

# Employee benefits: England, Scotland and Wales





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Agnes Machona grows ripe red peppers with her friends in a community garden in Zimbabwe.

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Front cover: Kasthuri Neru was excluded from her community in India. She and her son Mathi take shelter at our EcoVeg farm project, and she hopes one day to send him to school.

# Introduction

At Christian Aid we seek to recognise and acknowledge the value and hard work each of our employees provide. As well as our support, we strive to provide a working environment where employees can look after their health and wellbeing.

As an employer, we show our appreciation through rewarding our employees for their loyalty and experience. Our comprehensive guide details all of our benefits to help you understand what options are available to you from your first day of employment and beyond.



**Jessica Mwedzi and her children walk home from their farm in Zimbabwe.**



**Women work together to clear the community earth dam in Kitui county, Kenya. This dam is a lifeline for the whole community, helping to preserve water in times of drought.**

In Kenya, Faith Muvili is full of hope. She says: 'The sand dam has made me and my family feel happy. Now we can plant veg and water our trees.'



## Time away from work

### 1 Annual leave

Christian Aid's annual leave year runs from 1 January to 31 December.

Annual leave entitlement is based on an employee's length of continuous service with Christian Aid, which is:

- **On appointment up to 1 year: 25 days pro-rata**
- **1 year but less than 5 years: 25 days**
- **5 years but less than 10 years: 28 days**
- **10 years or more: 31 days**

In addition to this, employees also receive public holidays as time away from work.

### 2 Flexi leave

Christian Aid makes use of a flexitime system with the aim of demonstrating to employees an element of trust while providing flexibility.

In line with this, Christian Aid offers a flexi leave scheme to all levels of staff, which allows employees to reclaim time worked in excess of their contracted hours up to a maximum of 2 days per month, and 12 days each calendar year (subject to line management approval).

Time worked is recorded using the online timesheets and time off requested via Dayforce.

### 3 Time off payroll and career break

Christian Aid has a policy which enables staff to take time off the payroll as unpaid leave, up to a maximum of 12 weeks (subject to management approval and adequate notice).

After 2 years' service, employees are able to request a longer period of time away from work (3 months to a maximum of 12 months) which is termed a 'career break'.

The time off can be used to study, pursue personal development, spend time with family or dependants, carry out voluntary or paid work or perhaps travel abroad.

## 4 Maternity and adoption leave

All eligible staff are entitled to take **up to a maximum of 52 weeks maternity/adoption leave**, combining both paid and unpaid maternity/adoption leave, regardless of the number of hours they work or their length of service.

Christian Aid currently pays 16 weeks at 100% and 18 weeks at 50%.

As part of our commitment to flexible working, we have also introduced the ability to flex maternity payments over the year which enables the parent to manage their monthly payments to suit their individual circumstances.

## 5 Paternity leave

An employee whose wife, civil partner or partner gives birth to a child, or who is the biological father of the child, is **entitled to 2 weeks' ordinary paternity leave**, provided that s/he has 26 weeks' continuous service by the end of the 15th week before the week in which the child is expected.

Ordinary paternity leave is also available to adoptive parents where a child is matched or newly placed with them for adoption. Either the adoptive father or the adoptive mother may take ordinary paternity leave where the other adoptive parent has elected to take adoption leave.

## 6 Shared parental leave

Christian Aid offers the same as maternity leave, minus the first 2 weeks which must be taken by the mother as maternity leave.

Shared parental leave enables mothers to commit to ending their maternity/adoption leave and pay at a future date, and to share the untaken balance of leave and pay as shared parental leave and pay with their partner, or to return to work early from maternity/adoption leave and opt in to shared parental leave and pay at a later date.



Johaira Herrera holds her newborn baby son in Santa Rosa, Nicaragua. Johaira and her mother are part of a strong community who work together to strengthen their cocoa and coffee crops so they can stand strong against the climate crisis.

## 7 Time off in lieu (TOIL)

TOIL may be granted to compensate for hours worked over and above contractual working hours (which do not fall under flexi leave) and may be awarded for various reasons.

TOIL can only be accrued with the prior permission of the line manager and is used to cope with surges in work (eg, around Christian Aid Week).

It is managed under the flexitime scheme and limited to a maximum of **12 days in any one calendar year**.

## 8 Rest and recuperation (R&R)

R&R is a special type of paid leave for employees who live and work in high risk or stressful work environments.

The aim of R&R is to allow employees who are relocated from their home base without their family (unaccompanied), to a location where work, living conditions, risk and hardship factors have been assessed as exceptional, and/or where they are required to work excessive hours during humanitarian responses, to take a short break away from their working base.

The duration of R&R is dependent on the overseas work location and duration of deployment.

## 9 Compassionate leave

The primary purpose of compassionate leave is to help employees to come to terms with the death of a loved one, a serious illness or injury involving a loved one, or serious personal relationship problems.

Christian Aid offers:

- **up to 10 days paid leave (pro-rated for part time employees) for instances of bereavement**
- **and a maximum of 5 days' compassionate leave for a one-off incident.**



Thanks to the ARUN SKA programme in India and her new livelihood, Ranjita has hope of a brighter future for her family:

'When I think of my daughter being able to go to school now, my heart gets so filled with happiness.'

## 10 Parental leave

An employee is entitled to **up to 18 weeks' parental leave (2 paid weeks and 16 unpaid weeks)** throughout the duration of their employment at Christian Aid, per child, if s/he is the birth or adoptive parent of a child who is under 18 years of age.

To qualify for ordinary parental leave, employees must have completed at least 1 year's continuous service with Christian Aid.

## 11 Dependant's leave

Employees have the right to take reasonable time off work to deal with an emergency involving a dependant, and not to be dismissed or victimised for doing so. It may also be given in circumstances where a member of staff is responsible for caring for a dependant on a short-term basis.

**Christian Aid offer employees the right to request up to 3 days of paid time off in a 12 month rolling period for situations relating to a dependant.**

Individual employees will also have the right to request additional elements of unpaid leave should it be needed.

## 12 Study leave

All employees who have worked continuously with Christian Aid for 26 weeks or more have a legal right under UK legislation to make a request in relation to study or training.

Employees may submit a request in relation to any type of study or training, provided that they can reasonably demonstrate that the study or training is likely to lead to an improvement in their effectiveness at work, and consequently an improvement in the performance of Christian Aid.

**Christian Aid offers up to 5 days paid study leave in a 12 month rolling period.**



Janet Zirugo embraces her great grandson, Mufaro. Janet and her family are receiving support from the ZRBF-BRACT Programme to build their resilience to the climate crisis.

**Kakoli Aulia has received training for crab farming in Bangladesh. She runs the farm herself with support from her husband.**

**'I feel really proud. As a woman, I am earning. As a mother, I can provide for my child.'**



## Health

### 1 Enhanced sick pay

Christian Aid operates a contractual sick pay scheme that is more generous than Statutory Sick Pay (SSP).

During sickness absence employees will, in any 12-month rolling period, receive the following allowance:

- **0–6 months service: 5 full, 5 half days**
- **7 months – 3 years' service: 35 full, 40 half days**
- **4–7 years' service: 55 full, 40 half days**
- **7 years + service: 99 full, 65 half days**

### 2 Income protection

Christian Aid has arranged an Income Protection Insurance scheme with the intention to provide employees with an income in the event they are unable to work for 26 weeks or more.

The policy provides 50% of an employee's actual basic annual salary prior to the date they were first absent from work.

All benefit payments will be subject to employees satisfying the requirements of our insurer, Unum Limited.

## 3 Life assurance

Christian Aid has arranged the Christian Aid (UK) Lump Sum Life Assurance Plan with the intention to provide a lump sum payment in the event of the death of an employee with a UK contract of employment.

### **The benefit insured is a lump sum of 4 times your actual basic annual salary at your date of death.**

You are eligible for cover under the Plan on commencement of your employment with Christian Aid under a UK contract of employment and aged at least 16 but less than 70 years.

## 4 Eye tests

Christian Aid will pay for you to have an eye test if you habitually use display screen equipment.

We will pay for a further eye test every three years. If, within that period, a health condition arises which necessitates an earlier re-examination, this will be looked at on a case-by-case basis.

Christian Aid will pay for:

- **Eye test up to £25**
- **£75 maximum towards the cost of glasses prescribed for VDU**



**Johaira Herrera with her mother Angela Zelaya and her little sister Ariana Blandon. The family live in Santa Rosa, Nicaragua, and planted 700 cocoa plants to help diversify from growing coffee.**



## Wellbeing support

### 1 Holiday purchase

Christian Aid grants all full time employees **25 days' paid holiday entitlement each year**, rising to 28 days after 5 years' service and 31 days after 10 years' service (pro-rata for part time staff).

It is recognised, however, that some employees may wish to take longer periods of holidays and for this reason Christian Aid operates a scheme which allows employees to 'buy' a maximum of 1 week's holiday (pro-rata for part time) annually.

### 2 Debriefing after travel

This is a medical benefit which is offered to all staff that have been travelling and working in difficult circumstances.

### 3 Flexible working

Christian Aid recognises the positive impact of flexible working arrangements. **We have adopted a hybrid working approach** which provides office-based employees the opportunity to work from home on some days each week.

Our provision for flexible working arrangements aims to facilitate, but is not limited to, childcare and caring responsibilities, flexible retirement and voluntary activities. Employees are able to request other flexible working arrangements such as home working, condensed hours, part-time working and job shares.

All requests for flexible working will be assessed on their own merits, and based on a case by case basis of both the business and the employee.

## 4 Mental health first aiders

There are plenty of different types of support out there, and a Mental Health First Aider (MHFA) can help you access them.

MHFAs are a point of contact if you, or someone you are concerned about, are experiencing a mental health issue or emotional distress. They are not therapists or psychiatrists but they can give you initial support and signpost you to appropriate help if required.

Since 2019, we started training members of our staff to become MHFAs. We now have a number of MHFA based in the UK, Ireland, Asia and the Middle East and Africa.

## 5 Employee assistance provider

Life presents many challenges which often impact upon an individual's ability to lead a balanced and productive life, both at their home and workplace. The Employee Assistance Project (EAP) is designed to help the individual acquire the skills to deal with such problems.

The Unum EAP (UK) service offers Christian Aid employees confidential independent help, information, and guidance. It is accessed by telephone and is totally confidential. **The helpline is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.**





## Financial

### 1 Pension

Christian Aid operates a salary sacrifice scheme through Aviva. Christian Aid will pay up to **a maximum of 10% of your monthly salary.**

Janet Ben, Ida Lazalo and Eddina Yonasi hold a basket of baobab fruit. They are members of Makande Women's Group that makes baobab juice, supported by Christian Aid and our local partner.

### 2 Cost of living

Christian Aid commits to an annual pay review which is negotiated with the recognised trade union, Unite.

### 3 Equal pay audits

Christian Aid is committed to parity of pay and operates an annual pay audit to benchmark the salaries of all staff and address any inconsistencies.

## 4 Season ticket loan

An interest-free loan is available from the start date of employment with Christian Aid to purchase an annual season ticket for travel between home and work.

## 5 Bike loan

An interest-free loan (repayable over 12 months) is available in order to purchase a bicycle for travel between home and office.

Christian Aid also operates a bicycle leasing scheme.

## 6 Give as you earn

Christian Aid partners with the Charities Aid Foundation to allow you to make donations to named charities, by automatic deductions from salary. Payments up to a certain amount are tax free.

As Christian Aid is a charity, Charities Aid Foundation processes all donations free of charge.



Imote loryue lost both of his parents at a young age and was left to care for his nine siblings in Nigeria. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, Imote was unable to sell the produce from his farm, leaving him unable to buy food or basic household supplies.

With funding from UK Aid, Imote received cash support so he can continue to support his young family.

Janet Zirugo displays the variety of grains that she cultivates on her farm in Njani village, Zimbabwe.

## Professional support

### 1 Learning and development

Christian Aid's Global Talent and Learning team offers a comprehensive range of training and development support for staff at all stages of their careers, including external and in-house courses and coaching.

### 2 Professional subscriptions

Christian Aid pays for employee's professional subscriptions when this is needed to carry out their role, after 2 years of service.

### 3 Scholarships

Christian Aid offers a Scholarship Fund which has been put in place as part of our desire to support staff in their professional and personal development with the aim of providing staff with the opportunity to apply for a level of financial support to aid them in their professional development.





## About us

**We are a global movement of people, churches and local organisations.**

**We are the changemakers, the peacemakers, the mighty of heart.**

**Mark Daga, from Christian Aid Nigeria, at a hygiene kit distribution funded by Christian Aid's Covid appeal in Adagi community, Nigeria, November 2020.**

Everyone is equal in the sight of God. For over 75 years, this truth has inspired us to stand together in solidarity with our most marginalised global neighbours, of all faiths and none.

Poverty is an outrage against humanity. It robs people of their dignity and lets injustice thrive.

We seek to eradicate extreme poverty by tackling its root causes. Together with people living in poverty, we amplify our voices to speak truth to power and create lasting change.

## Get in touch

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