

[PRESS RELEASE - JUNE 11, 2025]

Poll Reveals Young People Want Action for Women and Girls Abroad, But the Government Spending Review Delivers Silence

Following the UK Government's Comprehensive Spending Review, new polling reveals a sharp generational and gender backlash against the deprioritisation of women and girls in Britain's international development agenda.

Commissioned by [Restless Development](#) as part of the [Walking the Talk UK](#) campaign and conducted by More in Common, the poll surveyed a representative sample of 1,105 young Britons aged 18–25. It found that:

- **62% of young women** say the Prime Minister is not doing enough to stand up for gender equality on the world stage
- **63% of all young people** say supporting women and girls should be a top priority for the UK's aid budget
- **Only 23%** support the Government's cuts to international aid
- **Maternal health, reproductive rights, and ending gender-based violence** were among the top spending priorities for young women

"The spending review is a direct challenge to the values of young people. The chancellor has not only sidelined international development, but has also ignored those most affected by cuts to aid, women and girls. "

— Alex Kent, Co-CEO of Restless Development

The Chancellor's failure to mention international development or gender equality in her [Comprehensive](#) Spending Review speech is a stark indication that this government's priorities are out of step with young voters. The poll reflects a generation that cares about global issues as much as domestic ones. A generation that rejects aid cuts. A generation calling for a UK foreign policy grounded in gender equality, peace, and climate action.

"The only time overseas aid budgets were mentioned in the chancellor's speech was to reference the cuts that continue to happen to aid to support other priorities. This polling shows that young people do not buy into these other priorities" Emily McChrystal, Project Officer, Walking the Talk UK.

At a time of worsening global crises and persistent gender inequality, this polling makes one thing clear: young people are paying attention, and they expect more from their leaders.

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Walking the Talk is led by a consortium of feminist organizations: Hivos (Netherlands), Equipop (France), Restless Development (UK), and ODI Europe. We advocate for feminist foreign policies and gender equality measures in Europe, that center the voices of women and LGBTIQ+ communities from the Majority World. We call for a significant increase in public development aid dedicated to gender equality and women's rights.