



Concept

Maximising the impact of UK development diplomacy: tools, capabilities and partnerships WP1886V

Virtual meeting 1: Friday 26 March 1100-1300 UK time

Development diplomacy in practice: principles, lessons and application

Virtual meeting 2: Thursday 15 April 1200-1400 UK time

Policy into practice. Testing the ideas and principles identified in session 1, this second meeting will focus on where, and how, UK development diplomacy can be best deployed in a specific priority region (the Indo Pacific)

In partnership with the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Summary

Development diplomacy means integrating development and foreign policy goals and activities through a single, coherent approach. It can mean making the most of the diplomatic opportunities that come from working on development challenges, as well as deploying diplomacy effectively to meet those challenges; good development diplomacy usually means both.

The Wilton Park round-table virtual dialogues will discuss how the UK's development and diplomatic skills, capabilities and partnerships can be better integrated and deployed, maximising their impact on poverty reduction and the sustainable development goals (SDGs), as well as on the UK's soft power and influence across the full range of UK national interests.

The two events will consider questions such as: How to use the creation of the FCDO to maximise development and diplomatic expertise and tools at the UK's disposal? How can this help to get the most from a reduced ODA resource? Where could a stronger approach to development diplomacy deliver transformative impact for poverty reduction and the SDGs, or for UK wider interests? Where to focus efforts: which challenges, goals or partners? How to demonstrate UK development diplomacy internationally, eg through the G7 Foreign and Development Ministerial?

The meetings will also consider the practical application of development diplomacy for policymakers: How to go about development diplomacy in different contexts, towards different goals, and with different partners? What are key aspects to consider? Where is development diplomacy different to traditional development programming or diplomacy? Are any of these false choices?

Participation and format

Each of these two meetings will bring together selected groupings of up to 25 thought leaders, foreign policy and development experts, representative from partner governments and senior FCDO officials in a mix of plenary and break out discussions, designed to maximise engagement from all participants. Participation in the two meetings will differ to reflect the focus of the two main themes under discussion. A core group of people will be involved in both.

All discussion will be non-attributable under the [Wilton Park Protocol](#), conducted in a neutral manner in order to encourage an open and constructive exchange.

The format aims to:

- provide space for informal, honest, off-the-record conversations to build understanding and trust
- promote the sharing of insights, fresh analysis and reflections; and also concerns
- enable external experts from other countries to share their insights

The meetings will be conducted in English.

Purpose of meetings

The meetings aim to:

- encourage and share thinking to help maximise the impact of UK influence on development and the influence from the UK's approach to development
- identify the tools, capabilities and approaches that, when harnessed and deployed coherently, will deliver the greatest return for development and for UK diplomatic interests
- identify opportunities in policies and practice to maximise the effectiveness of a 'one-UK' offer; exploring the best means to deliver through a merged international department

Intended outcomes:

- building evidence and mutual understanding on the questions posed
- helping to actively shape the UK's foreign and development policy offer
- supporting ongoing integration and planning across the FCDO and its network
- providing input for a 'practitioners guide' in development diplomacy

Overview

Virtual meeting 1: Development diplomacy in practice: principles, lessons and application

Drawing on the experience of the UK's approach to development diplomacy and insights from partner countries: what are the lessons on the integration of diplomacy and development, particularly from countries whose foreign ministries and development agencies have merged?

Leveraging for success: how the UK FCDO should apply development diplomacy

- How to use the creation of the FCDO to maximise development and diplomatic expertise and tools at the UK's disposal?
- How can this help to get the most from a reduced ODA resource?
- How to approach development diplomacy in different contexts, towards different goals, and with different partners? What are the magic ingredients?
- Where to focus UK efforts?
- What are the key aspects for FCDO policymakers, experts and diplomats to consider?
- How to measure the effectiveness of UK development diplomacy?

Virtual meeting 2: Policy into practice. Testing the ideas and principles identified in session 1, the second meeting will focus on where, and how, UK development diplomacy can be best deployed in a specific priority region: the Indo-Pacific

- What are the lessons from partners on deploying an integrated approach to development and diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific
- Where are the greatest opportunities for UK development diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific in the coming decade: thematically, geographically, and holistically?
- What are the specific examples of where integration can easily bear fruit – and the examples of where it's harder?
- How to make development-diplomacy work in practice, with different partners and challenges- geographically and thematically eg India, ASEAN, Myanmar; climate change, open societies, trade?
- What would diplomats, experts and policymakers need to consider, and do differently, to maximise development diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific?
- How to maximise the impact on UK influence, soft power and leverage without undermining development gains?

Wilton Park context

This conversation continues a series of dialogues on The Future of Aid which Wilton Park has led since March 2020.

- **'The future of aid: towards global public investment?'** (March 2020) WP1766 V1
- **'Crisis and Opportunity – How the COVID-19 moment will catalyse change in the aid sector'**. (April 2020) WP1766 V2
- **'Setting the principles to underpin public investment for global 'commons' in a post-COVID world'** (15 July 2020) with 82 participants joining, from Africa, Asia, North America and Europe. The meeting discussed the principles and parameters to help guide discussions going forward and progress to practical change. WP1766 V3
- **New models of governance for global development finance: principles, pitfalls, and potential** – 17 November 2020) WP 1766V4
A round-table discussion with 30 senior leaders and experts – report will be available.

A [summary of these discussions](#) is available via the link.

These meetings form part of a programme of activity in support of FCDO thinking, including [Pace of Diplomacy](#)

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