



House of Commons
International Development
Committee

**Kenya: DFID's Country
Assistance Plan 2004–07
and progress towards the
Millennium Development
Goals: Government
Response to the
Committee's Fourth
Report**

**Fourth Special Report of Session
2003–04**

*Ordered by The House of Commons
to be printed 5 July 2004*

The International Development Committee

The International Development Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Department for International Development and its associated public bodies.

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Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Alistair Doherty (Clerk), Sarah Hartwell-Naguib (Second Clerk), Alan Hudson (Committee Specialist), Katie Phelan (Committee Assistant), Jennifer Steele (Secretary) and Philip Jones, (Senior Office Clerk).

Contacts

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Fourth Special Report

On 12 May 2004 the International Development Committee published its Fourth Report of Session 2003–04, *Kenya: DFID's Country Assistance Plan 2004–07 and progress towards the Millennium Development Goals*. On 2 July 2004 we received the Government's response to the Report. It is reproduced as an Appendix to this Special Report.

In the Government Response, the Select Committee's conclusions and recommendations are in bold text. The Government's response is in plain text.

Appendix: Government Response

1. We firmly believe that DFID's role should be one of encouraging developing country governments to prioritise poverty reduction, rather than one of filling in the poverty gaps left by governments which have an insufficient focus on poverty. (Paragraph 16)

Agree. In Kenya, DFID's primary aim will be to support the further development and implementation of the Kenyan Government's own Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (ERS), including strengthening its poverty focus.

2. If the UK as a donor country wants to persuade developing country governments to prioritise poverty reduction and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), it should outline its plans in terms of assistance towards meeting these goals. The UK Government must not allow the MDGs to slip off the international development agenda – globally, or at a country-level – by neglect. (Paragraph 21)

Agree. The MDGs remain at the heart of the Government's international development policy. DFID's Public Service Agreement is structured around the MDGs to maintain that focus. We are actively seeking to keep them high on the international agenda, and will seize the opportunities afforded by the UK chairmanship of the G8 and the EU in 2005 to do this. The Commission for Africa will also help keep the MDGs – and Africa, where they are proving the most difficult to meet – at the centre of the international development agenda.

3. A Country Assistance Plan (CAP) should not simply outline DFID's plans; rather, it should provide a rationale for its plans and an explanation of how its priorities are decided. If priorities are decided on the basis of comparative advantage, then more information should be provided in the CAP about what other donors are doing in-country. In addition, given the need for different donors to work together effectively, and to avoid placing excessive demands on recipient governments, it would be useful if CAPs included more information about the extent of, and mechanisms for, donor coordination and harmonisation. (Paragraph 26)

Agree. We have strengthened the section of the Kenya CAP on comparative advantage (paragraphs E1 and E2) accordingly. We have also included an annex on the activities of development partners in Kenya (an annex on this will also be a standard feature in future CAPs), and have made increased development partner harmonisation and alignment a key objective of the programme.

4. We welcome the fact that DFID's CAP set out how it intends to support Kenya's development strategy, rather than superimposing DFID's own strategy. DFID ought not to micro-manage Kenya's development effort. But DFID must be able to assess whether sufficiently speedy progress is being made towards agreed objectives. DFID must be able to monitor Kenya's progress towards the MDGs, and to evaluate the effectiveness of its assistance. The Secretary of State accepted that DFID "ought to do more on how we track and monitor". Well-designed processes for poverty reduction and development assistance are crucial, but they must be judged by whether or not they deliver the outcomes required in an agreed timescale. We look forward to hearing from DFID as to how it intends to do more on tracking and monitoring Kenya's progress towards the MDGs. (Paragraph 30)

Rather than tracking Kenya's progress towards the MDGs on our own, we are working with the Government of Kenya and other partners to ensure that the information on progress is available to all. We are supporting the Government of Kenya's efforts to develop its own systems to monitor progress towards the MDGs. Together with several other partners, we are developing a new programme of support to monitoring and evaluation, including capacity building in the Kenyan Central Bureau of Statistics. The DFID contribution is likely to be around £3 million over 3 years. In addition we are working with several line ministries to ensure that they are able to capture and interpret the information they, and we, need to track progress in the areas for which they are responsible.

5. We recommend that the Africa Commission considers the value of, and mechanisms for, joint monitoring and evaluation by both donors and recipients. By making mutual accountability and learning a central part of aid relationships, the aid effort could be put on an upward spiral of increasing effectiveness, and the delicate balance between local ownership and external accountability might be more easily achieved. (Paragraph 33)

The Commission for Africa has been established to galvanise action for a strong and prosperous Africa. The Commission will analyse the barriers to Africa's development and make recommendations for action to overcome those barriers.

At its first meeting on 4 May, the Commission agreed to take forward six broad themes: economy, natural resources, investment in people, governance, peace and security, culture and participation. The relations between donors and recipients will be considered within the economy theme – it is widely accepted that the partnership approach is the best basis on which to support effective development, and the challenge for the Commission for Africa will be to recommend practical ways in which the partnership approach can be put

into practice more widely. Joint monitoring and evaluation by donors and recipients is one option that will be considered. The Government welcomes the support given by the members of the IDC for the work of the Commission and encourages them to contribute further both on the breadth of the Commission's agenda, and on the role of Parliamentarians in Africa's development, on which the IDC is working with the Secretariat.

Department for International Development

18 June 2004