

*Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017*

## **ERADICATING POVERTY REQUIRES FAR MORE THAN AID, SAYS CHRISTIAN AID**

**DFID focus on beyond-aid issues are welcomed, but the rest of the government must work together to support genuinely sustainable development.**

Commenting on the Department for International Development's [new strategy for economic development](#), Christian Aid welcomed its focus on beyond-aid issues such as tax and transparency and its attention to the whole economy, and called on the rest of the government to work together to support genuinely sustainable development.

"Economic development is vital for ending poverty but outdated economic models have driven the world to greater inequality and risky climate change and left many people behind," said Toby Quantrill, the charity's Head of Economic Development.

"The UK has an opportunity to support genuinely sustainable, transformational economic development and this strategy proposes some strong steps towards it. For success, we must play a role in the global economy as a trusted partner, with global agreements such as the Paris climate deal and the Sustainable Development Goals guiding our relationship with poor countries."

Mr Quantrill added: "We welcome this first 'economic development strategy' and share DFID's belief that the key to development is supporting poor countries to mobilize their own resources. We also welcome DFID's focus on decent work and especially on engaging with the informal sector and tackling barriers to women and girls' participation in the economy.

"DFID has outlined its plan to support poor countries' economic development and it is absolutely right to look far beyond aid. But unless every government department gets behind it – perhaps especially the Treasury and Department of Business – these ambitions won't be realised.

"Unless the entire British government does all in its power to stop multinationals and corrupt elites siphoning billions out of those countries using tax havens, we are unlikely to see much change. To really boost poor nations' economic development, the UK should take a leading role in plugging the leaky bucket of the International tax system."

Mr Quantrill argued that DFID is right to say economic growth can greatly help to eradicate poverty. But growth doesn't automatically reach the poorest people - especially women and children, he warned.

"For that to happen, you need fair and effective tax systems, which reduce inequality and enable developing countries to raise funds for essential services like health and education and to reduce their dependence on aid," he said.

The UK and its Overseas Territories are cornerstones of the international system that allows corrupt elites and multinationals to avoid paying the taxes they owe to developing countries. If

the government wants the City of London to be the leading hub of development finance, then it should address the secretive practices in the UK's back yard.

In other comments on the new strategy, Mr Quantrill said its failure to even mention economic inequality was a 'glaring omission'. The document is also short on concrete detail about what DFID plans to do differently and how will progress be measured, he added.

**Notes to Editors:**

**1. Christian Aid works in some of the world's poorest communities in around 40 countries at any one time. We act where there is great need, regardless of religion, helping people to live a full life, free from poverty. We provide urgent, practical and effective assistance in tackling the root causes of poverty as well as its effects.**

**2. Christian Aid's core belief is that the world can and must be changed so that poverty is ended: this is what we stand for. Everything we do is about ending poverty and injustice: swiftly, effectively, sustainably. Our strategy document Partnership for Change [www.christianaid.org.uk/images/partnership-for-change-summary.pdf](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/images/partnership-for-change-summary.pdf) explains how we set about this task.**

**3. Christian Aid is a member of the ACT Alliance, a global coalition of more than 130 churches and church-related organisations that work together in humanitarian assistance, advocacy and development. Further details at <http://actalliance.org>**

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