

Types of Aid

Aid is any kind of help given to an area or country. The types of aid we will be looking at in this section are

- Voluntary Aid
- Bilateral Aid
- Multilateral Aid
- Large Scale Aid
- Emergency Aid

Aid can also be broken into long and short term aid. This section also looks at self-help schemes.

Voluntary Aid

Voluntary Aid is also known as **charity aid**. It is money collected by agencies such as **Oxfam** and **ActionAid** which is then spent on a variety of different schemes. Governments can sometimes also contribute to voluntary aid schemes. Most of this aid goes towards long term development, for example in training farmers in efficient farming techniques that also prevent soil erosion.

Charities also have campaigns to collect funds and provide emergency aid after a **disaster**, for example, flooding in Mozambique.

Bilateral Aid

Bilateral means "**two sides**". This type of aid is from one country to another. An example would be Britain giving money and sending experts to help build a dam in Turkey. Quite often bilateral aid is also tied Aid.

This is the most common type of aid.

Tied Aid

In this type of aid the giving (or donor) country also benefits economically from the aid. This happens as the receiving country has to buy goods and services from the donor country to get the aid in the first place. In building a dam, for example, the Britain may insist that their companies, experts and equipment are used. Whether the aid is given may depend on the receiving country agreeing to buy e.g. military jets from the donor.

Some people believe that this type of aid can be harmful if it supports governments that oppress their people.

Multilateral Aid

Multilateral means "**many sides**". Here organisations that involve many countries, give help. This aid is run by groups such as the World Health Organisation (WHO) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) – both of which are part of the United Nations (UN).

Emergency Aid

Most aid is long term developmental aid. However after a **natural disaster** such as an earthquake or flood, help is needed straight away. This help includes food, clean water, shelter, medicines and the staff to organise these materials. Such items are not useful for long term aid as local farmers and business people would not be able to compete with the free handouts and so the local economy would be damaged.

Problems with Aid Schemes

International aid schemes have caused problems, and have been criticised by some people because

- They may involve the building of an expensive, prestigious building such as a hospital – which will mainly help the urban rich
- It will involve technology which is inappropriate – a tractor is not much use if there are not spare parts or diesel fuel available locally
- Large scale projects such as dams may damage the environment and force people off the land
- Some projects have suffered from corruption – the help has not gone to the people who need it but politicians and officials have greatly benefited

Self Help

These are schemes where the local people take part in **small-scale** activities which help the **local** area. As the local people are involved they are projects that are needed. They do not usually need high technology, nor do they need a lot of money. Examples of self help schemes include

- Planting trees, and building lines of stones to reduce soil erosion
- Training local health workers, who know how to prevent and treat the local diseases and health problems
- Making bio-gas plants which takes manure and produces gas for cooking and natural fertiliser



A tree nursery in Bermi village in Northern Tanzania. Picture from the [Bermi Village](#) website.