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- Community child health, public health and epidemiology
- **Personal practice**

## Developing sustainable international partnerships in child health and paediatric care

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1. *International Task Force on Children Affected by War and Absolute Poverty of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH), UK*

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One of the UK government's policy initiatives when taking office in 1997 concerned international development. This highlighted an intention to expand partnerships between institutions in the UK and poorer countries; specifically "to work closely with other donors and development agencies to build partnerships with developing countries".<sup>1</sup> The prime policy goal was to eliminate poverty and encourage economic growth that benefits the poor. Since children are a group most vulnerable to poverty, a specific intention was to support international efforts to "enhance children's well-being including through the provision of effective and sustainable health services".<sup>1</sup> This approach now features in documents from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) with all four of its International Development Targets relating to child and maternal health (table1).<sup>2</sup>

### Table 1

International development targets<sup>2</sup>

UK institutions have already established linkages or partnerships centring on child health or paediatric care with counterparts in developing or resource poor countries. These involve National Health Service institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and academic units; a selection is listed in table 2. In order to encourage the development of further partnerships, this article, from the RCPCH's International Task Force on Children Affected by War and Absolute Poverty, describes some linkages to show what is possible.

### Table 2

A selection of current child health and paediatric partnerships between the UK and developing/resource poor countries<sup>2-150</sup>

The joint activities undertaken are many and various and include service work, research, teaching, exchanges of staff, training, and support during and after humanitarian emergencies relief. The scale and funding of the activities vary greatly but a consistent feature is that developed from initial contact between individuals. This distinguishes the UK relationships from those of some other industrialised countries where the relationships are stimulated and supported by bilateral strategic relationships.

We describe three examples of a small ...