

A woman with short braided hair, wearing a patterned top and a green sash, stands in a field of corn husks. She is holding a cob of corn in her hands. The background is filled with green foliage and yellow flowers.

CAREERS
GUIDE

Introduction

Working to better the lives of people facing poverty and disaster can be an extremely rewarding career. Whether your interest is in supporting the long-term sustainable development of vulnerable communities, or providing essential support in response to humanitarian emergencies, there is a need for dedicated, skilled people to work in the international development and humanitarian response sectors.

Each sector is different, and within each sector there are a variety of different types of organisations, with different ways of operating. Such organisations range from international and local non-government organisations – such as WaterAid, Save the Children and the Lebanese Red Cross – to multi-lateral agents like UNHCR, government departments and private consultancy firms.

In addition, there are other sectors which often overlap with the work being undertaken in the fields of international development and humanitarian response. Such sectors include the conservation sector, which might sometimes engage in supporting the sustainable development of communities in ecologically important areas, and the human rights sector.

This Career's Guide is designed to provide a brief introduction to the international development and humanitarian response sectors, offering an overview of the different roles available, as well as guidance as to how to gain the skills and experience required to pursue a successful career in these highly competitive sectors. In addition, please see www.joa.je for details of JOA opportunities.

Front Cover: "Collecting milk from a goat, South Omo, Ethiopia" (*Farm Africa, Esther Ruth Mbabzi*)

Acronyms

CSO	Civil society organisation
EU	European Union
FCDO	UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INGO	International non-government organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
JOA	Jersey Overseas Aid
NGO	Non-government organisation
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

The Sectors

International Development

Although aid and philanthropy have a long history, the modern international development sector emerged in the mid-20th century when, in response to the devastating effects of World War II, the European Recovery Programme (otherwise known as the Marshall Plan) was launched. In 1960, the Development Assistance Committee was established and, throughout the 1960s, many Governments in Europe launched their own development aid programmes with the objective of alleviating poverty overseas.

Over the years, different theories of development have arisen, influencing different approaches to aid. Types of aid can include bilateral aid, multilateral aid, private and NGO aid. Some donor Governments and private foundations are predominantly grant making, whilst other Governments and foundations have teams of staff engaged in the direct implementation of programmes intended to better the lives of communities living in poverty.

Types of international development programmes vary greatly and can include supporting the capacity of national healthcare systems, enabling subsistence farmers to adopt sustainable, diverse, farming practices, or engaging with the private sector to ensure the availability of financial services for low income households.



Bilateral Aid: Where funds are transferred from a donor Government to the recipient country's Government.

Multilateral Aid: Where donor Governments provide international organisations, like the World Bank or European Commission, with funds which are then distributed according to the organisations' strategies.

Private Aid: Where wealthy individuals or corporations establish foundations to fund development, often by providing grants to NGOs and civil society organisations.

NGO Aid: Non-Government organisations are charities that often receive donations from the general public, although they often also apply for grants from Governments, multilateral organisations and private foundations.

Farming in the Bale Region
(Farm Africa, Lisa Murray)

Humanitarian Response

Whilst forms of emergency-related aid have existed for centuries, the era of organised humanitarian response is often seen to have begun in the mid 19th century with the creation international aid organisations such as the Red Cross Movement, in 1863, following the Battle of Solferino. In the case of the Red Cross Movement, the movement was established by Henry Dunant after he witnessed thousands of men laid dying on the battlefield due to a lack of medical attention and sought to promote the formation of neutral relief societies who could provide care during battle.

By the late 19th century and early 20th century, there was a rise in international responses to disasters, as well as medical collaboration. In 1945, the UN was formed to promote peace, security and friendship between countries, establishing – for the first time – a precedent for international intervention during both civil and international conflict.

Since then, thousands of organisations have engaged in responding to humanitarian crises following natural hazards and armed conflict.



Disinfecting an ambulance near Katwa Ebola treatment Unit, North Kivu, DRC
(UN, Martine Perret)

Sector Developments

The international development and humanitarian sectors have progressed greatly since the mid-20th century. Although initially international development aid was often used as an extension of foreign policy, there has been a growing move in many countries to ensure that aid is not tied to political objectives and is effective, with an increased emphasis on collaboration, monitoring and impact.

During the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, tens of states and organisations signed the 'Grand Bargain', a pledge to provide better quality aid that reaches those in need, with what they need, in the most effective and efficient way. In addition, efforts have been made to move the sectors away from historic structures that maintain power in the Global North, instead encouraging organisations to increasingly invest in national staff, who are often best placed due to their skills and local knowledge.

Potential Roles

Organisations within the humanitarian response and international development sectors demand a wide range of skills and expertise in order to effectively implement their programmes. From nursing roles in Afghanistan to security analysts in the Democratic Republic of Congo, there are a range of opportunities available, each of which require different experiences and qualifications.

The following roles are just a few examples of key positions available in organisations within the sector and areas of expertise which applicants are often deemed 'essential' or 'desirable' for the role.

Programme & Project Management / Coordination

Programme Officers responsible for thematic programmes, such as a sustainable agriculture programme or girls rights programme, might be involved in supporting the operations of multiple projects within the programme, including budgeting, monitoring and reporting.

Project Officers and Project Co-ordinators often adopt a similar role in relation to specific projects. Responsibilities can include organising contractors and implementers, budgeting, monitoring and reporting, as well as co-ordinating with staff across the organisation, such as Donor Relations Officers, M&E Officers, Logistics Officers and Communications Officers.

Employers often value experience in budgeting and project management. It may also be beneficial to have NGO-specific experience in project implementation, due to the unique challenges involved.

Fundraising

In larger organisations, there is often a fundraising team engaging in a range of tasks including proposal development, donor relations and fundraising campaigns. It is usual for an international organisation to have a fundraising team based at their Headquarters so there are usually plenty of fundraising positions available in Europe. Areas of fundraising include:

- institutional fundraising, which might involve developing relations with, and researching the change ambitions of, donors such as the EU, SIDA, the FCDO and USAID;
- private fundraising, which often focuses on relationships with trusts and foundations;
- public fundraising, which could involve working on larger, public campaigns including UK Aid Match campaigns.

Employers often look for NGO experience and fundraising experience.

Advocacy & Communications

These roles can vary greatly. In some you will be expected to support fundraising and awareness-raising campaigns in Britain or Europe, in other roles the advocacy and communications work relates to developing and supporting campaigns in the project region, such as campaigns relating to the danger of landmines or human rights campaigns. Responsibilities may include:

- developing communication plans and social media strategies;
- drafting and editing communications material, such as press releases;
- content collection, which may involve field trips to conduct interviews.

Employers often look for a background in journalism or publications, or experience with communications software. For human rights projects, a background in law is also desirable.

Logistics & Procurement

Whether an organisation is engaged with humanitarian response, or implements infrastructure-related projects such as renewable energy schemes, a strong logistics and procurements team is essential.

Responsibilities may include:

- managing and monitoring supply chains;
- receiving and analysing procurement bids;
- managing finances;
- identifying gaps in supply chains and analysing local context.

Employers often value experience in finances or budgeting, security, project management and co-ordination.

Donor Relations & Grants Management

It is increasingly important to donors that funds are spent in the most appropriate manner. To ensure this, grants are often governed by a grant agreement, which determines how funds can be used and when monitoring and reporting is required.

Opportunities to work in Grant Management exist in many organisations, both donor and grantees. Roles in NGOs often involve liaising with project officers, contributing to project reports and, at times, seeking out new funding opportunities.

Roles in donor officers potentially involve reviewing project reports, considering requests for project variations, and conducting project visits. Employers often value project experience and familiarity with a variety of bodies and organisations (such as the UN, EU and foundations). The ability to communicate efficiently is also often valued.

Specialist Advisory Roles

Specialist advisors are often key to the functioning of larger organisations. They can contribute to a range of technical and strategic areas, including strategic planning, policy work, and project design.

Specialist advisors are often experts, or junior experts, in a specific field, such as renewable energy, public health, market systems or gender. Often, the role of specialist advisor is one individuals progress into as it requires a level of existing experience in the sector.

Employers often value a relevant academic specialisation, as well as experience in project design, project implementation, introducing operational and strategic change, and management.

Legal Support & Policy

Legal qualifications and policy writing expertise are valuable in many organisations. Larger organisations may have a separate legal team, responsible for reviewing documents such as contracts and grant agreements, whilst organisations looking to influence systems are likely to have policy officers responsible for strategizing change.

In addition, projects with a human rights advocacy angle might require the expertise of a legal officer to provide support and engage with international or regional human rights mechanisms. Alternatively, the UNHCR engage legal officers to process asylum applications, whilst IOM and ILO engage legal and policy officers in relation to issues of migration and labour rights.

Employers often look for relevant legal experience, or experience engaging with government officials and working on governance frameworks.

Administration/Finance

A good administration and finance team is essential to the healthy functioning of an organisation. Roles can include that of Payroll Officer, Auditor, Finance Specialist, and Administrative Assistance.

Experience in admin and finance is usually required, with many roles demanding a finance-related degree.

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Technology

Most organisations employ IT specialists in relation to their day-to-day IT requirements. In addition, there are other opportunities for technology specialists.

Potential roles include Software Developer, Website Design and Developer, Dashboard Designer, and App Developer.

Building Skills

Choosing a Degree

So, you've decided that you want to work in the international development, or humanitarian response sectors. Now you need to ensure that you have the academic qualifications to pursue the career you want.

In the first instance, it is important to have an idea of what type of work you are interested in undertaking. If you are interested in working overseas, it is important to be aware that, in many instances, employers will see the employment of talented locals as the best investment in that country's future.

International roles are increasingly reserved for professionals who can bring specific skills that are difficult to find in the local market, or instances where conflict or corruption mean that it is considered appropriate that the role is held by a qualified non-national. Alternatively, many INGOs, multilateral organisations, foundations and Governments have offices based in Europe, North America and Australasia.

A quick search of job sites (such as ReliefWeb, Devex and BOND) will give you a sense of the roles available and the specific skills required. Degrees involving data analysis are often sought after for monitoring and evaluation roles, whilst degrees such as agriculture, engineering, economics, law, finance, media, and public health are also desirable, depending on the role.

A variety of organisations and trusts offer bursaries to Jersey students for studies relating to agriculture, law, economics and science.

Resource Suggestions

- [Coursera](#)
- [FutureLearn](#)
- [DisasterReady](#)
- [Humanetum](#)
- [Humanitarian Leadership Academy](#)
- [World Bank Academy](#)
- [EdX](#)



Inclusive WASH for schoolchildren, Sierra Leone
(Able Child Africa, Chris Parkes)

Specialisation

In recent years, there has been a growing trend toward seeking employees who have a relevant Master's Degree, as well as the necessary experience. For example, it is not uncommon for a logistics role to require a Master's Degree in a relevant field, such as Supply Chain Management, Business Management, or Commerce.

Work experience and volunteer roles with established organisations will help provide a sense of the opportunities available and may help inform your specialism. In addition, such opportunities could provide valuable connections for any research projects you undertake as a part of your degree, as well as for future employment.

The Government of Jersey offers prospective students the opportunity to apply for a Jersey Bursary for Postgraduate Studies.

Additional Resources

There are a wide range of online resources to help build your knowledge and understanding, some of which can be accessed for free. Resources range from topic overviews, such as 'Gender and Development' to specific skills support, such as project management courses or 'An Introduction to Monitoring and Evaluation'.

Languages

Top Tip

When considering where you want to pursue a Master's Degree, take into consideration the opportunities available for gaining practical experience during your course through an internship or volunteer role.

International cities such as London, Geneva, Brussels, Washington, and New York are often hubs for INGOs and multilateral organisations.

Communication is a key skill required by many employers, regardless of sector. With many organisations running projects in locations around the world, the ability to work in a second or third language is increasingly required to ensure that staff are in a position to communicate with colleagues, partners and beneficiaries. Working knowledge of at least two official UN languages (English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian, and Mandarin) is particularly valuable for many international organisations.

When determining your language skills, it is standard practice to use the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Working knowledge of a language is considered to be the ability to communicate at C1 or C2 level, according to the CEFR Global Scale, and it is possible to take free online placement tests for popular languages such as French and Spanish.

If you are looking to improve your language skills, it is worth taking into consideration what work experience, volunteer opportunities, and intensive language courses are available overseas for a more immersive experience. Alternatively, check out locally available language courses, such as those offered by Alliance Française (Jersey) or Highlands College.

Work Experience

Organisations in the sectors are always on the lookout for passionate people to work towards their cause. That means you'll often need to demonstrate a clear dedication to the not-for-profit world, although this is not so important for career-changers who are able to bring professional experience to the role, such as accountants, environmental scientists and engineers.

A great way to do this is through internships and volunteering, which can be a useful addition to your CV and can provide you with a valuable insight into the sectors. In addition, such roles provide networking opportunities and allow you to develop contacts in the sector.

There are several types of organisations you might consider when looking for work experience, including CSOs; NGOs; Government overseas aid departments; United Nations organisations; Universities and academic research bodies; Think tanks and Private consultancy firms.

Internships

A range of organisations, including INGOs and multilateral organisations, offer internships for individuals interested in a career in international development. These opportunities are often highly competitive and can require an element of existing experience.

Unfortunately, not all internships are paid or include a stipend. However, some institutions – including foundations and academic bodies – offer grants to help interns cover the costs involved in undertaking an internship. Internship opportunities are often advertised on international development job sites (such as ReliefWeb).

In addition, the UN advertise a variety of internship opportunities on their careers page, which are unpaid and are limited to applicants who have recently undertaken a Masters degree or PhD.

Jersey Overseas Aid Internship

In partnership with selected international charities, JOA offers an internship programme to Jersey residents.

This one-year, fully-paid position is intended to give someone the opportunity to launch a career in international development.

Through stints in JOA and the UK office of an INGO, culminating in a six-month field placement, the goal is to equip the successful candidate with the skills and experience necessary to enable them to take frontline roles with international relief and development organisations.

More information – including previous interns' blogs – can be found on our website.

Volunteering

Volunteering for a charity abroad is one of the most rewarding things one can do – not to mention one of the best ways to really get to know another country.

A variety of CSOs and NGOs offer volunteer opportunities, from assisting with the refugee response in Greece to teaching English in Nicaragua. Several Jersey charities also run overseas aid trips for volunteers. A list of local charities can be found on the Jersey Charity Commissioner website.

In addition, there are several established volunteer programmes, requiring differing levels of existing experience, some of which are listed in this Guide.

Local Funding Opportunities

Jersey Overseas Aid Bursary: JOA provides grants of £500 for Jersey residents to volunteer abroad. Whether it's part of a bigger trip or a dedicated mercy mission, a working holiday or a taster of a new career, you may be eligible to apply.

You'll need to be working with a recognised organisation for a minimum of two weeks, and doing something that demonstrably helps those less fortunate than ourselves. Teaching and conservation work count too! Applicants must be over 18 years old and be a Jersey resident. See our website for further information.

The Rotary Club Bursary Award: The Rotary Club de la Manche provides annual bursaries up to £1,000, to assist a young person or persons who are unable to afford the necessary funds, due to personal or family circumstances, to take part in an overseas community work project supported by the Jersey Overseas Aid Commission.

Applicants must demonstrate interest in the cultural issues they will face and enthusiasm for the work they will undertake. To be eligible, applicants must be between 18 and 25 years old and a Jersey resident. See our website for further information

Every year, Jersey Overseas Aid organises CWPs for local volunteers, aged 18+, in collaboration with its partner charities.

Projects are typically one, two or three weeks, and made up of between 8 and 12 individuals led by an experienced leader. Each participant contributes a modest amount towards their own travel expenses and JOA funds the additional costs of travel, plus insurance, medical kits, vaccinations, food and accommodation.

Recent CWPs have included trips to Lebanon, Tanzania and Kenya.



Constructing toilets in Tanzania
(Jersey Overseas Aid)

EU Aid Volunteers

The EU Aid Volunteers Initiative brings volunteers and organisations together from different countries, to provide practical support to humanitarian aid projects and contributing to strengthening local capacity and resilience of disaster-affected communities.

You must be over 18 years of age and be a citizen of an EU Member State or a long-term resident in the EU.

Volunteers receive accommodation and travel expenses, insurance, ongoing learning and development, a monthly allowance, and a resettlement allowance to help with expenses of returning home.

Placements are usually between 6 and 12 months.

UN Volunteers

The UN Volunteer Portal advertises volunteer opportunities both online and overseas. Applicants must be over 25, hold either a degree or higher diploma, and have at least two years relevant work experience.

Volunteers will be expected to fulfil a professional role and will be responsible for promoting peace and development in communities around the globe.

Successful candidates will receive travel expenses, insurance, access to learning resources, a monthly allowance, and a resettlement allowance to help with expenses of returning home.

Placements are usually between 6 and 12 months.

Raleigh International

Raleigh International is a sustainable development organisation offering volunteer placements for young people (aged 17-24) in Nepal, Costa Rica and Tanzania. The placements incorporate 3 different types of project: Community, Environmental and Adventure and their length varies from 4-5 weeks, to 10 week projects.

Depending on the length of your expedition, costs range from £2,250 to £3,800, but there is fundraising support available from Raleigh International and the Raleigh Bursary Fund.

International Citizenship Service (ICS)

International Citizen Service is a global volunteering programme funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). The programme is aimed at young people (18-25 year olds), although individuals aged 23 – 35 are eligible to apply as Team Leaders. ICS sees volunteers from the UK working alongside volunteers from the developing world.

Placements last from 10-12 weeks and are organised in partnership with one of ICS' partner charities. If accepted onto the programme you must fundraise at least £800. However participants are provided with information and resources to support their fundraising.

Stay Informed

To pursue a career in the international development or humanitarian sectors, it is vital that you stay informed with regard to current affairs and key sector updates.

In the first instance, regularly reading international news can help you stay informed, with outlets such as 'The Economist', 'BBC News' and 'Al Jazeera' providing global coverage of a variety of issues.

Subscribing for updates with Development Aid, BOND and ReliefWeb can also ensure that you are up-to-date with the latest developments. Likewise, podcasts such as 'Global Development', 'How Aid Works' and 'Bondcast' cover a broad range of topics and can be an informative way of developing your knowledge of the sectors.

In addition, many organisations host events and webinars to bring together experts and discuss specific issues, such as "Food Security and Livelihoods in Gaza" or "The story of micro-grids and a historical perspective".

If you would like to know more, please feel free to contact the JOA team at enquiries@joa.je as we would be delighted to discuss possible career paths.



Jersey International Development Network (JIDN)

JIDN is a forum that gives Islanders regular opportunities to learn more about how overseas aid works and how Jersey is making a difference on the international stage.

It's also a chance to join the dots of our philanthropic island, bringing together interested actors from charities, finance, government, philanthropy and the private sector.



Children fetch water from new water point, Ethiopia
(Plan International)