

Fact-Finding Trip to Zambia: Global health issues and international development

RESULTS UK is leading a cross-party delegation of UK Parliamentarians to Zambia during parliamentary recess from **3rd to 7th August 2015**. For the past two decades, Zambia has been in a period of relative peace and prosperity. It has had twenty years of elections that have been free and generally fair and, for the past decade, has had an annual growth rate between 6% and 10%. The country has also seen progress on several key health indicators, however in other health areas the progress has been mixed, which has in turn held further economic and social development back.

This visit will look at progress across several key health outcomes, including diagnosing and treating tuberculosis (TB), tackling TB-HIV co-infection, reaching all children with routine immunisations, and developing new tools to fight infectious disease such as an HIV vaccine.

The delegation will also look at how the UK Government is supporting the Zambian Government and other partners to address these key issues through channels such as the Department for International Development (DFID), the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.

- **Child Health:** Immunisation is one of the most powerful and cost-effective interventions in public health, saving millions of children's lives every year. Therefore scaling up vaccines and essential treatments against common childhood illnesses is critical to reducing child mortality. Zambia has significantly reduced its child mortality rate down from 193 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990, to 21 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2013, achieving its MDG 4 target of a two thirds reduction. However, 51,000 children under five continue to die every year, predominantly from conditions which could be easily prevented or treated. The basic immunisation rate of 79% remains lower than the global average of 84%, and drops lower still for newer vaccines, such as pneumococcal and rotavirus, which protect against the two leading child killers, pneumonia and diarrhoea.
- **Tuberculosis, TB-HIV co-infection, and tools to fight HIV:** Tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and TB-HIV co-infection all continue to present considerable challenges in Zambia. The WHO estimates that in Zambia 60,000 people develop TB every year and over 12,000 died from the disease in 2013. Zambia is also one of nine countries in the Southern Africa region with a high HIV burden, with almost 1 million adults living with HIV (a prevalence rate of 12.5%). Preventing and caring for both TB and HIV/AIDS is particularly challenging given that each disease fuels the other's progression. Currently, 62% of those who have TB are also living with HIV, making Zambia a high TB-HIV co-infection burden country. Integrated approaches to treatment are crucial, as is combatting the stigma that further marginalises high risk groups, and developing effective and accessible vaccines and treatments for both diseases.

The delegation itinerary will include visits to national and community-based health programmes, meetings with service users and health care providers, as well as meetings with British Embassy staff in Zambia, DFID country representatives and Zambian parliamentary and civil service decision-makers.

The trip is being organised and funded by RESULTS UK, a registered UK charity. RESULTS UK works internationally to generate the public and political will to end the extreme poverty. Please visit www.results.org.uk for more information about our work, and contact Laura Boughey, Parliamentary Advocacy Co-ordinator on laura.boughey@results.org.uk to express your interest in this delegation.