



International Development Committee

Oral evidence: [Sustainable Development Goals](#), HC 337

Tuesday 15 September 2015

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Members present: Stephen Twigg (Chair); Fiona Bruce; Dr Lisa Cameron; Nigel Evans Mrs Helen Grant; Pauline Latham OBE, Jeremy Lefroy, Wendy Morton, Albert Owen, Mr Virendra Sharma

Questions 34-71

Witnesses: **Rt Hon. Justine Greening MP**, Secretary of State for International Development, **David Hallam**, UK Envoy and Director on the Post-2015 Goals, and **Anna Wechsberg**, Director, Strategy, Department for International Development, gave evidence.

Q34 Chair: Good morning, everyone, and welcome. I am delighted that we have the Secretary of State and her team with us here today. The main focus for our evidence session today is the Committee's inquiry into the Sustainable Development Goals, but I just wanted to start by saying that I look forward, as Chair of the Committee, to working closely with the Secretary of State and her Department over this Parliament. I have said publicly that I think this Committee has an important role of scrutiny and accountability, but it also has an important role in making the case for the excellent work that is done by our country in leading the world on international development issues.

We are going to start with some questions about the refugee crisis and I am going to go to Pauline Latham first.

Pauline Latham: I have four parts to my question. Would you prefer to have them all in one go or would you like it section by section?

Justine Greening: Why not do them all in one go and then, if I forget one of them, you can no doubt come back and remind me?

Q35 Pauline Latham: The UK Government plan to provide refugee status for refugees in camps in the Middle East. How will the UK define the camps? We have heard that many of the most vulnerable refugees are not in formal camps. Will such people be included? What directions will you be giving to UNHCR about what criteria to use to select vulnerable refugees? Will it just be children or will other vulnerable groups, such as women who have been subject to sexual violence, be included? Can you confirm that no changes have been made to the classification of spending on refugees, for instance that spending on refugees in their first year in the UK is categorised as ODA, but not in future years? What, if anything,

do the Government plan to do to help the large numbers of refugees who have arrived in Europe already?

Justine Greening: Thank you very much. Perhaps before I answer that, Chair, can I at least get my colleagues here to introduce themselves to the Committee, because I know that we will be coming on to topics that are relevant to them later? Anna, would you like to introduce yourself?

Anna Wechsberg: Hello, I am Anna Wechsberg. I am DFID's Strategy Director, as of May this year. I have worked in DFID for quite a long time now, decades rather than just single years, but I have also worked in the Treasury, Cabinet Office and Number 10 at times.

David Hallam: I am David Hallam. I am the UK Envoy on the Post-2015 Development Goals. I first started work on what we called then the post-MDGs three and a half years ago, prior to the Prime Minister being appointed to chair the High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Justine Greening: Thank you for those questions. As you set out, Chair, this Committee plays a vital role in scrutinising what the Department is doing and also giving its own reflections, more broadly, on this important policy agenda.

To turn to your questions, Pauline, we will be taking refugees not just purely from the camps. We recognise that, overwhelmingly, many of them are in host communities around camps. The principle we are setting out is that we want to give people another way to be relocated, other than having to put their lives in the hands of a people-smuggler, so I hope that is clear.

In relation to UNHCR and the directions, essentially this is taking as a basis this Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme and then scaling that up. You are right; it will not just focus on children. It is probably worth saying that, often, UNHCR will give us and other donor countries advice that the best thing to do with unaccompanied children in particular is to try to find their family and, failing that, to try to help them rebuild their lives within the region. It is also worth pointing out that, of the unaccompanied children who have been identified in Jordan, some of the statistics I have seen show that over 80% of them are reunited with their family.

Yes, children are part of it, and also women and girls, as you mentioned too, particularly those who either have suffered violence or are at particular risk of violence. We know that issues like sexual violence and child marriage are particularly a risk in these situations. Then finally there are people who have been victims of torture, for example. The other aspect of the scheme that is important is that it does enable us to particularly help the most vulnerable people who have been identified in camps or host communities, who need to be removed from the region in order to help rebuild their lives. We can do that in a much more structured way.

Your last couple of changes were important too. There are no changes to the ODA rules. We are a country that stays within the ODA rules. There is a very clear approach in order to assess our spend in relation to that: of course, it is initially assessed domestically here in the UK by the ONS and the National Audit Office, and then internationally by the Development Assistance Committee, and the OECD then reports on those. Indeed, any rule changes also go through a very collaborative consensual discussion at the Development Assistance Committee. We are staying within those rules, which as you have pointed out relate to the

first year of costs. The theory is that, in the same way that we recognise that host communities in Jordan and Lebanon are affected clearly much more dramatically, there is also an issue for communities initially, when refugees arrive wherever they are in the world, including in countries like our own.

Finally, we are playing our role in the broader EU response to this crisis. It has not just been in terms of already having taken thousands of refugees through our usual routes and then announcing that we will take up to 20,000 more. It has been the role that we have played in the Mediterranean, with HMS Enterprise and Bulwark saving, along with the Border Force cutters, around 7,000 lives; the work we are doing to tackle people-smuggling more directly; and some of the broader coordinated work we are now doing with the EU to tackle transit routes and work with countries of origin. There is a lot of work going on there. Of course, I have not talked about all the work that we are doing in the region that the Prime Minister was able to see for himself yesterday, but a very broad effort from the UK and one that I think we can be proud of.

Q36 Pauline Latham: Can I follow up? The Prime Minister said that we will take 20,000 vulnerable people into this country. Suppose we take a mother with two children, for instance, or however many children, into this country and then we have done our 20,000. If some of them suddenly say, “Oh, but my husband is there and his parents” or “my parents”, will we then take them on top of the 20,000? How is that going to work when families suddenly say, “I have more people whom I need with me”? How will that work in this instance?

Justine Greening: There are two parts. First of all, taking a more coordinated approach means that we can look at those sorts of issues in the round, before people are moved out of the communities that they are already in. It is not only a safer route to be able to relocate people; it is a more effective route, full stop. As you are setting out, we can look more carefully at those issues.

Secondly, as we know, there are also our usual and normal asylum and refugee procedures in place, although we recognise that we have taken a much more stringent approach on ensuring that people cannot just simply come to the UK to then be able to use that as a reason to bring the entirety of their family. Everybody recognises the kind of suffering that many of the Syrian refugees are going through, which is why we have put in place this specific scheme that we are now working to get scaled up. In fact, the Prime Minister has announced that Richard Harrington will be a Minister dedicated to doing just that.

Q37 Chair: Last week, we heard from Save the Children and they were talking about unaccompanied children who are already in Europe. The Committee understands the Government’s position of focusing on those who are still in the region, but is there any scope to look at taking some of the unaccompanied children who are already in Europe?

Justine Greening: We have not made any commitment to do that. The work that we have done has been as I set out to Pauline: saving lives in the Med, tackling the criminality that goes alongside this. It is also fair to say, though, that we have provided assistance to the UNHCR and the Red Cross, which are on the ground in countries like Greece and Italy particularly, providing that immediate assistance. We are part of that broader EU effort to make sure that we are taking care of people as they arrive initially, but that is not the same

as going so far as to say that we will provide relocation. As I have just set out, it is an easy concept to set out. The practicalities, as we all know as constituency MPs, of child protection and the framework that needs to be in place to provide a proper solution for children in that position are incredibly complicated and need to be approached with some real care.

Q38 Fiona Bruce: How can we ensure that minority religious and ethnic groups, who are fleeing persecution from radical forces such as ISIS, are not left behind? If I can set this in context by relaying some concerns from the region, reports from the camp areas say that the current systems fail to protect these minority groups. One of the reasons is that refugee camps in the Middle East are run by the UN, which tends to group refugee communities together, rather than taking into account racial, ethnic or religious tensions. As a result, there are tensions experienced by refugee minorities, both Christian and Muslim. They have faced persecution and violence even within the camps and, subsequently, often, they have chosen to settle outside the camps and outside the reach of UN aid. This is concerning, particularly if we are looking to select perhaps most of those 20,000 from within the camps, although I am encouraged to hear that you have said that they will not all be from within the camps this morning. How can we ensure that these people are not further disadvantaged in the way that we approach this crisis?

Justine Greening: You have set out some of the challenges that the UN agencies face in being able not only to provide the life-saving support and assistance to people, but to do that in a way that is appropriate and, critically, keeps them safe and does not put them in a different kind of risk to the one they have just tried to escape from. When I was in Iraq last summer, in Irbil, I went to a church where many of the Christians who had been displaced had gone to, to be kept safe.

The key is to have all of this very clearly in mind as we work with agencies and for us to be very clear that our assistance should be based on need. It also absolutely needs to reflect on the clear risks that particular groups might face, and sometimes that is because of their religion. We are going to come on to discuss the global goals. One of the reflections that I have on that is that this “leave no one behind” concept more broadly is a central part of that, but, explicitly within that, the recognition that religion can be one of the reasons why people are discriminated against.

Q39 Jeremy Lefroy: There were reports in the press today that the Prime Minister was advised, when he was in Lebanon yesterday, to be concerned about possible infiltration of refugee numbers by Daesh and other groups. I wondered how confident you are in the UNHCR processes in vetting refugees for resettlement.

Justine Greening: As we set up this scheme and scale it up, as well as making sure that we have all the right procedures in place to be able to properly relocate someone—and possibly, as Pauline set out, a family—into the UK and that we have all the right services and support services with local authorities ready for them, there is a security aspect to this too. It is one of the reasons why this work is quite rightly being broadly led by the Home Office, with assistance from DCLG and DFID. That will, as part of that process, absolutely have the kinds of security checks to make sure that we manage those risks.

Q40 Jeremy Lefroy: If we could move on to Ebola, I have three questions really, one to get a view of the current state across the region, in particular Sierra Leone, where the UK has played such an important and leading role. Secondly, it is to enquire about the progress with the vaccine—I think it was a GSK vaccine—that was introduced, how that is going and whether DFID is involved in rolling that out. Thirdly, there is the really important point about post-reconstruction and the enormous loss, something like \$4 billion of GDP, across the region. What is the UK doing there, particularly with Sierra Leone but also Liberia, where we have a different office and work? What are we doing perhaps through multilateral partners in Guinea on reconstruction?

Justine Greening: The overall update from the region is a very positive one. When I went out in November last year, we were seeing well over 500 cases of Ebola a week emerging. Now we are at the stage where, for a period of time, we had no cases. As you might be aware, Jeremy, we did have one case one week, followed by several related cases since. Similarly in Guinea, a handful of cases are still emerging. Liberia is now getting towards being able to be at that 42-day period where it can say it is Ebola-free.

It is very difficult to be concrete on this, but broadly what we are seeing is that, even with survivors, this virus can stay within their body for perhaps longer than might have been expected. Therefore, some of the sporadic cases we are seeing are through sexually transmitted Ebola. It is yet another reminder, frankly, of how difficult this disease has been to combat and how it was no ordinary outbreak in a way. It absolutely was in danger of taking over not only West Africa, but Africa potentially more broadly and then of course spreading, had we not reacted to it.

We are continuing our work until we get to what we would call a resilient zero. In other words, we have not just ticked a box to say we have not had any cases for 42 days; we actually know that we have the kinds of surveillance structures in place and monitoring at the very local level, in order to be able to detect any Ebola cases that have not formally been identified. That is the update and we are going to stay the course. We need to get to zero, but it needs to be a resilient zero.

On the vaccine, you might have seen that there were some very positive trial results. It was actually the Merck vaccine that was being talked about, and it has proved to be not only very efficacious but also safe. It is one of the ways that we will get to a resilient zero by, when we find sporadic cases, then using the vaccine. It is worth saying, though, that that vaccine has still not been licensed; it is still going through trials, so there is still this issue around its mass use being limited for the time being. That was a part-DFID-funded vaccine, I should say as well. What it shows is that the research and the investment we are doing upfront in some of these vaccines absolutely can come to the fore, when we need it.

Finally on reconstruction, there was a reconstruction conference in New York earlier this year, which I attended. Britain has committed, I think I am right in saying, £200 million over the next two years for the reconstruction approach in Sierra Leone. There is a smaller amount there for Liberia as well. It is very important that we now focus on getting education up and running, those health systems back up and running, and also livelihoods in particular, so that the economy, which had been one of the fastest growing in the world before Ebola hit, can get back on its feet. It shows again, coming on to the SDG discussion that we are going to have, why the health element of that particularly matters. It is certainly something that the UK has been very involved in.

Q41 Jeremy Lefroy: If I may just follow up, I recall being at that conference that you called in Lancaster House, in September or early October last year, and the forecasts then for cases and deaths were pretty horrendous, if action was not taken. Clearly it was on a knife-edge, and there has obviously been examination and some criticism of the role of the WHO and indeed of whether our response was quick enough, and that has been reflected by this Committee. All of us here would want to pay tribute to the huge amount of work that has been done, led by you and your colleagues over the past year. Your focus has actually meant that we talk about the tragedy of 10,000 or 11,000 deaths, but the counterfactual is that there are hundreds of thousands who potentially would have lost their lives. The refugee crisis, which you refer to, would have been absolutely enormous and yet that has not happened in the way it could have done. I think we would all like to express our thanks and gratitude.

Chair: Jeremy speaks for the whole Committee, I know.

Jeremy Lefroy: That is something that needs to be stressed, because I find it a little difficult to take some of the rhetoric from some European leaders, who were not highly involved in this, over the current crisis, when this could have been an equally difficult and damaging crisis, in which the UK stepped up, along with the US and France, and played a major role.

Justine Greening: I very much appreciate those comments and will make sure that they get passed back to the Department. There were many people who ended up spending a very long time in Sierra Leone, which was entirely unplanned but in response to scaling up the team to deal with this crisis. We have a celebration in Parliament tomorrow that is going to be essentially led by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Armed Forces. It reflects that it was a cross-Government response, alongside NGOs. It was perhaps shaped and led by DFID, but absolutely would not have been able to be done without the MOD, the NHS, the Department of Health and of course the Foreign Office. We were immensely grateful for the cross-Government working and cooperation. It not only saved lives there; it quite possibly saved lives here as well. In doing so, it has highlighted that, worldwide, we need to be better prepared to deal with health-based emergencies, in the same way that we have got more used to dealing with humanitarian-based emergencies. That is the big lesson, but we need to make sure that we respond to that. The World Humanitarian Summit next year gives us a good opportunity.

Chair: We are going to move now on to the main body of questioning around the global goals.

Q42 Wendy Morton: My first question, rather like Pauline's, has several parts, so I will adopt the same format. It is around the adoption of the goals, the number and the breadth of them. The SDGs will be adopted at the UN summit later this month. Given that the draft outcome document has already been agreed to, what do you hope to achieve in New York and whom are you planning to engage with? That is the first part. In the past, you have been very critical of the proposal for 17 goals and the UK originally called for the framework to be reduced to 10 or 12. Why did you back down from this position? Finally, is the breadth and depth of the new goals a good thing?

Justine Greening: I am just scribbling down your questions here, thank you. We have ended up in a remarkable place with the global goals. Anybody who has just been through

the last election and a political party involved in drafting a manifesto or a bit of a manifesto will know how hard it is to sometimes get a single sentence agreed with colleagues in the same party. What has been achieved here is a document that is incredibly comprehensive and has not just been signed off by one country; it has been developed and signed off by all countries. The formal ratification of it comes in New York; that is important.

We can reflect on the fact that every country, if they had written it themselves, might have ended up with a slightly different document but, broadly, it is right at the top end of what I think we could have expected to get. We will be very happy to not only celebrate the achievement of the MDGs in New York, but also ratify this new set of global goals. The key now is making sure that the plan on implementation is rapidly put in place. The work done to finalise the indicators, which I should say is done by the UN Statistical Commission led by our own UK National Statistician, is the next key part of this, to make sure that all those very detailed indicators that will give us the “have we or have we not met these goals and targets” answers is a strong set of indicators.

On the fact that there are more goals, we have been in an incredibly complicated, challenging negotiation. In the end, we ended up with 17. Having said that, did it include the areas that the UK was very keen to have put in place? Yes, and I am delighted about that. We only have to look at the challenges in Syria to see how important Goal 16, on peaceful societies, is as a precursor for development taking place. That was a huge step forward from our perspective. The Committee will know how committed I am to the gender equality goal, which is Goal 5. I do not think we have ever seen a more comprehensive approach, in this kind of a document, to tackling gender equality.

Jobs would be another area I would particularly point to. We had the youth summit in DFID in Saturday. There were young people there and, when you asked them what their priorities are, it was jobs. They want to grow up and have a challenging job, a challenging career. They want to be stretched; they want to reach their potential and that means, very fundamentally, the dignity of a job. These were important elements of it.

The final important thing I would point to that changed, if I can come on to your breadth and depth question, was the sustainability piece. The outcome document that we have got found a sensible way round building in this issue of sustainability and climate change, whilst obviously being clear that it is the Paris meeting coming up that, in the end, is the forum where the key decisions will be taken. The need to meet this two-degree target is mentioned in the declaration at the beginning. It is very broad; it actually does have depth, but we can say that, by and large, all the things that needed to be in are in.

Chair: It leads nicely on to your second question, does it not?

Q43 Wendy Morton: It does actually, yes, very nicely. A number of international negotiations scheduled in 2015 will impact on the SDGs, including the recent Financing for Development Conference, the latest round of the WTO’s Doha Development Round and the 21st Conference of the Parties on climate change. How will the UK Government ensure that the outcomes are linked back to the SDGs in a coherent way? Just to finish off my little section, what do you see as the greatest challenges in the upcoming negotiations and what does the UK Government hope to achieve?

Justine Greening: You are absolutely right to highlight that 2015 will be seen as this historic year, when we were able to, quite rightly and fortunately, look at all these global challenges in the round. I do not think that is just how the UK sees it. Right from the word go, these four, as you say—the Addis Ababa Financing for Development, the global goals and sustainable development debate, the climate change agreement conference, plus of course then the WTO piece of this, which is easy to leave out but is actually important—have all been seen in the round. The links have been there for all of us and we have managed to navigate our way through certainly the first couple of those key moments well. I have no doubt that the outcome document appropriately puts us in a position to get a strong outcome in the Paris climate change meeting as well.

The negotiating challenges now for me are around climate change and achieving the kinds of ambitious outcomes we need in Paris, in order to not only get the sort of mitigation that we are looking for but also, from a DFID perspective, to get the kind of focus on adaptation that is going to be critical if we are going to see development take place whilst the climate is changing, and that it can take place in a sustainable way. From a DFID perspective, that is the challenge.

Having said that, if you look at some of the changes in renewable energy and the business model for things like solar panels, those are now moving in the right direction, which puts some solutions in play financially and in a viable way for developing countries, which might not have been just a few years ago. I feel very positive about where we have got to, but also the prospects for making the most of these conferences.

The final thing is on the WTO. I very much welcome the fact that you mention that in line with the other three conferences. The last deal we got in Bali was worth around \$10 billion annually to the African economy. It is a huge prize if we can achieve it. Indeed, going back to the outcome document that we are talking about, this issue of trade and putting in the conditions for trade is central to go beyond just tackling poverty to really enabling development more broadly to happen.

Q44 Mrs Helen Grant: My questions relate to finance and, if I may, I will ask them one at a time. There are three of them. How will the goals be financed and was any new money really put in at the conference in Addis? That is the first.

Justine Greening: I will ask David to respond to that as well. The outcome from Addis, this Addis Ababa Action Agenda, was a ground-breaking outcome. The Ethiopian Government did a fantastic job of hosting that really important meeting. I do not think, five to ten years ago, we could have even got close to the outcome we did, because it included all the sources of finance that we needed to look at in the round again. It was not just about ODA and aid, although of course it talked about that. It also, critically, talked about so-called domestic resource mobilisation, so there were elements in this document that talked about broadening the tax base, tackling tax evasion and tackling illicit flows. It very much played into what we had had as a then G8 agenda for the UK in 2013, on tax, trade and transparency. It also, critically, looked at the role of the private sector, private investment and how that could be seen alongside the public investment that is going in. It was a very broad agenda.

Certainly, the UK went with our 0.7% commitment. We got the EU to strengthen its commitment too, at the final meeting of Ministers in the run-up to that, so there were new

money commitments that were made. I do not know whether, David, you do want to add anything to that, but feel free if you would like to.

David Hallam: If I may, Secretary of State. The most important thing about Addis Ababa that the Secretary of State is referring to is summed up in the concept of moving from billions in aid to trillions in investment. That is the kind of shift that we are talking about with the new financing agenda for the goals. What that means in slightly longer term is, yes, aid is important, especially for the poorest countries. It is fantastic that we got the new EU commitment to 0.7%. We got a G7 commitment to reverse the decline in aid to the poorest countries in the world as well, the first time the G7 has ever committed to that. On top of that, Addis marked the first time that the international community has really recognised the role that domestic resource mobilisation, all the work that needs to be done to support that and private sector investment need to play. That is where the trillions are going to come from in the future.

Going back to the question about integrating across this agenda and across the conferences, one of the things that the UK was working very hard for in the post-2015 Agenda 2030 negotiations was the recognition, explicitly, that Addis Ababa needed to be part of that. We got the wording that says—and this is important in the UN—that the Addis Ababa Action Agenda is integral to the delivery of this agenda. That is quite important.

Justine Greening: There are a last couple of things on that, Helen. The UK launched at the Addis meeting the Addis tax initiative, which was about countries like the UK doubling our investment in tax capacity building with developing countries, but it was also signed up to by African countries like Ethiopia, for example. There was no prospect of being able to launch something like that, say, 10 years ago. You had countries like the UK, which had set up the HMRC tax capacity building unit, working together with countries like Ethiopia to help them start to really put in place the tax base, tax system, approach that they will need if they are going to get the receipts from their economic growth to eventually put into their own health and education. That is why it was such a big step forward for me. The partnership of working between countries now I do not think has been more collaborative. That is to be welcomed.

We of course also announced at that conference that we were re-capitalising CDC, which is the UK development finance institution, for the first time in 20 years. That is part of how we want to play our role in really turbo-charging the jobs agenda in the developing world.

Q45 Mrs Helen Grant: It sounds like a real success. The transition from billions to trillions in investment really does focus the mind. Thank you very much for that. I think you touched on the next question. How will we encourage more private sector investment?

Justine Greening: You need to have the conditions for companies to be able to invest in the first place. I spent 15 years in industry. In fact, I spent a longer time in business than I have as an MP so far. If the conditions are not right, you can have the best business case in the world, but you will not be able to go through and implement it. It is one of the reasons why Goal 16 on peaceful societies and rule of law is so important. If you cannot get a contract in place that you can rely on and then have a means of redress if you think it is not being adhered to, realistically, companies are not going to invest. It was about creating the conditions and then, for the very first time properly, formally, saying that jobs, private investment and business are a core part of the development agenda.

The last lot of MDGs really did not extend that far; these global goals do and that is absolutely reiterated further on in the document. If you get towards the end of it, there are several paragraphs that really go into detail on why it is going to be the private sector that creates those jobs that are going to give an unprecedented young population growing up in the world today jobs and careers. For that big youth bulge, if I can call it that, it will either be an opportunity or a challenge for development. Either they will be people who are productive and part of why countries develop or, if they do not get the chance to be productive because they have not been educated, because there are no jobs, because there is not the private sector investment, it will be a different challenge that we face and we will have missed that opportunity. That is why this piece of it is so important, but critically, and emphasised in this document, done in a sustainable, responsible way.

Q46 Mrs Helen Grant: Finally, do you think the international tax rules should be changed to remove loopholes that allow certain companies to pay less tax in developing countries?

Justine Greening: Yes. When they are unfair and companies are not paying their fair whack, then they should be. The root of some of those challenges is the fact that you need a tax system that does have an international approach, which is precisely why we had tax on our G8 agenda in 2013. The only way you will really tackle that is through getting particularly G7 countries to agree on a collective approach to tackling those sorts of inequities, and that is in everyone's interest in the end.

Q47 Chair: Can I just press you further on that because, in Addis, my understanding is the UK opposed a proposal to create a UN tax body? Certainly in the evidence the Department has given to us, the focus on is on the domestic, which we understand and support in terms of the Addis tax initiative, but not on the international. Can you set out why it is that the UK did not support a UN tax body?

Justine Greening: We felt it was a mechanistic response to a problem that we recognise, but one that would not particularly make the difference. There is already a tax body in place, which has tax experts from a variety of countries. Those experts then report back to the UN annually. At the last report back, which is essentially to the General Assembly—any country can be there, ask questions, pose challenges and input into what that work programme might be—only five countries turned up. I am pleased to say that the UK was one of them but, in a sense, I felt that it was not really addressing the problem.

The real issue is that you need to get G7 countries to agree that this is an issue that needs to be faced and then commit to taking the sorts of steps that we are doing, on transparency and beneficial ownership, so that there is the right structure in place. That was, from our perspective as the UK, the problem, and therefore you needed a solution to fix that. We just did not feel that the UN tax committee upgrading was particularly going to do that at all.

Q48 Chair: Is there an issue there with the political will amongst other G7 countries to take this forward?

Justine Greening: Yes, and we have seen the agenda that we set taken forward in the G7 since and indeed at the G20. The key is to stick with this agenda, to keep that momentum going and to follow through on it. This is something the UK recognises and that is why we have put it on the agenda, but the very practical work we are doing, i.e. this Addis tax initiative for example, is key. There is no point making all the rules work more effectively for developing countries, if they then do not have the capacity themselves to be able to take advantage of them.

There is a policy piece to this and then there is a very practical piece to this. I very much hope, and indeed would encourage you, if you are out meeting your EU counterparts, to get more EU member states signed up to the tax initiative and working alongside countries like the UK, Germany and the Netherlands, which were the founding members of it. That is going to be a key way that we can make some real progress here.

Q49 Dr Lisa Cameron: You have spoken about the UK's commitment to the universality of the goals and their implementation. This will also involve working across and within Government Departments and including devolved assemblies. How do you see this working in practice?

Justine Greening: Of course, as a country, the goals are applicable to us as well. Universality was an important concept of the goals that we pushed for, as the UK. Clearly they are driven by the need to tackle extreme poverty, and so there is a real developing country focus on them, but they do apply to all countries. The key now is for us to work with the Cabinet Office, so that we have a cross-Government response to them domestically but, as you say, to work with the devolved administrations. We can do that domestically but also, critically, internationally as well. DFID leads all of that work, but I am very proud of the fact that our East Kilbride office plays such a ginormous role in helping us do that. We need to work of course with some of the development work that the Scottish Government do, particularly in Malawi. That is a principal focus and we look forward to doing that.

Within Government, we will bring a best-of-British approach, if I can call it that, to our UK response. I do not think DFID has ever worked more closely with Departments, whether it is the MOD, the Home Office, the HMRC on tax, Defra on biodiversity, DECC on climate change, BIS on trade. We will step up that work, but we want to reach outside of Government and pull in some of our great institutions, whether it is the lawyers, the accountants or the City of London. We have talked a lot about the need to improve, this golden thread as the Prime Minister calls it, in terms of these key institutions that underpin development. Britain's golden thread is probably second to none, so we want to reach into those broader institutions outside of Government to enlist their help.

Q50 Dr Lisa Cameron: Just to put it on the record, I am also very proud of the work that DFID in East Kilbride does. It is my constituency. Is there a risk, though, that some Government Departments might engage only with elements of the Sustainable Development Goals or that some goals may not be engaged with at all?

Justine Greening: We certainly do not want to see cherry-picking. Coming back to an early question, I think from Wendy, around the fact that we had initially wanted a shorter

list, our concern with a longer list was that you would get to a stage, potentially, where there were so many that countries would go, “Well, we’re just doing four or five of them.” We do think they all need to work together. What you will see in practice is perhaps different countries particularly majoring on different groups of targets, mainly because they might have a particular expertise in them, but we will not, in terms of our domestic response, cherry-pick, so we are committed to following up ourselves as a country. Clearly, DFID’s focus is going to be helping to deliver on the international response but, as I have set out to you, we will enlist other Government Departments to enable us to do that. Hopefully, we are doing it in a way that has not happened like that before and it is a very positive development for DFID.

Q51 Dr Lisa Cameron: How important do you believe policy coherence is for the SDGs? Is there any sign we are getting better at policy coherence? Finally, in relation to environmental issues and climate change, there is some concern that UK policy may undermine some of the Sustainable Development Goals in terms of climate change. How can we work to ensure continuity with their philosophy?

Justine Greening: Policy coherence really does matter for two reasons. One is the reality that these goals are interconnected. That is reflected in the fact that there are quite a lot of them, frankly, because it is complex and there are different elements of development. The other reason why we need policy coherence is simply that we will get more bang for our buck if we make our programmes work as a whole and as a whole portfolio, rather than looking at them separately.

For example, we are looking carefully at our women and girls agenda to understand how the work we are doing on education can then feed into the work that is happening on economic empowerment, which can then also sit alongside the work we are doing on tackling child marriage, FGM and the kinds of things that stop girls from being in school in the first place. We do want to leverage, if I can put it that way, across the work that we are doing, and that is what we are encouraging other countries to do, including understanding how we then fit in with what multilaterals are doing themselves.

You particularly raised the question on the environmental approach. Over the last few years, DFID has gone through a process of really understanding how to mainstream the issue of climate and sustainability through our programmes. We are also doing that in relation to women and girls, if I can come back to that again. There are some cross-cutting themes that emerge from the discussion and the debate that we have just had, internationally, on development and that was one of them, which is why sustainability needed to run right the way through the goals that we have. I think the UK has shown some real leadership on environment and sustainability. We will be doing that in Paris at the end of the year. That is one of the ways that we can be a credible voice, going back to the global goals, in getting that centre stage within the global goals, as they are then implemented going forward.

Chair: The Secretary of State has spoken about women and girls. Lisa, your question seems to flow quite naturally from that.

Q52 Dr Lisa Cameron: Obviously DFID is extremely proud of the leadership that has been shown in relation to empowerment of women and girls. How is this being followed up and what action has DFID taken since last year’s summit on women and girls?

Justine Greening: When I look back at some of the key achievements we have had in the Department over the last few years, I would really point to the Girl Summit last year. We hosted it with UNICEF. That Girl Summit Charter, which now has 480 signatures and around 40 countries have signed up to it, ended up forming the basis for a UN resolution later that year on FGM. It was able, for the very first time, to really put these two issues of FGM and child and early enforced marriage into the spotlight, to give it enough time and profile to make sure that there was some momentum behind tackling it.

We have had more countries sign up to that charter since. We have had more signatories. DFID has launched flagship programmes on child marriage, really for the first time. We had already launched one on FGM. Supporting that now is work on more grassroots change, tackling some of the social norms that allow FGM and child marriage to happen in the first place, combined with continued advocacy at the UN that, as I just said, is leading to resolutions being passed on FGM, which I very much welcome.

A huge amount has been done, but the key thing for me was that the next set of global goals had the right level of ambition on driving for gender equality, and I think it does. There are specific goals in there, for the first time, on FGM and ending child marriage, and specific reference to sexual and reproductive health rights, which is really important. I have always talked about giving girls and women voice, choice and control in their lives, and Global Goal 5, which we have, gives us a platform to really make that happen over the next 15 years. I can assure the Committee that DFID will stay leading on that agenda, and the UK more broadly will stay leading on that agenda.

Q53 Dr Lisa Cameron: I have two final questions. In terms of spending on reproductive health, it is noted to have fallen between 2012 and 2013. Do you see that as an area where you will increase spending, given the commitment you have just made? Also, in terms of data collection for child marriage, my understanding is that these marriages do not tend to be recorded anywhere official. How do we therefore ensure that we are doing all we can at the grassroots level in collecting accurate data in that regard?

Justine Greening: On our support for sexual and reproductive health, we have had a real focus on family planning. That was initially kicked off by the Prime Minister, at a summit that was held in 2012. I am happy to write to the Committee with more details around what our ambition was, coming out of that summit, but also how we are well on the way towards achieving that ambition of giving more access to more women on family planning. Going back to things like Sierra Leone, again that would be a focus for us in helping that country get back on its feet.

There is actually significant investment going on here, not always bilaterally, I should say as well. The other thing to recognise is that we do work through multilateral institutions and mechanisms, particularly around health. Perhaps, if I can give a slightly broader update to the Committee, that would be helpful. Sorry, can you remind me of your second question, Lisa?

Q54 Dr Lisa Cameron: It was about data collection in terms of child marriage. It is very difficult to access data in that area. How do we know that what we are doing on the ground is working?

Justine Greening: There is a general point on data that is really important around how we not only baseline where we have got to with the global goals already, but then put ourselves in a position to be able to track progress. That is something that we are very involved in.

In relation to the specific issue of child marriage, you are right to highlight that it is not always easy to track perfectly what is happening on the ground. Indeed, in terms of this area, in understanding what works, those lessons are emerging quite quickly now. It is not like there is a big fact base that we can draw upon that has been there in the past, because really there has not been a lot of work done on this in the past, but we broadly know what is working. What tends to work in both FGM and child marriage is that you need all stakeholders pulling in the right direction. You need countries like the UK backing up momentum that is there from Governments, which is backed up where possible with legislation, which is then delivered at a local government level, which has religious leaders and community leaders backing it up, which is then also backed up probably by some grassroots work by communities and civil society.

We have a programme called AmplifyChange, which is about helping to get resources to those civil society groups that are doing that on the ground. In a sense, we know what model works, but delivering it is extremely complex, because every country is different. If you talk to the Minister who has led a lot of this work in Ethiopia, she will tell you that she has had to literally do 85 slightly different approaches with slightly different groups in Ethiopia to be able to make progress. There is no perfect approach, but we broadly know what the key ingredients are.]

Q55 Dr Lisa Cameron: It is a very complicated matter, but very crucial. Just finally in terms of DFID's spending, I wanted to clarify the targets in terms of family planning and maternal health, and how that is divided.

Justine Greening: Why do I not write to the Committee to give you the specific outcomes that came from the family planning summit, which was all about expanding access? Indeed, we made some announcements earlier in the year about our next tranche of funding. It has been a key focus for us, because we know that one of the reasons why girls are out of school is that they are often children who are having children themselves.

Q56 Mrs Helen Grant: A supplementary: I know you are passionate about FGM; you have mentioned FGM a number of times. Does the lack of prosecutions, at the end of the day, concern you and what do you think we might be able to do about it?

Justine Greening: The other aspect of the Girl Summit that to me was really important was that it was actually saying that we have issues here in the UK that need to be dealt with as well, in relation to FGM and forced marriage. It was fantastic that the Home Secretary played such a big role at that summit, and set out a whole range of different actions we were taking as a Government to tackle that, including strengthening the legislation and broadening it out on FGM, so that we could take tougher action.

Our focus is prevention more than anything else, and indeed working with communities to try to get the changes in attitudes that we need to make sure that there is a new generation

of girls growing up in Britain who know that they do not need to go through FGM. One of the leading campaigners, Fahma Mohamed, was at the youth summit we held last Saturday and spoke at it. I think that is where change will come. What I can say, Helen, is that we have a legislative framework that is in place now to take action. Of course, that is then backed up with work with the police to enable them to follow up cases when they come to their attention.

Mrs Helen Grant: I do not think you can do much more than that, can you?

Q57 Fiona Bruce: Secretary of State, you talked about how DFID, over the last few years, has been adept at change. With the SDGs coming in replacing the MDGs, again it is a whole new way of working, particularly with increased partnership working. I am interested to know how things are going to change at DFID to accommodate this and to embrace it. Your ministerial colleague, the MP for the New Forest, said in response to last week's debate on the SDGs that the Department is already working on new strategies. I wondered if you could give us an indication of what that work involves, how and when it will be published, and also how it is going to be implemented.

What is interesting now is that, increasingly, partnership working—you mentioned for example other Departments, lawyers and then the NGOs, the donee countries, civil society—recognises that everyone has to work together. How is DFID going to hold all these disparate groups to account? In particular, is DFID going to be a lead Department with all the other Government Departments? I am interested in that, with regard to DFID in the UK. Then, also looking at the country offices, how are they going to revise how they develop in-country plans? What guidance are you giving to them? Again, if there is increased partner working, how do they ensure that partners deliver and what kind of accountability process will there be?

Justine Greening: That is a very broad question, and I will ask Anna to perhaps give a little more detail on two of the key processes that are getting underway in the Department. The challenge, as I have set out, is that we need to make sure that our work adds up as an overall portfolio of investment, so we do not have sporadic programmes that, in and of themselves, are good but do not actually fit as well as they could do with other programmes. We are doing that, so we need a more thematic approach, which is what we are putting in place, particularly around things like women and girls, and climate and environment.

At the same time, as you say, we have to work with multilaterals. Actually, what is emerging or has emerged is much more partnership. The final goal is about global partnership. What that is saying is that you really do need to get the right people working together effectively. You see that through mechanisms like Global Fund and Gavi, where you have country Governments that are committed to a strategy that they want to do in their country to tackle something, whether it is tuberculosis or malaria. You then have donor countries like the UK, which are part of how you fund that and also can help shape policy. You then have the private sector often, which is part of delivering at scale, and then you have civil society as a core part of that, too, and often the multilateral institutions involved as well. That really has become a much more standard *modus operandi* in development now.

I do not particularly see it as more complicated, in a way; I think it enables us to work more effectively. What has happened is this normality of working together has become something that we are very used to now. I do not see it as more of a challenge. The key is making sure we have the right actors in the right room.

Back in the UK, yes, DFID is the lead Department on our international response. As I said to Lisa, we do, more than ever before, pull in other Departments' expertise when we can: a) because that is a sensible thing to do, and b) because we should be showcasing the whole of what we have as a Government and a country to offer, more than perhaps we have been able to in the past.

The processes that are going on will enable us to reach decisioning on all of this in a very structured way. Of course we have spending reviews. We also have the strategic defence and security review going on. Internally within the Department, we have looked at our strategy in the light of the emerging global goals that are coming out, but also, critically, going back to the bilateral aid review process and the multilateral aid review process, looking at where we are working and how we are working within countries and, as you say, Fiona, how we then work with the key multilateral institutions that are also doing a massive amount in many of the places we want to work and on many of the issues we want to work on. I am going to ask Anna to perhaps talk a little more about those processes that we have, and also the timelines might be helpful for when we expect to get to the end of it.

Anna Wechsberg: As the Secretary of State said, we have the bilateral aid review and the multilateral aid review, which are starting now. The bilateral aid review has already kicked off. Both of those will run through to the early part of next year. We also have a civil society partnership review and a research review running alongside those, and those are due to report some time towards the end of this year.

That is quite challenging because, as the Secretary of State said, it is happening at the same time as the spending review itself and the SDSR, but we have done it deliberately, because what we want to do this time around is allow those processes to generate information that we can then consider in the round. Five years ago, we had a bilateral aid review and a multilateral aid review, which were both excellent processes, but were slightly separate. This time, the idea is that we can generate information, which we can then use to decide how we work and through which agencies we work as a whole, rather than doing it in single bites.

Fiona Bruce: We will probably come back to this subject on many occasions.

Q58 Chair: Definitely, yes. I might follow that up now, because what you have just said is extremely welcome in terms of that integrated approach to the SDGs, bilateral and multilateral aid reviews. We are looking as a Committee to work with ICAI to look broadly at allocation of resources over the next period. Is the implication that we might be spending more through multilaterals to achieve the SDGs or not necessarily?

Justine Greening: I would say not necessarily. We have to get to the end of that process. Obviously our spend through multilaterals has grown but, broadly, that has been, as much as anything else, a factor of the fact that we have been getting to 0.7%, so overall our investment in this whole area has risen. These processes are really important for us, because they enable us to look at how much of an overlap there is on priorities, with the

multilaterals we are working with, and also value for money and getting the most out of every pound.

A good example might be some of the health programmes. Traditionally, before Global Fund got going so much, we might have done all of our malaria work bilaterally. Now, we can do a huge amount through the Global Fund, which is actually better value for money. You might look at our bilateral spend and see it changing over time, but the key is to look across the piece and say, “What are we also doing through Global Fund?” The answer is much, much more now, because we have great economies of scale and a very effective approach to reach as many people as possible, which is really working well.

Q59 Chair: Can I move on to education and Goal 4 in the global goals? Clearly, the MDGs had a big focus on access to primary education, particularly on numbers. There is a widespread welcome for the emphasis both on quality, in the new goal, but also on lifelong learning, not simply on primary education. We wanted to ask two questions. One is how, in practice, you see this shift impacting on the work that DFID does on education, particularly in the poorest countries. The second is really on tertiary education, because we are very much a world leader in terms of our university sector. How do you see the UK’s university sector, and perhaps working with your colleagues in BIS, playing a role in taking forward implementation of Goal 4?

Justine Greening: On the first point, Chair, it is incredibly welcome that we have such a broad series of targets around education now. As you have said, we have made massive progress on primary. Indeed, interestingly, the Chibok girls obviously were kidnapped but, if you look at where they were in their education, they were girls who had got through primary, had got through secondary and were actually doing a physics exam.

The key is making sure that the capacity of particularly secondary education is now there, as that pipeline of primary education really has been semi-filled up, but also, as you say, then tertiary education. We have a Higher Education Taskforce, which is looking at how we can have our own universities work effectively in the sorts of countries that DFID is interested in working in to develop those links. Also on issues like teacher training, we can really bring our experience.

There was one last point I wanted to make on education, which is around the “leave no one behind” agenda. We know that a lot of those children who still are not in school, aside from possibly being caught up as refugees, which is why we are doing lots of work with the Syrian children, are often disabled. One of the big changes that we have had within the Department over the last couple of years is to put in place, for the first time, a disability strategy that really says, in a very basic way, how we can make sure the work we are doing in education means that schools are accessible and that we are getting that last tranche of children, who still have not made it into primary school, into primary school. That is difficult work, but I wanted to flag to the Committee that it is absolutely in my mind as something that we need to work on, as challenging as it is, whilst doing this broader piece of the education work that we just talked about.

Chair: I am conscious that we have about 20 more minutes and we have six other areas that we are seeking to address. I am quite keen that we try to address all six.

Q60 Mr Virendra Sharma: Secretary of State, you just indicated the response to my question, but I still want to put this, so that you can elaborate on that. We do not want to leave anybody behind, but achieving those goals is sometimes very difficult in developing countries or fragile states. Do you have any extra new plans to tackle this issue?

Justine Greening: As a country that very much made the case from the beginning—the Prime Minister was on the High-Level Panel in 2012-13—we will deliver on our part of making sure that we leave no one behind, whether that is on disability or whether it is on girls, who often are excluded. That will run throughout our development approach, Virendra, and that is something I can absolutely assure you of. I am happy, if the Committee has any more specific areas where you would like details, to then provide that. I am conscious of time, Chair.

Mr Virendra Sharma: If you keep in mind that there are many states that are poor and do not have the same vision but are part of it, how best can we involve them to deliver that? I am sure that, when you respond later, you will keep that in mind.

Chair: We move on to the private sector now.

Q61 Jeremy Lefroy: I would like to apologise for having to slip away. You have emphasised the importance of partnerships with the private sector. How is DFID going to work with the private sector towards the achievement of the SDGs?

Justine Greening: We are doing it in a number of different ways. One is simply being a voice that has been in the international community, saying the private sector needs to have a role and indeed has to have a role, if it is going to be a successful development strategy we have in place. I do not think that has always necessarily been the case. There was a time probably when there were a few companies saying that they thought this mattered, but we have a) said we think this is core for every company, and b) rebutted those people who say that the private sector should not be involved in development. It absolutely should.

There was a World Bank report in 2013 that talked about something like 600 million jobs these young people will need over the next 15 years, but it also, critically, said that 90% of them will come from the private sector. We cannot not engage. Actually, the key is working out how you can get responsible investment, so we will continue to make that case.

How are we doing it? Well, as you know, we have done more economic development work on the ground and more programmes around jobs and livelihoods now than ever before. We continue to scale up our work on infrastructure, for example—some of those enabling ingredients that enable companies to invest. Domestically, we have a very strong story around how we are working now with UK companies to encourage them to join the development push that the UK has more broadly. We have got good corporate governance. We have passed the Bribery Act. I believe our UK companies have something to offer this agenda in tackling poverty, and we should be prepared to work with them in order to bring everyone to the table, as part of this UK push I talked about. Not just our fantastic UK institutions and our Government, but we should be working with the corporate sector too, and that is what we do.

Q62 Jeremy Lefroy: Are we, as well as engaging in direct programmes, whether through DFID, through the Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund or through CDC, engaging directly with Governments and working with them on policy, as to how to improve jobs and livelihoods? We have some excellent programmes in the UK that have been successful. There are excellent programmes around the world, which we might look at for both the UK and in the work that we do in DFID. Is there policy work that is going on that says, “Yes, these programmes are working in this country. They are helping to develop jobs and livelihoods particularly for young people”, and can that be introduced elsewhere?

Justine Greening: Yes, and of course we get scrutiny from ICAI and indeed from this Committee that also provides us with some valuable input on what works. The UK provides significant resources around technical advice for countries to enable them to be part of the WTO talks, effectively, but also advice around how they can make sure that their laws are laws that can help investment and responsible investment take place. I should also say we give significant support around public financial management, rule of law and the other things I talked about that are critical to create the right kind of investment climate that companies need.

Q63 Jeremy Lefroy: Are you considering, or maybe you have already started, perhaps getting a list or a group, a very wide group I hope, of UK companies that will actually positively sign up to the SDGs and say, “We will work with the host Governments in the countries where we operate, and with DFID and the UK Government, on getting these SDGs into place”?

Justine Greening: The UN has a so-called global compact with business, which has a number of UK companies signed up as part of it. These are companies that buy into the role of the private sector and the corporate world in development and want to play their role. I very much hope that that will grow, now that we are close to getting the final global goals document signed off. As I say, I think it is a critical role. Whether or not business can effectively play its role in development will, as much as anything else, determine whether we can be successful in the end in achieving eradication of extreme poverty, which is really one of the core objectives of this next 15 years of development push—that alongside good governance.

Q64 Jeremy Lefroy: Would it be worth DFID and the UK Government encouraging and saying, “Here is a list of companies”—companies that are realistically committed to it, not just to get a logo or badge—“Please sign up.” “We commit, as a FTSE 100 company, a FTSE 250 or an SME, to work on seeing the implementation or the achievement of the SDGs.” Would it be worth DFID perhaps taking the lead on that?

Justine Greening: We have worked with the global compact group of UK companies and we are looking at a range of different things that we want to be able to do, once this outcome document is finally signed off and in place, to launch it and say what we think it means for the UK’s development efforts. That will include, as you point out, our work with UK industry.

Q65 Wendy Morton: The SDGs are not legally binding on member states, so how will accountability on the SDGs be secured, at a national and an international level? The second part of my question was: where goals are being achieved in partnership with other stakeholders, for example civil society or the private sector, how can they be held to account on their achievements? More specifically, how can we do that and how will it be done here in the UK?

Justine Greening: Briefly, what all Governments now need to do is look at the goals and understand how they relate to their own domestic circumstances. Aside from that, there will be the work done by the UN Statistical Commission to look at the indicators that can go alongside the goals. It is key that these goals are country-owned, if they are going to be successful. Civil society has a key role to play in monitoring and holding Governments to account. The outcome document itself, as you will know, talks about having a high-level political forum that provides a clear moment to assess progress.

This issue of data is techy but very important, because we really do need to make sure that we have the right kind of data collection and accuracy to be able to tell whether we are actually making progress. As that final monitoring, accountability and transparency architecture emerges, the UK will obviously play its role in making sure that we do our bit. We will be able to get back to the Committee with more details on that, over the coming days and weeks.

Chair: Helen and then Virendra have questions that you have addressed, but might want to elaborate on.

Q66 Mrs Helen Grant: I shall be quick as well, Chair. Indicators are going to be really important. You mentioned them earlier. What do you think they should look like? Do you think Governments should have a role in formulation and were there any limitations with the MDG indicators?

Justine Greening: The indicators have to be measurable and the usual SMART indicators that are actually ones we can work with and we have, broadly, an ability to baseline in the first place, so we know what the starting point is. I am not a statistics expert, but that UN Statistical Commission means that we have the right kinds of expertise brought to bear on this. I think it is good news that John Pullinger, who is our lead on this, our National Statistician—which is not an easy word for me to say—is heading up that work. We expect it to finish in March. We have the right people making sure we have some strong, sensible indicators that are meaningful. In a way, Government's role is to let that UN committee get on with things.

Mrs Helen Grant: To stay out, basically?

Justine Greening: Broadly, yes. The politics around this debate were in getting to this outcome document that we have got to now. What we now need is a series of SMART indicators that genuinely can give us a sense of whether we are moving in the right direction or not.

Q67 Chair: Are you confident that will be done for March?

Justine Greening: Yes, I think so.

Q68 Mr Virendra Sharma: Data collection is very important. You said that, but it is costing an estimate of \$254 billion. How is it going to be financed?

Justine Greening: There are different discussions happening internationally and at the UN at the moment around how we can make sure we have the right approach on data. In the High-Level Panel report that the Prime Minister co-chaired, one of the key points that that report made was this need for a data revolution. We have the statisticians doing their work on the “what”, and, as part of that then, there is further work on how we can collect this data and make sure it is effective. What I expect to come out of this is an overall international partnership that will focus on getting good-quality data in place and the right systems in place. I do not think it will be easy and, if you look at the document, there are some areas where we know there are challenges on collecting data. This is not an easy task but, at the same time, we are sighted on some of those difficulties and that is why there is so much work underway.

If you talk to people about the MDGs, who were involved in getting those in place and set up, which I have done, they will tell you that one of the shortcomings was not enough thought on how to measure from the word go. We have gone a long way towards mitigating that as far as it was possible, with the new global goals, but we will obviously find out as we get towards putting in place that data management framework.

Q69 Chair: Just on data and how to measure, this seems to be a very important area and one where potentially the UK and DFID could play a big role, bearing in mind some of the expertise in our universities, in places like Cambridge and London, on this. We took evidence last week from Jamie Drummond from ONE, who put a lot of emphasis on this. Is your sense that this is something where the UK can play a role, not just in developing the indicators but, beyond next March, taking forward data analytics?

Justine Greening: Yes, Chair. I think it is. I talked about our golden thread. There are lots of things that the UK does well; one of them is data. We are a country that likes collecting data on all sorts of things, whether it is weather or anything else, and we can bring that very natural experience to bear in this too and we want to. It is important actually, because it is one of the principal ways in which we will be able to hold ourselves to account. If there is one area that I have been worried the international community would lose sight of that we did not need to, I had a concern that we might have a big policy discussion, which we would successfully get to an end on, but we would not pay attention to the data. I think we have avoided that, which is good news and I can assure the Committee the UK will play its role.

Q70 Mr Virendra Sharma: What will the world look like in 2030, if the SDGs have been achieved? Is it possible? The follow-up from that is: what is your vision for DFID’s role in the implementation of the SDGs in 2020 and 2030?

Justine Greening: What we want to see is a world where we have achieved our global goals, which we are setting ourselves now. That will mean we have eradicated extreme

poverty for the first time. No other generation has ever achieved that. It would be an immense achievement. It will mean children in school. It will mean access and levels of healthcare for people who have never had it before. It will mean, I think, a level of economic growth that is sustainable, but also creating prosperity for all of us, which is a prize really worth having.

You need that strategy because there are so many challenges that we face, and we will only be able to address them by having a challenge. We see all the challenges of the humanitarian strife and the fact that we have more displaced people now than ever before, according to the UNHCR. These global goals give us a blueprint for understanding what good looks like, whilst we get on with all of the work that we need to, which is tackling some of the problems that we see around us today.

I want to come back to your point, Chair, on education. For those children caught up in those crises, they will grow up; they will become adults. We all have a choice around what kind of potential they might be able to fulfil. What I do know is that, if they do not get to school and they are not able to read and write, then we have taken away one of the most basic things that can give them some kind of an advantage in life, which is why, for DFID, education and in particular girls' education have been so important.

Even now in these humanitarian situations, we are pushing ourselves to really lead the international community in how we can make sure that those children get into school too, because there are just simply so many of them now, which is a tragedy. We need to deal with that and not allow it to take away those children's futures because they happen to be growing up in the wrong part of the world, at the wrong time.

Q71 Chair: Secretary of State, thank you very much indeed, and thanks to Anna and David as well for coming today. This is only the second oral evidence session that we have had. We have had a very large amount of written evidence for our inquiry. The focus of our inquiry will be implementation of the global goals, so we will be taking further oral evidence after the New York summit, but today has been extremely helpful for us. We are grateful to you for giving so much time to answer our questions and engage in the discussion. Thank you very much indeed.

Justine Greening: Thank you very much, Chair, and good luck with your inquiry.