



All-Party Parliamentary Group for
Aid Match



UK Aid Match: Real Aid or Charity-Washing?

Dr Martin Scott

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REAL AID



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The views expressed in this independent report do not necessarily represent the individual views of the APPG for Aid Match officers and members.



Government aid match-funded policies have been a galvanising force to help the UK meet the UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and tackle climate change by 2030. These matching policies have been deployed through a variety of initiatives, some targeted at multilateral health funds such as GAVI the vaccine alliance and the Global Fund, with the majority deployed through its flagship UK Aid Match initiative (UKAM). UKAM has match-funded public donations pound for pound and benefitted around 75 leading NGOs as well as major Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC) appeals, which in combination, were run in over 100 countries through its 13-year roll out period to date.

We know that delivering aid through more direct and transparent channels minimises government waste and delivers more value for taxpayers' money, it also reduces NGO fundraising costs.

Most of all, it has reached the people the aid is intended to reach, positively impacting well over 100 million lives. So, when donors see all the good that their money is achieving it creates this multiplier effect, attracting more donations and increases aid confidence. This is what I call Real Aid².

I congratulate the Government on, and I take particular interest in these impressive results because together with my late colleague, Sir James Mirrlees, Nobel Laureate Economist, since 2008, we had co-authored a set of government policy recommendations, the Mehta Mirrlees (MM) Aid Model, which encouraged increased private sector contributions by matching these donations from governments' development-aid budgets, optimising its effectiveness and by enhancing appropriate accountability of these funds. We advised Government on this aid policy which led to the Department for International Development (DFID) developing our central ideas that ultimately manifested in UKAM. We provided the blueprint for its Private Sector Department, which was the vehicle for the

If we call for just 3% of the foreign aid budget for aid matching this would unlock half a billion pounds for frontline NGOs per annum as opposed to currently per decade, or framed properly it could conceivably save and improve many more millions of lives at no extra cost to government, while still pursuing our national interests.

GAVI matching programme, and proposed notable aid boosting initiatives such as an Independent Audit of Aid and an Innovation Fund that were also taken up by Government³.

GAVI, Malaria Matching Fund (via the Global Fund) and multiple UKAM funding rounds committed till 2023 totalled £502 million. Having identified this amount, as a percentage of UK Official Development Assistance (ODA), as a meagre 0.3% of ODA⁴ (as opposed to GNI), I founded the APPG for Aid Match⁵ for parliamentarians to push for a radical tenfold increase of the **quantity** of UKAM. The Government's tiny UKAM commitment raises blatant and alarming comparisons; why do we spend only 0.3% of our foreign aid budget on aid matching policies in contrast to a circa 30% of ODA here in the UK through the Home Office?

The world's delayed progress on the SDGs exacerbates the needs of the poor. There are plenty of excellent projects run by NGOs, they are desperate for vital funds, and yet the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office's (FCDO) decision to delay the next phase of UKAM budget by 3 years (by extending the current phase period) is simply astounding.

There are yet more unanswered questions relating to the **quality** of the UKAM architecture. Why, since its formation, are explicit and restrictive obligations that promote the Government's image imposed on NGOs? Is UKAM a meritocratic NGO platform and does it therefore provide the public with true democratic choice, or is it 'charity washing'? This landmark report suggests the latter.

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In the making of Disparity Film⁶, an expose of the foreign aid industry, numerous NGOs were reluctant to speak out, to challenge government for fear of endangering future and vital funding.

Further, some parliamentarians have expressed their frustration that some excellent charities do not meet the strict UKAM eligibility criteria or that the UKAM website funding rounds are closed.

I therefore commissioned this independent report to interrogate the Government's practices, as revealed by its very own published resources, to highlight the **inadequacies and inequities of UKAM**.

This report illustrates the way in which UKAM eventually discriminates against deserving NGOs who – irrespective of size – have a track record of delivering on comparable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), but who are being excluded from or inhibited by this remarkable programme on the grounds that they may not possess the marketing capabilities to promote the Government as part of UKAM's clear conditionality. NGO marketing potential is palpably curtailed.

I founded the Fortune Forum charity⁷ to support the tremendous fundraising and advocacy work of effective NGOs who take on the arduous work on the frontlines in the face of mass suffering. They deserve

our unconditional support. The British public who gives so generously in times of need do not ask for 'visibility' in return, so why should the Government? The Government has historically set aside an emergency fund for ad hoc humanitarian crises which would likely have been awarded in the form of a grant in the absence of UKAM. So why should the Government receive vast reputational benefits from Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) through the UKAM communications' requirements? (This practise has overly skewed UKAM away from longer term development projects). Multilateral health funds which are the largest recipients of matched funding were not required to provide stringent marketing metrics, so why should trusted NGOs have to?

This report also implies widespread advertising of the UKAM logo may give the misleading impression that a larger proportion of taxpayer funded aid is going to UKAM NGO appeals than the actual 0.2% proportion of ODA (not GNI as a whole). Certainly, our favourite charities should display the Government's UKAM logo as part of their appeal, but our taxpayer's money should not be used to 'charity wash' the Government's public image to the detriment of NGOs. It should promote Real Aid. Real Aid is about saving and improving lives, it's about long-term development that eventually lifts us all. It's not about self-serving promotion or tokenism.

I would like to thank and commend the author of this report Dr Martin Scott for his robust research and persuasive conclusions – this report's objective findings, backed by empirical evidence, is undeniable as it is damning. It sets out our set of comprehensive recommendations which we hope the Government would consider, respond to, and take up in earnest ahead of the next funding phase announcement.



Renu Mehta

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UK Aid Match (UKAM) is a match-funding scheme, funded by the UK government, designed to incentivise greater charitable giving amongst the UK public towards projects that reduce poverty in developing countries. For every £1 donated to a UKAM charity appeal, the government also contributes £1 of UK aid – usually up to £2 million. This report examines UKAM's communication requirements and considers their potential limitations, contradictions, inconsistencies, and political implications.

UKAM's overall aim is to allow the British public to have a say in how UK aid is spent and provide opportunities to engage with international development issues, whilst boosting the impact of civil society projects to reach the poorest people in developing countries⁸. According to the UKAM documents analysed for this report, all participating Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are required to comply with various communication requirements, to be eligible for government match-funding, most notably to use a pro bono communications partnership that can provide at least 400,000 opportunities for the UK public to view information about the appeal and the match funding offer.⁹

NGOs are required to comply with various communication requirements, to be eligible for government match-funding, most notably to use a pro bono communications partnership that can provide at least 400,000 opportunities for the UK public to view information about the appeal and the match funding offer.⁹

Since 2011, £331m of UK Aid money has been allocated to UKAM by DFID/FCDO to match-fund public donations for 178 different campaigns about international development (this figure does not include the corresponding money raised by NGOs)¹⁰. A wide range of UK-based NGOs have benefitted from UKAM support including ActionAid, British Red Cross, Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide, Oxfam, Save the Children,

WaterAid and WWF¹¹. UKAM has also matched public donations for numerous Comic Relief Red Nose Day and Sport Relief appeals¹², since 2011. Up to 30 percent (£98 million) of UKAM funding has been allocated to 14 different UK Disasters and Emergencies Committee (DEC) appeals. This large DEC allocation coincides with its 'significant media coverage on primetime TV'¹³.

Since 2011, UKAM appeals have generated over 14 billion unique Opportunities To be Viewed (OTVs) by the UK public. These communications include appeals involving Ministers, Parliamentarians or the Secretary of State receiving over 45 million OTVs in 2019 alone¹⁴.

This report shows that UKAM appeals have generally been very successful in achieving their communications objectives. Since 2011, UKAM appeals have generated over 14 billion unique Opportunities To be Viewed (OTVs) by the UK public. These communications include appeals involving Ministers, Parliamentarians or the Secretary of State receiving over 45 million OTVs in 2019 alone¹⁴. In just the February 2020 round of UKAM, the 'value in kind for pro bono communications' of the 1.7bn OTVs was given as £2.2 million¹⁵.

However, this report also highlights several concerning contradictions with UKAM's current communication requirements. For example, setting a minimum requirement for generating 'Opportunities to View' (OTV) appears likely to restrict the participation of NGOs with smaller marketing capabilities. This limits the extent to which UKAM can achieve its stated objective – in line with two consecutive Conservative Party Manifesto commitments¹⁶ – to 'give the public a say in how a portion of the UK aid budget is spent'¹⁷.

This report also notes that UKAM funding has only amounted to approximately 0.2% of UK Official Development Assistance (ODA) since 2011, while ODA has been reduced to 0.5% of Gross National Income (GNI)¹⁸. Given this, the 14 billion OTVs generated by UKAM may inadvertently give the UK public a

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misleading impression of the true extent to which they are directing a portion of the UK aid budget to their favoured charities. In fact, there is evidence to suggest that – rather than giving the UK public a greater say in directing UK aid – incentivising campaigns to have greater reach may instead be providing greater reputational benefits to government Ministers – who charities are required to feature in their campaigns.

There is also evidence to suggest that this requirement for Ministerial involvement has several other problematic consequences – which require further investigation. First, it may have a ‘negative impact’¹⁹ on donations since previous research shows that Ministers are relatively ineffective ‘messengers’ for fundraising campaigns, compared to NGO workers, volunteers, and aid recipients²⁰. Second, given that UKAM has ‘flexed’²¹ to respond to ministerial requests to support appeals that fall outside the competitive funding rounds, it is

possible that some UKAM allocations may reflect Minister’s pursuit of reputational benefits, rather than public support²². This is significant because the Ministerial Code warns that, ‘Ministers should... avoid any criticism that a Minister is using his or her official position to influence or take the credit for donations to charity’²³.

Third, the requirement for Ministerial involvement, when combined with the obligations to (a) emphasise positive messages, (b) communicate success, post-appeal, and (c) have almost all appeal content pre-approved, might inadvertently discourage NGOs from publicly criticising UK Government aid spending in case it jeopardises their current or future UKAM funding. Collectively, these various requirements are also likely to restrict NGO’s ability to freely implement their most successful fundraising strategies, thus hindering their goal of maximising public donations.

This report therefore raises important questions about UKAM:

- 1 What is the Government’s rationale for awarding a fractional 0.2% of ODA to NGOs through UKAM, given its stated aim is to ‘give the public a say in how a portion of the UK aid budget is spent’?
- 2 What is the basis for imposing a specified obligation to provide 400,000 OTVs as an eligibility requirement, given NGOs are already responsible for utilising their own marketing to raise the equivalent matching amount in order to qualify for funding?
- 3 DEC appeals appear to have been awarded up to 30% of UKAM funding. Can the Government clarify how much of this DEC funding was made outside of UKAM from ODA?
- 4 Given UKAM have sought to calculate the monetary value of the positive reputational benefits of UKAM (e.g. £2.2 million in the February 2020 round²⁴) can the Government clarify whether this category is included as part of ODA expenditure?
- 5 Can the Government clarify whether all money raised by both public donations and government match-funding must be spent on the same advertised project(s)?
- 6 Have any NGOs been obliged to use quotes from Ministers in their communications, in breach of the Government Communication Service’s guidance²⁵?

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These are important questions because – as the FCDO/DFID’s flagship initiative for promoting public engagement with international development, with a budget of over £330 million – UKAM has had a significant influence over NGO fundraising and communications, for over a decade. A critical review of UKAM communications is especially timely since the

UK Government recently noted that it would, ‘draw on the successes of the current UK Aid Match programme’ to ‘consider... future models for central FCDO funding for civil society’²⁶. Given the UK Governments recent reductions in aid spending, it is important that such funding is not used as charity washing²⁷.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Convincingly ‘give the public a say in how a portion of the UK aid budget is spent’ by meaningfully increasing the overall UKAM commitment from 0.2% to 2%²⁸, as a percentage of ODA, and the diversity of NGOs benefitting from UKAM.
- 2 Commission a study to investigate the benefits of UKAM’s development outcomes, compared to other forms of ODA expenditure, to ensure better value for taxpayers’ money.
- 3 Create a transparent and open consultation process for NGOs to voice their concerns, to ensure UKAM becomes an egalitarian platform for all NGOs.
- 4 Remove the requirements for UKAM appeals to (a) provide at least 400,000 opportunities for the public to view information about appeals and (b) specify engagement of parliamentarians and government Ministers.
- 5 Make all disbursements to UKAM (and other schemes designed to support public engagement with development) available on an accessible data dashboard.
- 6 Implement wider safeguards²⁹ to ensure that foreign policy and development spending are not misdirected by a pursuit of favourable media coverage.



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MESSAGE TO POLICYMAKERS

The world faces a polycrisis like never before. Against a backdrop of Covid, conflict and climate change, hard-won development gains over the past decades are being reversed and extreme poverty is rising. The world is tremendously off track in its attempts to meet the Sustainable Development Goals and the required leadership to focus minds on the tasks at hand and ahead is absent.

The UK, once regarded as a leader on this stage has abandoned its moral and legal duty to those requiring assistance throughout the world. The destruction of the Department for International Development and the cut in ODA from 0.7% to 0.5% of GNI has resulted in death-sentence cuts to programmes designed to alleviate poverty and support the poorest and most vulnerable in our global society.

It is essential that the UK Government rebuilds trust amongst global partners, amongst INGOs, and with the British public and re-establishes its leadership within international development. An international development strategy, using every available avenue to maximise funding, along with an immediate return to 0.7 is required.

This is supported by voters with over half the population believing that we should keep or increase the UK's current aid budget, according to the Development Engagement Lab.

And not only are the public supportive of funding international development through the spending of taxpayers' money by the UK Government, they are also incredibly generous through their own direct financial donations to their preferred charities and aid organisations.

The importance of this support cannot be understated. Research by the University of Manchester's Global Development Institute has found that 40 per cent of UK development funding for INGOs comes from public donations.

The public's continued willingness to dig deep into their own pockets (no matter how much or how little they personally have) to help end poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and tackle global challenges such as climate change is cause for celebration and should never be taken for granted.

Yet, while 19% of people have donated to a global poverty charity over the past 12 months, this is down 4 percentage points from this time last year.

Similarly, the Charities Aid Foundation has found that there is a declining trend in the number of people in the UK giving to charities.

Pressure on people in recent years from Covid lockdowns to the cost-of-livings crisis has forced them to reconsider how they support the causes they care about.

It is therefore imperative that we use every tool available to us to encourage people to give generously and maximise the funds made available by the UK Government to support the vital, life-saving projects being undertaken by INGOs overseas.

UK Aid Match (UKAM) is one of those tools that can play an important role in this.

As this report lays out, over £300million has been allocated to UKAM by the UK Government to match-fund public donations for over 170 different international development campaigns.

However, this only equates to 0.2% of UK ODA since 2011. Knowing that the UK Government will match a public donation pound for pound is a significant incentive for people to donate and provides a vital lifeline to NGOs, particularly at a time when funds are scarce for all involved.

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Greater ambition from the UK Government is therefore required and they should look to significantly increase funds allocated to UKAM projects, encouraging members of the public to donate and providing NGOs with much needed additional funding in order to help the UK meet the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

Key to achieving this is the need to remove some of the restrictions on UKAM appeals as outlined in this report.

Restrictions on who can participate in UKAM depending on their communications reach and the requirement to include Government Ministers as messengers in UKAM campaigns has limited the involvement of worthy NGOs and causes. As recommended, these requirements should be removed to encourage greater diversity and prioritise projects with the greatest impact rather than marketing capabilities.

Transparency should be improved by making all disbursements to UKAM available on an accessible data dashboard, commissioning a study onto the benefits of UKAM's development outcomes, and creating a transparent and open consultation process for NGOs to voice any of their concerns.

It is imperative that UKAM is able to live up to its potential to maximise funding for INGOs and play a more prominent part in the UK international development sphere. This is not just what the sector needs, but it is what the general public wants and what the government has promised. The UK Government has the power to unlock a significant amount of money through this and I look forward to their response to this report.



Chris Law MP

APPG for Aid Match Co-chair,
International Development Committee Member,
Sub-Committee on the work of Independent Commission
for Aid Impact Member,
Former Shadow SNP Spokesperson for International Development

1. INTRODUCTION

UK Aid Match (UKAM) is a competitive funding scheme for UK-based non-governmental organisations (NGOs). It aims to give the UK public a say in how UK aid is spent by matching public donations to appeals for projects designed to reduce poverty and contribute towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in developing countries. Each UKAM appeal is required to seek to raise at least £100,000 from individuals living in the UK, within a three-month appeal period.

UKAM was initially created in response to a Conservative Party Manifesto 2010 commitment to 'allow British people a direct say on aid spending'³⁰.

UKAM was initially created in response to a Conservative Party Manifesto 2010 commitment to 'allow British people a direct say on aid spending'³⁰. It also followed recommendations by, and consultations with the Fortune Forum charity policy advisor Sir James Mirrlees, Nobel Laureate Economist, and the charity's founder Renu Mehta.

This report does not seek to establish whether the UKAM scheme has been successful in incentivising more members of the UK public to give more money to charitable appeals – or to evaluate how effectively the money raised has been spent on international development projects³¹. Instead, this report examines the potential implications of five of its communications requirements. These include requirements for NGOs to:

- 1 Provide at least 400,000 opportunities for the public to see information about the appeal and the match funding offer.
- 2 Engage parliamentarians in their campaign, including by identifying at least one opportunity for ministerial involvement.
- 3 Align their communications with 'The Narrative Project' approach, which emphasises positive messages and imagery.
- 4 Communicate the success of their projects to the public, post-appeal, to demonstrate that aid works.
- 5 Comply with mandatory UK Aid Match branding guidance.

Specifically, this report asks whether these requirements – individually and collectively – carry any potential limitations, contradictions, inconsistencies, and political implications.

This report is based on an analysis of publicly available documents relating to UKAM held on the UK FCDO 'Development Tracker' website³² and the official UK Aid Match website³³. This includes annual reviews, business cases, guidelines, and application forms. This report is structured according to 5 key UKAM communication requirements, listed above, which are analysed in turn. It concludes by discussing how these requirements are enforced.

2. PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES TO VIEW (OTVS) UK AID MATCH APPEALS

UKAM's most prominent communication requirement is that all appeals, 'use a pro bono communications partnership with one or more organisations that can confidently provide at least 400,000 unique opportunities to view (OTVs) through a variety of channels'³⁴. At the application stage, all NGO's communications plans are assessed according to 'the number of OTVs which the appeal will provide to the public'³⁵. Opportunities to View (OTVs) are 'a standard and common measure of communications reach'⁶⁶ and indicate, 'the broadest reach a grant holder can achieve through their appeals'³⁷.

The documents show that UKAM appeals have, in general, been very successful in meeting this OTV requirement. The 58 appeals within the first phase of UKAM (2013 to 2016) collectively generated 'over 2 billion opportunities to view messaging about UKAM appeals and the government's match funding offer'³⁸. Table 1 shows that the second phase of UKAM (2016

and 2023) has been even more successful – generating over 12 billion OTVs to date.

The latest round was by far the most successful – with 13 appeals achieving over 6.5 billion OTVs – although this data is significantly impacted by one Save the Children appeal, which generated 4 billion OTVs due to significant press coverage³⁹.

Furthermore, Table 1 shows that the average number of OTVs achieved per NGO is significantly higher than the minimum requirement of 400,000 (although this calculation is distorted by a small number of campaigns with a very large reach). In its 2019 Annual Review, UKAM notes that – as a result, 'campaign branding was seen on prime-time TV, in national and regional papers, alongside samba band performances, in restaurants, in corner shops, in car-parks, in football pitches and across all social media platforms'.

MILESTONE	TOTAL NUMBER OF UNIQUE OTVS OF UK AID MATCH APPEALS	AVERAGE NUMBER OF OF OTVS PER NGO
Round 1 (Feb 2019)	1,594,362,896	63,774,515
Round 2 (Feb 2020)	1,756,413,319	45,759,159
Round 3 (Feb 2021)	823,831,592	51,489,474
Round 4 (Feb 2022)	1,326,116,000	82,882,252
Round 5 (Feb 2023)	6,544,553,171	503,427,167

Table 1: Number of unique Opportunities to View (OTV) generated by UK Aid Match appeals in each completed round of the second phase of UKAM

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In its 2019 Annual Review, UKAM notes that, 'campaign branding was seen on prime-time TV, in national and regional papers, alongside samba band performances, in restaurants, in corner shops, in car-parks, in football pitches and across all social media platforms.'

According to the UKAM documents, requiring NGOs to generate at least 400,000 unique opportunities to view (OTVs) their campaigns is central to enabling UKAM to achieve its overall purpose of giving the public a say in how a portion of the international development budget is spent⁴⁰. As explained in the original UK Government Press Release for UK Aid Match in 2013⁴¹,

Because the scheme is set up to give an extra boost to the causes the British public support, the appeal must also have a good chance of reaching a large section of the population. So, organisations need a plan in place to make sure that at least 400,000 people have the chance to find out about their appeal⁴².

However, it is also possible that setting a minimum requirement for OTVs may be inadvertently undermining the objective to provide opportunities for the UK public to have a say in directing part of the UK aid budget. This is because the OTV requirement may act as a disincentive for some NGOs to take part in the scheme – especially for NGOs with smaller marketing capabilities, which are likely to find it more difficult to secure pro bono communications partnerships and generate higher OTVs. This would limit the choice of development programmes available for the public to support.

Indeed, a recent performance evaluation of UKAM recommended that UKAM could 'encourage greater diversity of NGOs in the UKAM II portfolio' by

'provid[ing] support [to NGOs] to estimate Opportunities to View (OTVs) as this challenge may deter participation in the programme⁴³. It also recommended 'postpon[ing] the requirements for NGOs to have binding commitments from communications partners at the application stage.'

These recommendations were rejected because, 'the [UKAM] Fund Manager already does all of these things – provide support on OTVs, binding commitments, advanced notice of funding⁴⁴. However, the UKAM management response to this evaluation did acknowledge that, 'smaller organisations tend to be precluded as they don't have the capacity, skills, knowledge to run an appeal⁴⁵. If this is the case, then UKAM may tend to provide the UK public with the opportunity to direct part of the UK aid budget towards issues supported by NGOs with larger marketing capabilities⁴⁶.

UKAM itself recognises that, one of the main 'communications risks' associated with the initiative is that, 'the cohort of NGOs who apply, and the subsequent selection of successful NGOs don't represent a comprehensive enough cross-section of UK based international development charities to really give the public a say on how the aid budget is spent⁴⁷.

UKAM itself recognises that, one of the main 'communications risks' associated with the initiative is that, 'the cohort of NGOs who apply, and the subsequent selection of successful NGOs don't represent a comprehensive enough cross-section of UK based international development charities to really give the public a say on how the aid budget is spent⁴⁷.

In its 2019 Annual Review, UKAM noted that, 'some smaller NGOs have been initially concerned about the 400,000 target'. The 2018 Business Plan also acknowledged that '[if] the minimum eligibility criteria

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Since UKAM appeals have so far generated over 14 billion OTVs, but only directly approximately 0.2% of UK Official Development Assistance (ODA), this may inadvertently give the UK public a misleading impression of the true extent to which they are directing a portion of the UK aid budget to their favoured charities.

for the amount which appeals have to raise (£100,000) and their reach (400,000 opportunities to view) could be reduced... This would substantially increase the number and diversity of organisations able to apply for match funding'. It is also possible that UKAM's success in achieving its OTV requirement may have inadvertently undermined its overall objective to give the UK public a say in UK aid spending. Since UKAM appeals have so far generated over 14 billion OTVs, but only directly approximately 0.2% of UK Official Development Assistance (ODA), this may inadvertently give the UK public a misleading impression

of the true extent to which they are directing a portion of the UK aid budget to their favoured charities. It is also possible that this misperception could be compounded by the volume of donations given to DEC appeals, given the UK Government claims to match public donation pound for pound. For example, three months after it was launched, the DEC Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal had raised £350 million – yet this total only included £25m from the UK Government via UKAM. However, the DEC are required to make clear in their communications that support from UKAM is capped.

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Appeals by the UK Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) appear to have been awarded up to 30% of UKAM funding. DFID Media Team, 2018.

There is also reason to question the assumption within the UKAM documents that a larger number of OTVs displaying the UK Aid Match logo will translate into a higher number of donors and thus, a greater say for the UK public in how the UK aid budget is spent. For example, the 2019 Annual Review notes that OTVs, 'give us a sense of what the appeal is likely to raise, as the more people who are aware of the appeal increases the number of potential donors'. However, this assumption is not necessarily valid. Indeed, later within the 2019 Annual Review it is acknowledged that, 'whilst OTV is needed to secure donations, a higher OTV does not necessarily result in a higher number of donations'. Three reasons are given for this within the documents. The first reason for this is that,

This will largely depend on the channels the NGO has used, for example a social media campaign results in high OTV but is a lower level of engagement and so less likely to generate a donation. A fundraising event will have a lower OTV but is a higher level of engagement and so likely to result in more donations⁴⁸.

The second reason is that OTVs don't distinguish between different kinds of audiences, who may be significantly more or less likely to donate. As explained in the 2019 Annual Review: 'It is quite common for

individuals not to donate on the first or second engagement with a new NGO as this relationship starts with behavioural engagement and can take a number of years to move towards financial engagement with a new NGO'.

Third, 'the large variation in value of any one donation'⁴⁹ means that members of the UK public may not have an equal say in directing part of the UK aid budget – since one large donation may be far greater than many smaller donations. For these reasons, in the 2018 Annual Review, it is recognised that, 'a higher OTV figure does not necessarily indicate that a more effective campaign took place'.

SUMMARY

In summary, UKAM appeals have, in general, been very successful in meeting the requirement to provide at least 400,000 opportunities for the public to see information about appeals. So far UKAM appeals have generated over 14 billion OTVs. However, OTVs are not a reliable indicator of the extent to which the UK public is able to have a say in directing UK aid spending – and the OTV requirement itself may in fact be undermining this objective because it may deter some NGOs from participating.

3. INVOLVING MINISTERS AND ENGAGING PARLIAMENTARIANS

A second key UKAM communications requirement relates to the involvement of parliamentarians, including government Ministers and the Secretary of State. All NGOs taking part in the UKAM scheme are *'asked to factor how they will engage parliamentarians into their campaign'*⁵⁰. This requirement is embedded throughout the UKAM documents – in its guidelines, application forms⁵¹, and reporting procedures. For example, the UKAM Round 5 'Communications and Appeal Application Rule Book' states that, *'applicants must... identify at least one opportunity for ministerial involvement'* in their campaigns. Examples given for what this 'involvement' could entail include, *'attending an event, taking part in a challenge or social media activity celebrating the appeal with the charity and its key fundraisers'*⁵².

The sheet provided to NGOs to record the details of how they 'communicate the success of your project to the public', notes that their description, *'should make it clear if an activity includes ministerial involvement and/or local and parliamentary engagement'*. This particular reporting requirement appears to enable UKAM to track the levels of public attention politicians receive within NGOs' communications. For example, the 2020 Annual Review notes that, within the 2020 round of UKAM, *'over 45 million OTVs were achieved across NGOs from ministerial, parliamentary or Secretary of State involvement'*.

The documents also indicate that DFID's Communications Division proactively encouraged NGOs receiving UKAM funding to involve ministers in their communications. For example, the 2018 Business Plan noted that DFID's Communications Division was responsible for, *'making recommendations for DFID/ministerial involvement in launches, appeal total announcement[s]' and 'providing ministerial quotes and maximising opportunities for positive ministerial involvement'*⁵³.

Previous research shows that politicians are relatively ineffective messengers in overseas aid and development campaigns involving images of politicians were very poorly evaluated compared with other 'messengers'

Within the documents, the reason given for requiring NGOs to involve Ministers and parliamentarians in their campaigns is that 'high level Ministerial support' is 'very useful' for promoting and publicising UKAM appeals⁵⁴. However, none of the published documents make clear why it was felt that UK politicians were well placed to publicise UKAM appeals – especially since previous research shows that politicians are relatively ineffective messengers in overseas aid and development campaigns. Research by the Development Engagement Lab (DEL) has shown that, amongst the UK public, *'frontline workers and volunteers are the most effective messengers in activating respondents' intention to make a donation or sign a petition... [whereas] celebrities, businesspeople, and philanthropists have a negative impact for both'*⁵⁵. Within this study, appeals involving images of politicians were very poorly evaluated compared with other 'messengers'. In fact, the appeal image which received the lowest overall evaluation score in this study was the only one – out of 42 appeals – to contain an image of a single politician.

Several documents indicate that the requirement for NGOs to include parliamentarians in their appeals originated from a request by Ministers themselves. The 2019 Annual Review, for example, states that, *'the UKAM team has looked at options for further communications and engagement as requested by Ministers'*⁵⁶. It also notes that this resulted in *'DFID Ministers attending... receptions [and] MP football matches'*, for instance, and all NGOs being provided with quotes from the Secretary of State *'to use in their communications'*⁵⁷. The 2018 Annual Review also states that efforts to *'involve Ministers... [in] national and regional press [coverage]'* stemmed from a *'request... by Ministers'*⁵⁸.

This raises the possibility that Ministers may have requested that they be involved in UKAM communications – not to make the appeals more effective – but to generate favourable publicity of themselves. Recent research⁵⁹ indicates that using aid spending announcements to *'advance the personal career of Ministers'* is not uncommon within aid bureaucracies but that it can lead to funds being redirected away from where they are needed most⁶⁰. Furthermore, the UK Government Communication Service's Propriety Guidance describes the use of 'Government communicators or other resources' for 'image-building'

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and ‘opinion-forming in political support of ministers’ as ‘improper’, since that is ‘the province of the party political machine’⁶¹. It also notes that,

It is possible that a well-founded publicity campaign can create political credit for the party in government. But this must not be the primary or a significant purpose of government information or publicity activities paid for from public funds... The treatment of information should be as objective as possible. While such information will acknowledge the part played by individual ministers of the Government, personalisation of issues or personal image-making should be avoided.

However, it is important to note that these documents do not state that Ministers explicitly requested that UKAM involve them in generating further communications and engagement – only that this was an outcome of being ‘requested by Ministers’ to ‘look at options’. But the documents do show that Ministers have directly influenced other aspects of the running of the UKAM scheme. The 2019 Annual Review, for example, states that, ‘the [UKAM] fund has flexed and responded to ministerial requests that fall outside the competitive funding rounds’. It also notes that, ‘applications for three out-of-round proposals were accepted: War Child, Elton John Aids Foundation (EJAF)⁶² and Soccer Aid for Unicef 2019’. These three awards resulted in approximately £5.5million match funding being committed⁶³. The award to the Elton John Aids Foundation, for example, was to support the ‘AIDSfree appeal’ – in partnership with The Independent and Evening Standard newspapers. To promote the appeal, Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt and Health Secretary Matt Hancock published a joint press release entitled, ‘AIDSfree appeal: Government joins campaign to fight HIV and AIDS’⁶⁴.

These out-of-round appeals appear to have created some issues for the UKAM scheme. The 2019 Annual Review notes that ‘it has been challenging to manage these [Ministerial] requests’ because, ‘supporting applications

Recent research indicates that using aid spending announcements to ‘advance the personal career of Ministers’ is not uncommon within aid bureaucracies but that it can lead to funds being redirected away from where they are needed most .

outside of the competitive funding rounds leads to misunderstanding and lack of clarity on expectations, as well as an increased burden on programme management’. Hypothetically, it might also give undue influence to NGOs that are willing to provide favourable publicity to ministers⁶⁵. However, the 2019 Annual Review also states that the UKAM team subsequently, ‘developed a clear process to ensure these requests meet the same level of standards as the successful applicants in the funding rounds’.

Government Ministers have also been involved in launching different thematically-focussed UKAM funding rounds, which, unfortunately, ‘lead to a lower number of applications’ and a reduction in the diversity of appeals.

Government Ministers have also been involved in launching different thematically-focussed UKAM funding rounds, which, unfortunately, ‘lead to a lower number of applications’⁶⁶ and a reduction in the diversity of appeals. For example, the one UKAM funding round was ‘timed to launch at the Illegal Wildlife Trade conference in London in October 2018’⁶⁷ and was launched by then Secretary of State, Penny Mordaunt. According to the press release at the time, ‘[the] latest £20 million round of UK Aid Match scheme particularly invites proposals from wildlife and conservation charities’⁶⁸.

However, the 2020 Annual Review notes that, ‘feedback was received from the sector that the funding round focus – the international wildlife trade [IWT] – was confusing

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and led to many believing that the round was only open to specific projects'. As a result, 'there was a reduced number of applications received' because NGOs, 'felt there was likely to be a significant focus on IWT to the detriment of other sectors so the investment in the application process would be less likely to generate a positive return'⁶⁹. This is problematic because it would have limited the range of UKAM-supported initiatives the UK public was able to contribute to, thereby undermining the UKAM's objective to 'give the UK public a say in directing part of the UK aid budget'. In response, for the following round of UKAM2 – which focussed on climate and environment – UKAM states that it 'carefully balance[ed] the messaging... [and] made it clear that all applications would be considered regardless of their sector focus'⁷⁰.

SUMMARY

In summary, UKAM requires NGOs to engage parliamentarians – both locally and at Westminster – in their appeals, despite politicians being relatively ineffective messengers in overseas aid and development campaigns. There is evidence to suggest that this requirement may have stemmed from Minister's pursuit of reputational benefits and that this is linked to a reduction in the diversity of issues the UK public is able to direct the UK aid budget towards via UKAM.



Prime Minister Theresa May hosted a reception for UNICEF and Soccer Aid at 10 Downing Street on 6 June 2018 featuring Sir Mo Farah, Usain Bolt, and Ollie Murs. Soccer Aid was supported by UK Aid Match. Number 10, 2018.

4. ADDITIONAL COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS

This section reviews three further UKAM Communication requirements: the obligations for NGOs to (a) follow UK Aid Match branding guidance, (b) promote positive messages, and (c) communicate success post-appeal.

To qualify for match funding, all appeal materials used by NGOs must feature UK Aid Match branding and use it appropriately so that the public are accurately informed about the match funding offer. For example, the UK Aid Match logo – which should appear on all UKAM appeal materials – should be ‘easy to read and a decent size... in full colour on a white background wherever possible’⁷¹. All appeal material is also required to include a pre-approved written description about UKAM and how match funding will be used. For example:

Match funding from the UK government will be used to [insert detail e.g. support children to get a decent education, support communities to grow sustainable crops etc.]⁷².

The FCDO reserves the right to refuse to match any donations that are generated by appeal materials which breach these guidelines⁷³.

The guidelines do not appear to explicitly require NGOs to specify that all money raised – by both the public and government match-funding – is spent on the same advertised project... This could be confusing for audiences, who have been told that, ‘all public donations to NAME OF APPEAL will be doubled by the UK government’⁷⁵.

NGOs are also required to ensure that all claims about what donations will achieve are fully accurate. This is necessary to reduce the risk that the final project design does not align with the original messaging and

that the UK public will therefore be misled, ‘which may in turn pose reputational risk to the programme and DFID’⁷⁴. However, the guidelines do not appear to explicitly require NGOs to specify that all money raised – by both the public and government match-funding – is spent on the same advertised project. In fact, the UKAM ‘Communications and appeal application rule book’ notes that, ‘it must be clear if public donations and match funding are being spent on different areas’. This suggests that it is permissible for government and public funding to be spent on different initiatives. This could be confusing for audiences, who have been told that, ‘all public donations to NAME OF APPEAL will be doubled by the UK government’⁷⁵.

All UKAM appeals must also align with ‘The Narrative Project’ approach⁷⁶. The Narrative Project was a large-scale research project, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in 2015, which developed a series of insights and guidelines about how to change the narrative about development in the United Kingdom, United States, France and Germany to create a broader base of public support for global issues⁷⁷. Its key focus, according to UKAM’s 2022 Annual Review, is ‘promoting positive messages of enabling development partners to succeed’⁷⁸.

UKAM documents suggest that NGOs have a range of reactions to this requirement. Some are described as, ‘moving away from pity-based imagery and taking on board the findings of the narrative project... very well’⁷⁹. The 2020 Annual Review also notes that, ‘conditions to include the Narrative Project approach within their campaigns, has seen a vast improvement in the way this is incorporated... Some NGOs have also stated that running an appeal based on the Narrative Project findings allowed them to look at their communications approach across their organisation’.

However, the 2019 Annual Review also notes that, ‘it is evident that many NGOs do still struggle to apply the findings of the narrative project and prioritise a short-term bump in donations over a longer-term positive relationship’. Indeed, several UKAM documents describe a tension between the requirement to adhere to Narrative Project approach and UKAM’s fundraising objectives⁸⁰. This tension between fundraising in the short term and promoting support for development in the long-term is common within the sector. However, it is clear from the documents that UKAM requires all appeals to resolve this tension in a particular way – by ‘actively seeking

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to counter negative narratives around development work through creative, positive, solutions focused messaging⁸¹.

Finally, all UKAM appeals are required to report back to their audiences on the outcomes of their projects⁸². This is generally considered good practice within international development campaigns. Specifically, organisations running UKAM appeals are required to report back to the public *‘three times throughout the project’s life cycle: three months after the appeal, at the mid-point of the project and at the end of the project’*⁸³. These ‘report backs’ should communicate, *‘how funds raised by the appeal are being used and what development results are being achieved’*. Within the UKAM documents, the main rationale given for requiring grant holders to ‘report back’ to their audiences is that it will, *‘promot[e] transparency’*⁸⁴ and *‘build trust’*⁸⁵.

When discussing ‘report back’ requirements, there is a strong emphasis within the documents on communicating the successful outcomes of UKAM-funded projects – in line with The Narrative Project approach. For example, one document notes that, *‘communicating success of the project to the public is a requirement of all UK Aid Match grant holders’*⁸⁶.

It also states that having *‘a credible plan to communicate success to the public about their response to the appeal and about how UK aid is being used’* is one of the criteria used to assess applicant’s communications plans. Similarly, the 2020 Annual Review notes that, *‘all organisations are reporting back to the public within 3 months of their appeal end and then every year thereafter using evidence to demonstrate that aid works’*.

This requirement to communicate success post-appeal may inadvertently undermine UKAM’s intention to ‘build trust’ and ‘increase transparency’ – is significant because previous research suggests that public engagement in development and support for aid may be undermined if audiences feel that they are not being given the full truth.



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However, this requirement to communicate success post-appeal may inadvertently undermine UKAM's intention to 'build trust' and 'increase transparency' – if it does not reflect the true nature of the outcomes of a project. Unforeseen events and circumstances will inevitably affect the outcomes of different projects – especially given that nearly 200 different appeals have been supported by UKAM since 2011. For example, the 2018 Annual Review noted that the DEC Yemen appeal experienced various, *'challenges include[ing] access and international supplies, delays in project approvals by local authorities, and the overall security situation being volatile and unpredictable'*. This is significant because previous research suggests that public engagement in development and support for aid may be undermined if audiences feel that they are not being given the full truth. For example, Seu and Orgad's⁸⁷ research with UK audiences suggests that overly positive imagery often *'contributes to making viewers critical and cynical... [and] suspicious of NGO's communication strategies and use of formulas, and reinforce a perception that, 'all they want is my money''*.

Furthermore, the requirement to communicate success post appeal – combined with the focus on positive, solutions focused messaging – may hypothetically disincentive NGOs from being critical of actors who may have hampered their work. At a time when the UK government has significantly reduced its aid budget – this might conceivably include the UK government itself. It also means that, when UK Government Ministers are mentioned or included in UKAM appeals – as they are required to – they always appear in a positive context.

SUMMARY

In summary, UKAM requires that all appeals promote exclusively positive messages, in all their campaign material, at every stage of the project. UKAM guidance is less clear about whether public donations and government funding can be spent on different areas and how this is communicated to the public.

5. ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH UKAM COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS

To ensure compliance with its various communication requirements, UKAM has clear system for working with NGOs and approving their campaign material. According to the 2020 Annual Review, all successful applicants are required to sign a *'communications terms and conditions document'*, which, *'pulls into one place the key requirements for their communications appeal and efficiently sets the scene from the beginning, reducing any possibility for confusion'*. To allow UKAM to track the progress of appeals, NGOs are *'expected to submit a monthly snapshot of their live appeal, detailing key activity during the month, OTV and fundraising totals to date'*⁸⁹. All NGOs are also *'required to inform DFID communications of any potential reputational risk'* and, according to the 2019 Annual Review, *'are usually very proactive in doing so'*.

The 2018 Business Case noted that DFID should be given a *'forward look'* of appeal content and be kept informed of timings, *'to allow strategic communications, press and creative content to coordinate on themes/amplify messages, proposing opportunities to promote appeals/UK Aid Match'*. This document also notes that DFID retained the right to veto any messaging and communications activities or channels which might risk damaging DFID's reputation – giving the example of *'undignified publicity stunts'*. This *'forward look'* and veto also appears to have been part of UKAM's partnerships with Comic Relief and the DEC⁹⁰. For example, the 2018 Business Case stated that, *'Comic Relief will be required to submit a proposal to DFID with... communications plans 10 months in advance of the appeals. To be approved for match funding, Comic Relief will need to demonstrate that these maximise UK Aid Match II objectives for development outcomes and public engagement'*.

UKAM's communication requirements and the enforcement of them could inadvertently affect NGO's wider communication practices, since NGOs may anticipate that negative or critical communications, especially about UK government aid spending, might jeopardise their chances of getting UKAM funding in future.

This level of input is significant because – when combined with the requirements to (a) include Government Ministers, (b) adopt exclusively positive communications and (c) communicate success post-appeal – it appears to give FCDO/DFID considerable control over the format, content, and timing of a significant proportion of NGO communication about international development. In these circumstances, the capacity for NGOs to communicate critically about UK aid are likely to be heavily constrained. A NGO campaign seeking public donations to support an initiative affected by cuts to the UK aid budget, for example, is unlikely to meet UKAM's communication requirements. It is also possible that UKAM's communication requirements and the enforcement of them could inadvertently affect NGO's wider communication practices, since NGOs may anticipate that negative or critical communications, especially about UK government aid spending, might jeopardise their chances of getting UKAM funding in future. This is important because, in a democratic system, NGOs need to be autonomous from government to be able to exercise their role – not just as development actors implementing projects – but in communicating with citizens about development. However, the evidence presented in this report is insufficient for demonstrating whether this has been the case, or not. Further research - involving interviews with staff of NGOs who have engaged with or benefitted from UKAM – is required to investigate this. It is also important to note that the UKAM fund is managed for the UK government by the consultancy firm – MannionDaniels – although the partnership with the DEC appears to be managed directly by the FCDO⁹¹.

Further research is also required to investigate the potential for a conflict of interest between the FCDO's apparent ability to oversee and influence NGOs communications within UKAM and its capacity to draw reputational benefits from the scheme itself. On several occasions, the UKAM documents suggest that the UKAM scheme may be used to provide reputational benefits – not only to Government Ministers – but also to UK Government departments. This was implicit in references to UKAM appeals having *'strategic potential for DFID communications'*⁹² and helping *'deliver the DFID communications strategy'*⁹³. Other documents emphasise how UKAM offers a unique opportunity to *'provide visibility for DFID's work'*⁹⁴ in a way that couldn't otherwise be achieved. For example, the 2018 Annual Review stated that,

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'[DFID's] Communications Division have worked hard to maximise this opportunity to... promote the UK aid brand. This includes communicating through channels that we do not typically have access to such as TV advertising and billboards, and through household names such as Starbucks, Andrex and Mumsnet.'

The 2018 Business Case highlights the 'high level of recognition... DFID will receive' if a match-funding announcement is made on day one of a DEC appeal, since this attracts, 'significant media coverage on primetime TV'⁹⁵.

The potential reputational benefits of UKAM for FCDO/DFID are also raised in relation to the match-funding of humanitarian appeals. For example, the 2018 Business Case highlights the 'high level of recognition... DFID will receive' if a match-funding announcement is made on day one of a DEC appeal, since this attracts, 'significant media coverage on primetime TV'⁹⁵. The suggestion that UKAM may be providing reputational benefits to UK Government departments is also implicit in the justification given for requiring NGOs to estimate the equivalent monetary value of their appeals. In 2019, UKAM began to request that

NGOs, 'calculate the value in kind for their pro-bono communications... to allow the UK Aid Match team to see the worth of the campaigns they run'⁹⁶. In the February 2020 round of UKAM alone, the 'value in kind for pro bono communications' of the 1.7bn OTVs was given as £2.2 million⁹⁷. For all appeals funded in the 2022 Round the 245 million OTVs generated from pro bono partners was valued at £777,225⁹⁸. The rationale given for asking NGOs to make this calculation was that it would, 'bring UKAM communications in line with the rest of government' and allow UKAM to report on their value, 'in the same way that high-spend government campaigns do'⁹⁹. While



Minister of State for International Development Lord Bates stands centre with Sense International Director, Alison Marshall, and staff, to announce the amount raised for UK Aid Match appeal. Melanie May, 2018.

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this comparison with other 'government campaigns' could simply have referred to UKAM's reporting requirements, it might also suggest that UKAM was seen as analogous to 'government... communications'.

To be clear, these quotations do not provide conclusive evidence to show that UKAM is used to provide reputational benefits to government departments, since their exact meaning is often ambiguous. However, they do raise this as a possibility. If this were the case, this could be problematic because it is likely that a pursuit of reputational benefits in the selection, support, and communication of UKAM appeals would compromise the pursuit of UKAM's stated objective: to give the public a say in how a portion of the international development budget is spent.

SUMMARY

In summary, the FCDO's apparent ability to oversee and influence NGOs communications within UKAM and its capacity to draw reputational benefits from the scheme for itself may have important implications – both for the effectiveness of the scheme, and for NGO's ability to publicly criticise UK government aid spending. Further research is necessary to investigate this issue further.



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The views expressed in this independent report do not necessarily represent the individual views of the APPG for Aid Match officers and members.

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All-Party Parliamentary Group for
Aid Match



Remarkable Parliamentarians are calling on the UK Government to expand existing aid matching programmes namely; UK Aid Match, GAVI Matching Fund and Malaria Matching Fund, totaling **£502m** of government funding to date. These initiatives were set up, based on our organisation's policy recommendations; to match fund private sector contributions, thereby doubling the public sector funding pot to create a multiplier for frontline development organisations.

However, this amount represents a tiny 0.3% of Official Development Assistance (ODA), averaged over its rollout period (2011-2023). Our singular mission is to scale up aid matched funding to a more reasonable level of at least 3% of the prevailing ODA budget. This would ensure that more aid gets delivered, more directly, through trusted NGOs, to more than double the impact of the UK taxpayer.



See our APPG for Aid Match hub at www.real-aid.org for up-to-date information

About APPG for Aid Match - Officers & Members - Parliamentary Action - Talking Points Menu - Match-Funded Rounds - Special Events

1. This image accompanied the DFID Press Release announcing the second phase of the UK Aid Match Scheme. 28 August 2017. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/british-public-to-have-their-say-on-how-uk-aid-is-spent-as-government-supports-largest-ever-round-of-charity-appeals>
2. <https://www.real-aid.org>
3. <https://www.real-aid.org/uk-success/>
4. <https://www.real-aid.org/talking-points/#match-funded-rounds>
5. <https://www.real-aid.org/about-appg-for-aid-match/>
6. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sas7-kT-Idl&t=3s>
7. <http://www.fortuneforum.org>
8. UK Aid Match: About <https://www.ukaidmatch.org/about/>
9. See UKAM Communications and Appeal Application Rule Book and <https://www.ukaidmatch.org/apply-eligibility/>
10. This includes £163 million for the first phase (2013 to 2016) and pilot phase (2011-2013) and £168.32 for the second phase (2016 to 2023). The programme end date for the second phase was extended from 2023 to 2027 to accommodate delays to round 4 and round 5 projects because of the global pandemic.
11. The full list of NGOs which have benefitted from the second phase (2016 and 2023) of UKAM includes: ADD International, Action Against Hunger, ActionAid, AfriKids, African Revival, Amnesty International UK, Amref Health Africa (UK), British Asian Trust, British Red Cross, Build Africa, CAFOD, Camfed International, Care International UK, Child.org, Christian Aid, Christian Blind Mission (CBM), Compassion UK, Concern Worldwide, EMMS International, Farm Africa, Handicap International UK (Humanity and Inclusion), Health Poverty Action, Hope and Homes for Children (HHC), Hope for Children, Islamic Relief Worldwide, Mary's Meals, Mercy Ships, Mines Advisory Group, Motivation Charitable Trust, Opportunity International UK, Orbis Charitable Trust, Oxfam, PHASE Worldwide (Practical Help Achieving Self Empowerment), Play Action International (formerly East African Playgrounds), Practical Action, READ Foundation, Railway Children, Restless Development, Right to Play, Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), Samaritan's Purse International, Save the Children Fund (SCUK), Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF), Self Help Africa, Send A Cow, Sense International, Sightsavers, Solar Aid, Sound Seekers, Street Child, TREE AID, Tearfund, The HALO Trust, The Leprosy Mission England and Wales (TLMEW), TraidCraft Exchange, Trocaire, UNICEF, United World Schools, Village Water, WWF, War Child, WasteAid UK, WaterAid, Womankind Worldwide, World Child Cancer UK, World Horse Welfare, Y Care International, Zoological Society of London. <https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/projects/GB-COH-04105827-AIDMATCHII/partners>
12. See <https://www.gov.uk/international-development-funding/uk-aid-match>
13. In full, the 2018 Business Case states that,

There will be match funding opportunities for humanitarian appeals through the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC)... DFID match announcements would likely be made at two points: on days one and five (when appropriate). The rationale for this approach is to ensure both maximum coverage for UK aid match opportunities, and to deliver higher value for money. By announcing on day one, DFID will receive a high level of recognition as a DEC appeal launch attracts significant media coverage on primetime TV.

The potential reputational benefits of supporting DEC appeals for FCDO/DFID are also raised within the April 2022 'Business Case: Summary Sheet' for providing match funding to the DEC Afghanistan Appeal. One of the rationales given for providing support was that it, 'highlights FCDO support to Afghanistan through DEC public messaging and branding on the Afghanistan Appeal'. Indeed, one of the 'outcomes' listed in the 'theory of change' in this document was, 'visibility of FCDO work in Afghanistan to British public & media'. The intended 'impact' associated with this match funding was, 'improved understanding of UK support to Afghanistan'. The theory of change also states that, 'if we design appropriate communications strategies in line with DEC visibility, then the perception of FCDO work in Afghanistan will be better informed'. Finally, this document notes that, 'funding DEC agencies offers an opportunity provided by UK Aid Match fund branding and public messaging across multiple fora at the national level that gives visibility and exposure to FCDO's support in Afghanistan'. It is possible that promoting 'visibility of FCDO work' could refer to an intention to raise awareness of UK aid match opportunities – and that references to promoting a better-informed UK public perception of FCDO's work in Afghanistan could refer to the UKAM objective of 'promoting public engagement with development'. However, given the references to FCDO/DFID within these quotations, rather than to NGOs, they could also imply that UKAM is providing reputational benefits to FCDO/DFID itself.
14. UKAM 2020 Annual Review,
15. UKAM 2020 Annual Review.
16. See <https://general-election-2010.co.uk/2010-general-election-manifestos/Conservative-Party-Manifesto-2010.pdf>
<https://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/wmatrix/ukmanifestos2015/localpdf/Conservatives.pdf>
17. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-scheme-backs-public-choices-on-aid-spending>

18. Since 2011, £331m has been allocated to UKAM. Over the same period, £143,877m has been spent on Official Development Assistance (ODA) – see Table 2. (During this period, UK spending on ODA has declined from 0.7% to 0.5% of Gross National Income (GNI)). Thus, spending on UKAM represents approximately 0.2% of ODA.

Year	ODA, £m
2011	8629
2012	8766
2013	11431
2014	11775
2015	12,138
2016	13,348
2017	14057
2018	14542
2019	15,176
2020	14,477
2021	11,423
2022	8115

Table 2: UK ODA spending per year (2011-2022)

19. Hudson, H., Hudson, D. and Morin, P. (2020). Who can communication international development? Understanding effective messengers. Development Engagement Lab 2018-2023. London: University College London and University of Birmingham. <https://developmentcompass.org/publications/briefs-and-reports/gb-who-can-communicate-international-development>
20. Hudson, H., Hudson, D. and Morin, P. (2020). Who can communication international development? Understanding effective messengers. Development Engagement Lab 2018-2023. London: University College London and University of Birmingham. <https://developmentcompass.org/publications/briefs-and-reports/gb-who-can-communicate-international-development>
21. UKAM 2019 Annual Review
22. See Scott, M., Bunce, M. and Wright, K. (2021). The Influence of News Coverage on Humanitarian Aid: The Bureaucrats' Perspective. *Journalism Studies*. 23:2, 167-186. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1461670X.2021.2013129>
23. In full, the Ministerial Code states that,
8.8 Ministers should not accept payment for speeches or media articles of an official nature or which directly draw on their responsibilities or experience as Ministers or with a view to donating the fee to charity. If the organisation in question insists on making a donation to a charity then it should be a charity of the organisation's choice. This is to avoid any criticism that a Minister is using his or her official position to influence or take the credit for donations to charity.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1126632/Ministerial_Code.pdf

24. UKAM 2020 Annual Review
25. The Government Communication Service's guidance on 'Planning and Delivering Effective Communications Partnerships Strategies' states that, 'Ministers can attend relevant campaign events and approved quotes may be supplied for use in partners' press releases and information materials, as long as they are relevant to the campaign. However, these things should never be guaranteed or included in any partnership agreement'.
- <https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Planning-and-Delivering-Effective-Communications-Partnership-Strategies.pdf>
26. Lord Goldsmith's response to a written question. 29 March 2023.
<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-29/HL7007>
27. Charity washing refers to the use of aid spending announcements to present a favourable public image, often in ways that mask or obscure problematic practices. Recent research indicates that using aid spending announcements to 'advance the personal career of Ministers' can also lead to funds being redirected away from where they are needed most. See Scott, M., Bunce, M. and Wright, K. (2021). The Influence of News Coverage on Humanitarian Aid: The Bureaucrats' Perspective. *Journalism Studies*. 23:2, 167-186.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1461670X.2021.2013129>
28. A target of 2% is the figure set by the charity Real Aid.
29. These safeguards could include: (a) briefing ministers and civil servants on the true nature of public opinion, and the extent of media influence on it, (b) strengthening evidence-based aid allocation models within FCDO and (c) strengthening commitments to aid transparency standards and the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) initiative.
30. <https://general-election-2010.co.uk/2010-general-election-manifestos/Conservative-Party-Manifesto-2010.pdf>
31. Internal reviews of the UKAM scheme have been very positive. The average project score across the portfolio of UKAM (phase 2) outputs so far has been 'A'. The most relevant 'output to this report – to promote 'greater public engagement through a more diverse group of NGOs' (output 3) – has been especially highly rated, achieving a score of 'A++' in each of its first three years.
32. Most of the documents analysed for this report were available here <https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/projects/GB-1-205210/documents>
33. The following documents have been analysed for this report:
1. Business case for Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) Match Funding – Afghanistan Appeal (April 2022)
 2. Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland acting through the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office and the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) for Match Funding for the 2021 Afghanistan Appeal (Published – May, 2022)
 3. UK Aid Match II Business Case and Summary (Published – June, 2018)
 4. UK Aid Match Round Five – full application guidance (Access June 2023)
 5. UK Aid Match Round Five: Communications and appeal application rule book
 6. UKAM A1-application-form (UK Aid Match concept note)
 7. UKAM A2-application-form (Access June 2023)
 8. UKAM Annual review (1) (Published– March, 2018)
 9. UKAM Annual review (2) (Published – March, 2019)
 10. UKAM Annual review (3) (Published – October, 2020)
 11. UKAM Annual review (4) (Published – July, 2021)
 12. UKAM Annual review (5) (Published – July, 2022)
 13. UKAM Annual review (26) (Published – June, 2023)
 14. UKAM C2-Application-Form (Access June 2023)
 15. UKAM Evaluation management response [to IPSOS review] (Published - December, 2022)
 16. UKAM Logical Framework (Published – July, 2022)
34. UKAM Communications and appeal application rule book. Specifically, to be eligible for match funding, appeals run by based international development organisations must aim to 'provide at least 400,000 opportunities for the public to see information about the appeal and the match funding offer, and partner with one or more organisations which can publicise the appeal to the UK public beyond the NGO's own supporter base'. For an OTV to be counted as one of the minimum 400,000 required, it must 'reach a UK audience and include the UK Aid Match message and logo' (UKAM Communications and Appeal Application Rule Book). OTVs can be generated from a range of channels, including websites, mailing lists, events, owned social channels, articles in magazines and newspapers/ TV/ radio broadcasts, and adverts in newspapers, TV, radio, social media, billboards etc. There are no specific target audiences for UKAM appeals within the UK population.
35. UKAM 2020 Annual Review

36. UKAM 2018 Annual Review
37. UKAM 2022 Annual Review
38. UKAM 2019 Business Case
For example, UKAM's partnership with Soccer Aid for Unicef 2018 - 'which saw UK Aid Match branding on prime-time TV' (2019 Annual Review) - generated over 5.1 million OTVs.
39. UKAM 2023 Annual Review
40. The 2018 Business Case for UKAM (phase 2) emphasises that OTVs provide the UK public with the opportunity to have a say in directing part of the UK aid budget:
- By generating over 2 billion opportunities for the public to view information about UK Aid Match appeals over the course of the programme, the scheme has achieved its aim of providing opportunities for the UK public to have a say in directing part of the UK aid budget. Even if many of the public decided not to contribute to any appeal - the opportunity has been provided.*
41. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-aid-match-120-million-boost-for-british-charities>
42. According to the UKAM documents, requiring NGOs to generate at least 400,000 unique opportunities to view (OTVs) their campaigns is also central to achieving a second objective: to increase UK public engagement with development. However, there are two main weaknesses to this claim - and both are acknowledged within the UKAM documents themselves. First, this claim appears to assume that raising awareness of appeal messaging - as indicated by higher OTV figures - will lead to greater public engagement - but does not fully explain how. As is stated in the 2019 Annual Review, 'engaging the UK public to increase awareness of international development... does not necessarily result in a deep engagement'. Second, it is frequently acknowledged within the documents that there is currently no evidence to support the assumption that exposure to appeal messaging will promote public engagement with development. For example, the 2020 Annual Review states that, 'the assumptions behind the engagement theory have not been tested'. Although a performance evaluation of UKAM by Ipsos MORI Ecorys, has recently completed - which aimed to test this assumption - the findings of this evaluation have not been made publicly available.
43. UKAM Evaluation management response [to IPSOS review] (Published - December, 2022).
44. UKAM Evaluation management response [to IPSOS review] (Published - December, 2022).
45. UKAM Evaluation management response [to IPSOS review] (Published - December, 2022).
46. UKAM does note that it 'mak[es] it clear to applicants that they should view the 400,000 OTV as a baseline expectation when looking to raise £100,000. Those larger charities with multimillion-pound donation targets need to provide a higher OTV to ensure they reach their fundraising targets' (2019 Annual Review).
47. UKAM 2020 Annual Review.
48. UKAM 2019 Annual Review.
49. UKAM 2018 Annual Review.
50. UKAM 2019 Annual Review.
51. Within the UKAM application form, applicants are asked to consider, 'How will you deliver local and parliamentary engagement?' when describing their proposed appeal activities.
52. The UKAM Round 5 'Communications and Appeal Application Rule Book' also describes, 'engaging with local communities and parliamentarians' as 'an integral part of the NGO's communications'. NGOs are told to consider how they can,
- Engage parliamentarians both locally and at Westminster. If there are appropriate opportunities to engage local parliamentarians or the Secretary of State - launch events, photo opportunities or fundraiser activities - these should be exploited. The NGO should also make full use of media partnerships and their own channels to generate public awareness of their local and parliamentary engagement activities, and the support of UK Aid Match.*
- When describing the criteria used to score applications, this 'rule book' notes that, 'We will look for evidence that you... include local and parliamentary engagement opportunities in your plan of activity, including with the local community and MPs'.
53. Efforts by DFID's Communications team to publicise the UKAM scheme also appear to have frequently involved parliamentarians and Ministers. The 2019 Annual Review notes that, 'DFID Communications team has been working with national and regional press and DFID's social media around the end of the appeals and looking to engage Ministers. As a result, there have been some Ministerial visits and photo calls with large cheques and thank you cards'.
54. UKAM Evaluation management response [to IPSOS review] (Published - December, 2022). The 2022 IPSOS evaluation itself appears to have recommended that UKAM could, 'promote the programme and the role of FCDO in the international development and aid' by 'work[ing] closely with Ministers and the wider FCDO to ensure the programme is publicised'.

55. Hudson, H., Hudson, D. and Morin, P. (2020). Who can communication international development? Understanding effective messengers. Development Engagement Lab 2018-2023. London: University College London and University of Birmingham. <https://developmentcompass.org/publications/briefs-and-reports/gb-who-can-communicate-international-development>
56. According to the 2019 UKAM Annual Review, 'the UKAM team has looked at options for further communications and engagement as requested by Ministers. These include:
- All NGOs are encouraged to think of ways to engage Ministers and their local MP. This has resulted in MPs (including DFID Ministers) attending a number of events ranging from receptions to MP football matches.
 - Keeping parliamentarians even better informed, a Ministerial letter is sent to MPs with a UKAM NGO in their constituency with the details of that NGO and encourages the MP to support the charity in their appeal. All MPs are sent information on UK Aid Match as part of MP engagement.
 - At the end of appeals we have been able to host photo-ops with Ministers and volunteers holding large cheques and thank-you cards to celebrate the achievements of that NGO.
 - All NGOs are provided with SoS [Secretary of State] quote to use in their communications and DFID Ministers and Permanent Secretary tweet to show support when campaigns begin. (2019 Annual Review).
57. The Government Communication Service's guidance on 'Planning and Delivering Effective Communications Partnerships Strategies' states that, 'Ministers can attend relevant campaign events and approved quotes may be supplied for use in partners' press releases and information materials, as long as they are relevant to the campaign. However, these things should never be guaranteed or included in any partnership agreement'. <https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Planning-and-Delivering-Effective-Communications-Partnership-Strategies.pdf>
58. In full, the 2018 Annual Review states that,
- 'Together with the Fund Manager and Communications Division, the programme team will look at options for further communications and engagement as requested by Ministers. These are being finalised but will include, for example... Keeping parliamentarians even better informed... Working with national and regional press and DFID's social media at the end of each appeal, looking to involve Ministers'*
59. Scott, M., Bunce, M. and Wright, K. (2021). The Influence of News Coverage on Humanitarian Aid: The Bureaucrats' Perspective. *Journalism Studies*. 23:2, 167-186. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1461670X.2021.2013129>
60. A 2021 study by Scott, Bunce and Wright – involving interviews with 30 directors and senior policymakers in 16 of the world's largest donor countries – found that some ministers proactively used aid allocations, 'as an opportunity to engage in a 'frontstage' publicity-gaining politics' in order to 'advance the personal career/s of the minister/s concerned'. One interviewee is quoted as saying, '[Ministers'] priorities are not purely humanitarian. It is also about their career... To guarantee their next steps. [Some] ministers like to [have] publicity... Then the public will like them'. See Scott, M., Bunce, M. and Wright, K. (2021). The Influence of News Coverage on Humanitarian Aid: The Bureaucrats' Perspective. *Journalism Studies*. 23:2, 167-186. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1461670X.2021.2013129>
61. <https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Government-Communication-Service-Propriety-Guidance.pdf#:~:text=Government%20Communication%20Service%20Propriety%20Guidance%20defines%20how%20civil,the%20communication%3A%20Should%20be%20relevant%20to%20government%20responsibilities>
62. The award to the Elton John Aids Foundation was to support the 'AIDSfree appeal' – in partnership with The Independent and Evening Standard newspapers. To support the appeal, Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt and Health Secretary Matt Hancock published a joint press release entitled, 'AIDSfree appeal: Government joins campaign to fight HIV and AIDS'.
63. The 2021 Annual Review also notes that, 'the application process and systems can flex to meet ministerial demands and priorities and be able to respond to funding calls with different technical requirements, such as the girls' education and the impacts of COVID-19'. Similarly, the 2020 Annual Review stated that, 'the application process and systems can flex to meet ministerial demands and priorities and be in a position to respond to funding calls with different technical requirements, such as the illegal wildlife trade or climate and environment'. However, in both cases, it is unclear what kind of 'ministerial demands and priorities' UKAM can 'flex to meet'.
64. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/aidsfree-appeal-government-joins-campaign-to-fight-hiv-and-aids>
65. For this reason, the Ministerial Code notes that,
- Ministers should take care to ensure that in participating in any fund-raising activity, they do not place, or appear to place, themselves under an obligation as Ministers to those to whom appeals are directed and for this reason they should not approach individuals or companies personally for this purpose.*
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1126632/Ministerial_Code.pdf

66. UKAM 2019 Annual Review.
67. UKAM 2019 Annual Review.
68. Round 4 of UKAM (phase 2) was launched by Baroness Sugg in July 2019. This particular round, 'welcomed applications which address at least one of the Global Goals but also particularly encouraged proposals for tackling the climate and environmental crisis the poorest people in the world are facing' (2019, FCDO. 'Latest round of UK Aid Match application date announced' <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/tackling-climate-change-by-doubling-charity-donations-through-uk-aid-match>).
69. UKAM 2019 Annual Review.
70. UKAM 2020 Annual Review.
71. UKAM Communications and Appeal Application Rule Book
72. UKAM Communications and Appeal Application Rule Book. Regarding digital materials, UKAM recommends the following:
- Use #UKAidMatch, #UKaid and #UKgov hashtags and references to the UK government in online communications should be linked to an FCDO online presence. Including the Twitter handle @FCDOgovUK and Facebook, @foreignanddevelopmentoffice on Instagram.
 - The UK Aid Match logo must be incorporated in all appeal related videos. Ideally the logo would appear at the beginning and throughout (UKAM Communications and Appeal Application Rule Book).
73. UKAM Communications and Appeal Application Rule Book.
74. UKAM 2020 Annual Review.
75. UKAM Communications and Appeal Application Rule Book.
76. The requirement for appeal content to align with The Narrative Project is embedded in the UKAM assessment criteria which, according to the 2018 Business Case, 'awards higher scores to communications plans that 'emphasise how development interventions aim to increase the empowerment and self-sufficiency of target communities' – and lower scores to messages based on emergency need and pity'. For this reason, 'applicants are strongly encouraged to refer to the Gates Narrative Project when developing their messages'.
77. <https://www.bond.org.uk/resources/the-narrative-project-user-guide/#:~:text=To%20find%20a%20new%20approach%2C%20these%20organisations%20created,the%20United%20Kingdom%2C%20United%20States%2C%20France%20and%20Germany.>
78. The UKAM 'Communications and appeal application rule book' provides further details of how NGOs should, 'implement Narrative Project messaging themes into social media posts, emails, newsletters, blog posts and all public-facing communications'. It emphasises that while appeal messaging will be addressing a clearly identified and succinctly outlined 'problem', the 'bulk' of communications, 'should focus on 'the solution' and how your campaign works to overcome or alleviate that problem'. According to this document, 'strong messaging':
- Avoids sweeping statements and generalisation
 - Gives concrete examples of progress and impact
 - Avoids making people feel guilty, blamed, helpless or pitying
 - Emphasizes core human values and priorities that are relatable to all
79. UKAM 2019 Annual Review.
80. The 2020 Annual Review, for example, notes that, 'a key purpose of UKAM is to give the British public a say in how the aid budget is spent and so it is vital that communications are clear and transparent. There are a few risks around this... For example, there can be a risk around the style of NGO communications and how these align with The Narrative Project approach which DFID communications follow in order to ensure long-term support for development'.
81. UKAM Communications and appeal application rule book.
82. Comic Relief's partnership with DFID also appears to have included a 'report back' requirement, as illustrated in the following extract from the 2018 UKAM Business Case.

Comic Relief recognises the importance of developing an ongoing conversation with supporters about the impact that Comic Relief continues to have around the world... There is a year round strategy to demonstrate how donations are spent, and the impact it is having in some of the world's poorest communities. Demonstrating how DFID match funding is being implemented plays a crucial role in this outreach. This includes a communications 'report back' moment that clearly illustrates the impact of the DFID and Comic Relief partnership. Comic Relief also ensure that progress updates are included in direct marketing emails to supporters and are included social media updates at relevant points.

83. There is evidence to suggest that UKAM's agreements with the DEC also included 'report back' requirements. For example, the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the FCDO and the DEC relating to the 2021 Afghanistan appeal included the following requirement: 'In line with UK Aid Match guidance, [we] agree that [DEC] will report back to the public at a six-month interval what matched donations have achieved, as well as in a full appeal final report (after two years)'.
84. UKAM 2018 Business Case. In the 2018 Business Case, it is argued that report backs, 'promot[e] transparency and show aid in action. This will increase the number of people talking about international development, UK aid and DFID's work'. The UKAM Round Five 'Communications and appeal application rule book' states that report backs, 'provide an opportunity for UK Aid Match grant holders to share successes and milestones from their project to the public, which in turn increases transparency in how the UK aid budget is spent'.
85. 2019 Annual Review. The 2019 Annual Review states that sharing, 'a growing body of evidence showing the impact of UKAM projects' with the UK public will 'build trust'.
86. UKAM Round Five Communications and appeal application rule book.
87. Seu, I. B. and Orgad, S. (2017). *Caring in crisis: Humanitarianism, the public and NGOs*. Palgrave.
<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-319-50259-5>
88. UKAM Communications and Appeal Application Rule Book
89. UKAM 2020 Annual Review.
90. When discussing the six month 'report-back' requirement, the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the FCDO and the DEC regarding the 2021 Afghanistan appeal stated that the DEC, 'will need to give FCDO Communications Division sight of this proposed communication for sign off'. Interestingly, this document also notes that the BBC's DEC appeal films have not carried UKAM branding in line with their 'editorial independence of government'.
- The BBC have made an editorial policy decision that their appeal film will not carry UKAM branding. They have indicated the reason for this decision, in line with all previous appeals where this request has been made, surrounds editorial independence of government related to BBC output. However, it should be noted the BBC have indicated their strong support of the featuring the FCDO's generosity on our own material, including prominently on our website where viewers are being directed through their launch day support.*
91. The Social Change Agency is also part of the consortium of organisations that manages UKAM. The UKAM documents indicate that, 'no content or information about your appeal or UK Aid Match activity can be released without The Social Change Agency's prior approval' (UKAM Communications and Appeal Application Rule Book). The quotation below – taken from UKAM Communications and Appeal Application Rule Book – highlights how The Social Change Agency is involved in giving prior approval to UKAM appeals 'at every stage of the appeal development'.
- If successful, applicants must ensure that The Social Change Agency gives approval at every stage of the appeal development. The Social Change Agency must approve the key messages document before any other materials can be developed. All further content should draw from the approved messaging. In the lead up to launch and in the early stages of the appeal The Social Change Agency will work closely with you on your messaging and other core documents, as well as approving each piece of content. Once all content is consistently being approved with no issues, approval will not be required on all content. You will continue to liaise closely with The Social Change Agency on the appeals progression and upcoming activity.*
92. UKAM 2018 Business Plan.
93. In full, the 2018 Business Plan states that, '[DFID] Communications Division will be responsible for the following tasks related to communication of appeals: ... Assessing the strategic potential of appeals for DFID communications and making recommendations for DFID/ministerial involvement in launches, appeal total announcement, social media amplification... The fund manager will work with the UK Aid Match team on opportunities to publicise the scheme to potential applicants and partners (to deliver the programme successfully) e.g. Third Sector roadshows, corporate social responsibility profession, sector press. DFID will publicise the scheme to the media and general public (to deliver the DFID communications strategy), assisted by fund manager who will identify opportunities'. It is possible that references to DFID communications benefitting from UKAM could refer to efforts to generate further publicity for UKAM appeals. However, given the emphasis on DFID's strategy and communications, these references could also refer to the opportunity UKAM content provides for generating favourable publicity for DFID itself.
94. UKAM 2020 Annual Review.
95. In full, the 2018 Business Case states that,
- There will be match funding opportunities for humanitarian appeals through the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC)... DFID match announcements would likely be made at two points: on days one and five (when appropriate). The rationale for this approach is to ensure both maximum coverage for UK aid match opportunities, and to deliver higher value for money. By announcing on day one, DFID will receive a high level of recognition as a DEC appeal launch attracts significant media coverage on primetime TV.*

The potential reputational benefits of supporting DEC appeals for FCDO/DFID are also raised within the April 2022 'Business Case: Summary Sheet' for providing match funding to the DEC Afghanistan Appeal. One of the rationales given for providing support was that it, 'highlights FCDO support to Afghanistan through DEC public messaging and branding on the Afghanistan Appeal'. Indeed, one of the 'outcomes' listed in the 'theory of change' in this document was, 'visibility of FCDO work in Afghanistan to British public & media'. The intended 'impact' associated with this match funding was, 'improved understanding of UK support to Afghanistan'. The theory of change also states that, 'if we design appropriate communications strategies in line with DEC visibility, then the perception of FCDO work in Afghanistan will be better informed'. Finally, this document notes that, 'funding DEC agencies offers an opportunity provided by UK Aid Match fund branding and public messaging across multiple fora at the national level that gives visibility and exposure to FCDO's support in Afghanistan'. It is possible that promoting 'visibility of FCDO work' could refer to an intention to raise awareness of UK aid match opportunities – and that references to promoting a better-informed UK public perception of FCDO's work in Afghanistan could refer to the UKAM objective of 'promoting public engagement with development'. However, given the references to FCDO/DFID within these quotations, rather than to NGOs, they could also imply that UKAM is providing reputational benefits to FCDO/DFID itself.

96. UKAM 2019 Annual Review.

97. UKAM 2020 Annual Review.

98. UKAM 2022 Annual Review. Rounds 2 and 4 of UKAM awarded £24.8 million and £22 million of funding respectively.

99. In full, the 2019 Annual Review stated that, 'to bring UKAM communications in line with the rest of government, going forward it is proposed that NGOs calculate the value in kind for their pro-bono communications. This will allow the UK Aid Match team to see the worth of the campaigns they run and report back on this in the same way that high-spend government campaigns do.'

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REAL AID

