about so much more than aid, and stretches beyond what Labour's flagship Department for International Development (DFID) is able to achieve on its own. A future Labour government should ensure that *all* policies – on trade, tax, immigration, defence, energy, climate change, foreign policy alliances and growth – are 'pro-development'. That is the only way to ensure that we do not entrench poverty with one hand whilst trying to relieve it with the other. An open, globally-minded Britain, at the heart of Europe, should aim to be a development superpower.

#### **What this means in practice:**

- Making global social justice Labour's number one foreign policy priority. The Whitehall machine should be directed to secure an ambitious post-2015 framework to replace the Millennium Development Goals, and Labour should fight to ensure that reducing inequality, not just relieving poverty, is at the heart of the new framework. Labour should also fight to secure a binding global climate deal, based on science not ideology;
- Displaying international leadership from Number 10 outwards, with Prime Minister Miliband attending all relevant summits (including in September 2015 on development and in December 2015 on climate); and driving the Whitehall machine to deliver for development across all departments whose activities impact other countries;
- Implementing domestic policies to bring Britain in line with the most ambitious global targets on climate change, including by drawing up a national sustainable development plan, to be monitored by a joint parliamentary committee and cabinet sub-committee.

**Labour should make sure government institutions are able to deliver on this ambitious development vision. We must:**

- Ensure DFID remains a full department of state with a Secretary of State at the cabinet table;
- Create a new Cabinet Subcommittee on Britain's Global Impact, bringing together all departments whose actions impact other countries, to ensure policy coherence and a joined-up approach;
- Ensure DFID's poverty reduction mandate is protected, with no resumption of tying aid to British commercial interests or diversion of funding to subsidise the Ministry of Defence;
- Pass legislation to make 0.7% a binding national commitment;
- Conduct a review, within the first year of a Labour Government, to ensure all DFID expenditure is effectively spent and targeted at areas where DFID is best placed to assist.

**Labour should aim to reduce inequality, not just relieve poverty. We must:**

- Push for five-year 'equity' targets to be included in the post-2015 development agenda (e.g. halving the gap in death rates, school attendance, and access to basic services between children from the richest and poorest homes, and reducing income inequality such that the post-tax income of the top 10% is no more than the post-transfer income of the bottom 40%);
- Lead a global campaign to achieve Universal Health Coverage by 2030. Applying the core principles of the NHS and other progressive health systems, our approach will be guided by a simple objective: ensuring that all people have access to quality health care, regardless of their ability to pay. This means reaching more people, broadening the range of essential services available to every person, and ensuring that services are affordable for all. We must also champion new 'open source' approaches to medical innovation that finally begin to deliver medicines for the diseases of the developing world. Investment in strengthening health systems, especially in health promotion and disease prevention like vaccinations, is a smart way to build stronger societies and economies;
- Look beyond primary schooling to work towards universal secondary schooling and expanded tertiary provision by 2030, with a relentless focus on children who have been left behind, including the rural poor, child labourers, young girls and 'first generation' learners – the children entering school from homes where parents have no schooling;
- Gear our development support towards poor people, whether or not the country they happen to live in is low income or middle income; and develop clear needs-based criteria for withdrawing aid from middle income countries. Ensure phased rather than 'cliff-edge' withdrawal from countries to ensure emerging economies do not suffer as a result of their success;
- Provide technical support to countries to help them develop their taxation and universal health, education and social protection systems.
- Measure the impact of British foreign policy by its contribution to safeguarding human rights as well as reducing poverty, including the rights of women and girls, those with disabilities, and LGBT people.

**Labour should lead on climate change globally and deliver decarbonation at home. We must:**

- Do whatever it takes to help build global consensus for a global deal under the UN process, ensuring that it puts science before politics. This should include pushing forcefully for legally-binding and ambitious targets, and for an EU target to reduce emissions by 55% by 2030;
- Work for a fair deal for developing countries – including additional climate finance over and above 0.7% on aid, and fair shares for all in a global carbon budget;
- Reject lazy assumptions that decarbonisation is anathema to growth in developing countries. Through investments in green technology and infrastructure, developing countries must be assisted to ‘leapfrog’ to low-carbon energy generation, improving energy access while also tackling poverty;
- Match international leadership with action at home – by pushing for major divestment out of fossil fuels, restoring support for solar and other renewables, and defending the Climate Act;

**Labour should clampdown on tax dodging. We must:**

- Review all UK tax policies to ensure they do not undermine global agreements, are fair to poor countries and consistent with the UK’s development objectives;
- Reform UK tax rules which incentivise UK-based companies to avoid tax in other countries (like the revised Controlled Foreign Companies rules)<sup>1</sup>;
- Insist on a G20 agreement that developing countries can automatically access tax information from richer countries, on a non-reciprocal basis if necessary;
- Curb the abuse of shell companies by ensuring that the UK, its Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories share tax information with other countries and publish the ultimate beneficial owners of companies and trusts<sup>2</sup>;
- Champion a new global agreement, going beyond the OECD’s BEPS Project, which ensures that multinational companies pay tax in the countries where they truly earn their profits;
- Introduce a financial transaction tax to raise money for tackling poverty and climate change at home and abroad.

**Labour should champion responsible capitalism globally. We must:**

- Set ambitious department-wide targets in DFID on creating quality jobs, including indicators on improving incomes, the quality of work and labour productivity, especially for young people;
- Endorse the UN’s “Protect - Respect - Remedy” framework and champion the Global Compact’s principles, in order to promote and protect human rights in businesses beyond the UK’s borders;
- Value the International Labour Organisation as a key partner in pursuing the Decent Work Agenda, funded accordingly;
- Establish social partnerships with British businesses and unions in the South,

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<sup>1</sup> ComRes poll for Christian Aid found that 84% of the public report being angry at multinationals avoiding tax (up from 80% last year)

<sup>2</sup> A recent ComRes poll for Christian Aid shows that 74% of the public think the UK government should tell Crown Dependencies and British Overseas Territories to make information about company ownership publicly available.

with DFID funding for infrastructure investment, trade facilitation and anti-corruption measures in return for providing decent jobs in line with ILO and OECD guidelines, and a “challenge fund” to promote decent work in developing countries;

- Actively support more equitable growth through aid, trade and investment strategies that focus on job creation, skills development and investment in infrastructure.

**Labour should prioritise the rights of women and girls. We must:**

- State clearly that the rights of women and girls are non-negotiable, whether the threat to them emerges from religious fundamentalism, ‘traditional practices’, cultural norms or vested interests;
- Ensure that DFID's policies and programmes include dedicated measures to promote women's equal access to education, participation and rights in labour markets, uphold their dignity and safety, ensure they have full and equal access to health and education, and protect them from economic exploitation in line with international labour and human rights standards and obligations;
- Champion sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) at both a global advocacy level and by providing comprehensive SRHR services and programmes on the ground;
- Drive universal birth and marriage registration as a key indicator of progress in women and girls rights. The important role birth and marriage registration has in providing access to services and preventing early child marriage cannot be underestimated. Labour will ensure no girl is invisible;
- Prioritise the equal and meaningful participation of women in decision-making process at all levels, and, in countries like Afghanistan, to negotiate just solutions to conflict that protect women’s rights;
- Tackle all forms of violence against women, including through redoubled efforts to eradicate harmful traditional practices such as FGM, both at home and abroad, working with progressive local leaders and communities.

**Labour should recognise conflict and fragility as a primary impediment to development. We must:**

- Ensure that the post-2015 framework includes a goal to reduce conflict and violence and its impact on poverty eradication and economic growth, for all social groups;
- ‘Conflict-proof’ all DFID interventions to ensure that – especially in fragile states – every programme demonstrably supports peacebuilding and statebuilding and does not undermine it. This involves closer alignment with country-led development plans, better coordination with other donors, and the use of country systems, local NGOs and local private sector actors to deliver programmes wherever possible;
- Use the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review to set out a plan to increase the MoD’s military and police contributions to UN peacekeeping, after UK forces have left Afghanistan;
- Vigorously use the UK’s permanent UN Security Council seat to help deliver the protection of civilians through peacekeeping missions, and encourage all permanent Council members to renounce the use of their veto in the case of mass atrocities;
- Implement the Arms Trade Treaty to the highest possible standard, and offer

technical and legal assistance to developing countries that may need it to improve their import/export controls, security sector reform and other necessary measures;

- Ensure long term, flexible funding in fragile and conflict-affected areas in order to respond effectively to the changing and complex needs of communities and individuals in the aftermath of humanitarian crises;
- Work to ensure ambitious outcomes from the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, including reform of humanitarian law and a more efficient mechanism to get funding to those local NGOs best placed to respond to humanitarian emergencies.