



Department  
for International  
Development



Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt MP  
Secretary of State

To supporters of the Save the Children petition on UK  
Aid for health/nutrition

Our ref: 187960

November 2018

Thank you for getting in touch with us regarding the petition calling for UK Aid to prioritise investing in stronger health and nutrition systems, with a focus on protecting the poorest children. I agree that no parent should have to choose between paying for food or medicine for their children. The UK is a global leader on health and nutrition. UK Aid already prioritises investment in both these areas to help countries build health systems that provide access to good quality essential health services without risk of financial hardship.

Key UK Aid investments that support health and nutrition globally include the £1.2billion that we have committed to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria that will provide lifesaving anti-retroviral therapy for 1.3million people with HIV; our funding as the largest donor to Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance that will vaccinate 76million children and save 1.4million lives between 2016 and 2020; and investments in nutrition that by 2018 had reached 42million adolescent girls, women of child-bearing age and children under five. Our bilateral programmes in a range of low income countries assist in building strong and resilient health systems, for example in Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Bangladesh.

Where possible, we expect countries to finance their own health systems and UK Aid is therefore focused on supporting those countries that are least able to do so. We also help countries to increase their ability to fund health systems effectively. DFID, along with the HM Treasury and HMRC is supporting tax reforms in five priority countries in Africa and South-East Asia to help them raise more money to spend on health and to spend this effectively and equitably. Our £30million commitment to the Global Financing Facility will also drive innovative ways of increasing public and private funding for health.

The UK continues to prioritise investments in these sectors and will look to use future opportunities to help countries build strong health and nutrition services. The High-Level Meeting at the UN in September 2019 will be an important moment to champion the commitment to universal health coverage and the UK will be at the forefront of efforts to make sure this meeting successfully drives international action.

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