

**DON'T SET A NEW
DEBT TRAP:**



Election 2015 Action Guide



The General Election period is a vital time to raise awareness about the threat of a new debt trap. Here are five actions you can take.

1. ASK A QUESTION AT HUSTINGS

During the election campaign your candidates will attend events in your local area known as 'hustings' where they

answer questions from the public. This is a great opportunity to ask a question about the campaign. You can find hustings events in your local paper, by searching online or by contacting the candidates' campaign offices themselves. Churches Together in Britain and Ireland have a website where you can find hustings organised by churches in your constituency (the events should be open to people of all religions and none):

<https://ctbielections.org.uk/view-hustings/>

SUGGESTED QUESTION:

New lending to the most impoverished countries has tripled since the financial crisis, and 15% of the UK aid budget is now given as loans, not grants. What action will you take to stop a new debt trap being set in the global South?

If you do manage to ask your candidates a question, whether through a hustings, or meeting them on your doorstep or in the street, please email campaigns@jubileedebt.org.uk to let us know the answers you received.

2. LOBBY YOUR CANDIDATES

To go a step further, especially with the leading candidates in your constituency, request a meeting to ask them to support the campaign. Here's some steps to take:

- Find out who the candidates are in your local area. You can do this by looking on the websites of the main political parties, conducting a quick web search or by calling us at our office and we can help you.
- Get in touch to ask for a meeting, or for an event you can attend when you can discuss the campaign.
- Before you meet them, re-read the Action Guide to remind yourself of what we're calling for. Your candidate won't be an expert on debt, even if they are practised at sounding like one, so have confidence in your arguments!
- Ask the candidate to write to their party's international development spokesperson asking the party to support the campaign. Give them a copy of our Briefing for Candidates (enclosed or download at: www.jubileedebt.org.uk/debttrapbriefing).

3. WRITE TO YOUR LOCAL PAPER

Writing to your local paper is another crucial way to raise awareness, attract attention and spark discussion. You can use the template letter below but be sure to personalise it.

Dear Madam/Sir,

We all know that this election is the most competitive for a generation, and the question of how to most effectively manage the government's debt is paramount. One thing that is not often mentioned is

the way Britain contributes to other countries' debts. Since the financial crisis, the amount of loans made to developing countries has tripled, and there have been warnings by the Jubilee Debt Campaign that a new debt trap is being laid for some of the world's most impoverished countries. Being strong on the economy means showing leadership at home and overseas – I hope all candidates will pledge support for aid to be given as grants not loans, tax justice to end debt dependency, and fair rules for resolving debt crises.

Have a look to see if your letter gets printed – and email us at campaigns@jubileedebt.org.uk if it does.

4. WRITE TO YOUR NEW MP

Once the election campaign is over, please send your new MP a copy of our Don't Set a New Debt Trap MP briefing, and ask them to raise the issue with the new International Development Secretary. A suggested text will be on our website at: www.jubileedebt.org.uk/newMPaction

5. ORDER MATERIALS

To order more copies of any of the materials for the campaign, phone the office on 020 7324 4722 or email campaigns@jubileedebt.org.uk