

International Aid Matters

January 2012 Action Guide



INTRODUCTION

Ensuring that all countries get the money and expertise they need is vital to improving the chances of beating global poverty.

International aid helps many countries provide everyone living there with good quality public services; access to education, health care, water and sanitation and access to justice. Aid contributes to emergency relief efforts and helps communities to better prepare for future disasters.

Whiskey (15) in Grade 6 at Bvumbe Secondary School, Ghana. Whiskey hopes to go on to university and train to be a doctor. UK aid has helped Ghana provide basic education. Credit: Abbie Trayler-Smith, Oxfam 2009

WHY DOES AID MATTER?

Foreign aid has already helped send millions of children to school in Uganda, improved maternal health for women in Nepal, and built roads in Ethiopia — making it easier for farmers to transport and sell their crops. Aid helps improve the daily lives of millions of people all over the world, yet more progress is still needed.

WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?

In 1970, rich countries pledged to spend 0.7% of their annual income on foreign aid. But so far, few countries have achieved this target.

By reminding rich countries of the promise they have made, we can help ensure the world's poorest and most vulnerable people are offered a better chance of escaping poverty.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

1. Design a poster to share a key aid fact

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2. Survey your community and help bust aid myths

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3. Share your learning about aid with a play

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Cargo plane loaded with emergency relief at Stansted Airport, bound for the Horn of Africa. Credit: David Levene/ Oxfam

For support with taking action, get in touch with Oxfam's Youth & Schools Team:
youthteam@oxfam.org.uk

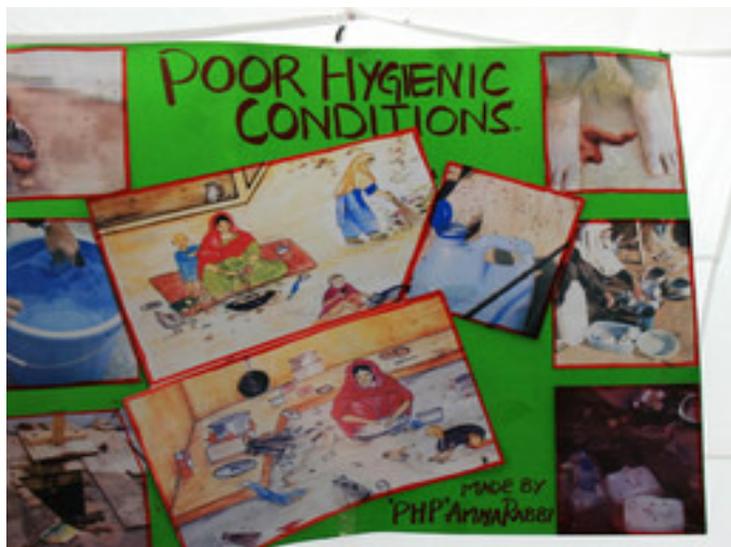
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DESIGN A POSTER TO SHARE A KEY AID FACT

Show people that you care about aid by sharing positive or myth-busting aid facts on a poster. Posters can be a great way to communicate your message, and get people to support the UK government commitment of 0.7% annual income to aid.

Health and basic hygiene information provided after flooding in Pakistan. Credit: Jane Beesley/Oxfam

WHY THIS ACTION?

Posters quickly communicate a key message — reaching a lot of people in a short space of time.

Images are often used in developing countries where many people cannot read — to share vital information with the community.

Dr. Davlatova carries out a routine check-up in Shibantai village, Tajikistan. Credit: Karen Robinson/Oxfam



WHAT TO DO

STEP ONE

Think about all the information you have learnt. Summarise the key points and find a single key fact that you think will grab people's attention.

Remember to always double check your facts and figures with a reliable source.

STEP THREE

Display your poster in a central location eg. school reception or local library.

Find somewhere that lots of people pass by every day so your poster will reach as many people as possible.

STEP TWO

Get creative and design an eye-catching poster.

Use photographs, newspaper clippings, fabric, paint or design software.

Bright colours attract people, as does bold text. Just make sure your fact is clearly displayed and there isn't too much writing.

STEP FOUR

If you use social networking sites, why not use your poster as a profile picture and encourage others who agree with your message to do the same?

This a great way to share your message with an even bigger audience.

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SURVEY YOUR COMMUNITY ON AID AND HELP BUST AID MYTHS

Carrying out a survey helps to find out what your community thinks about aid.

Write down the answers or make a short video— or ‘vox pop’ of local public opinion.

Women growing aubergine, tumeric and okra on floating vegetable gardens in Bangladesh. Floating beds help communities adapt to climate change as the beds offer a reliable food source during floods.

Credit: Glolam Rabban/ Oxfam

Aid helps provide basic services that improve the lives of millions of people every day.

However, bad news makes headlines; so many people have a negative opinion of aid. Carrying out a survey, talking to people about what they think, and sharing positive stories might help improve public support for aid.

Some key things to share with people:

Aid helps to make the world a fairer place. Aid helps countries invest in public services — ensuring a healthy and educated population boosts economic growth, not aid dependency. Boosting stability and economic growth in developing countries reduces the risk of armed conflict.

Increasing the UK’s international aid budget to the 0.7% target does not mean significant cuts to government spending in the UK. This small increase would have little impact on other budgets.

To keep up to date on how UK aid money is being invested, visit the Department for International Development: www.dfid.gov.uk

WHAT TO DO

STEP ONE

Spend some time thinking about what you have learnt. Summarise the key issues and the areas you want to ask people about. Write your questions – they should be clear and easy to understand.

STEP THREE

Look at the results— are there common responses? Is your community pro aid? Did you persuade anyone to change their opinion? Edit your video.

STEP TWO

Carry out your survey at school or within the local community. Remember— people have lots of different opinions and its ok if people don’t always agree with you. Be ready with some key facts on aid successes to persuade your audience if challenged. Record your results on paper or on film.

STEP FOUR

Screen your video and let even more people know about aid. Bust as many negative views of aid as you can by sharing positive aid stories.

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In South Sudan mosquito nets are given out to mothers with young children. Preventing the spread of malaria is vital to tackling infant and maternal mortality in this fragile region where access to clean water and adequate sanitation is low in most areas.

Credit: Caroline Gluck/ Oxfam



In Ethiopia, roads built with aid have made it easier and safer for small scale farmers to transport their goods and buy and sell items at the market.

Credit: Crispin Hughes/ Oxfam

Next month: Farmers, Business and Shoppers— who wins and who loses in the world food market?

SHARE YOUR LEARNING ON AID WITH A PLAY IN A DAY

Drama is a fun and interesting way of sharing the issues you are passionate about with your peers .

Aid can be a complex and contested issue, so a play is a good way of making things simpler, and highlighting the positive outcomes aid provides every day.

A 'Play in a Day' is a dramatic piece which is written, rehearsed and performed within 24 hours!

WHAT TO DO

STEP ONE

Break into small groups. Assign each group an issue – all issues should relate to the theme of aid eg. maternal health, basic infrastructure, education, justice.

STEP TWO

Get creative and come up with a dramatic response which highlights a positive aid story relating to your issue.

Each group's dramatic piece should be 5-8 minutes long.

STEP THREE

Write and rehearse your piece.

Remember, a play in a day must be complete within 24 hours.

STEP FOUR

Bring all the groups together and perform your short dramatic pieces on aid.

You could perform to your school, local community, or MP. Drama is a great way of letting people know how important international aid is.

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