



The Four Corners

The quarterly Alumni Association newsletter

Issue 40:

June 2017

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EDITORIAL

Message from the chairman



Welcome to the Summer edition of The Four Corners.

It is 10 years since the idea of creating a DFID alumni association was first mooted. It was seen as a way of keeping past and current DFID staff in touch with each other and of facilitating an exchange of information about progress in international development.

It received active encouragement from the Secretary of State, Permanent Secretary and DFID Management Board who saw the value of strengthened links with its former employees and of tapping into their extensive experience and knowledge.

Where are we today against these objectives, set out in our Constitution? We discussed this at the AGM on 19 June. As you will see from the minutes that have been circulated, there was a sense that we need to reinvigorate the relationship with DFID and to demonstrate the mutual benefits of the Association for DFID and alumni.

We also discussed how we could strengthen the networking opportunities for alumni and to reach out to the wider range of interests of members across the world, not only those in the UK and those able to benefit from London-based events.

The newly elected committee is keen to have your ideas on how respond to these concerns. Let us know what more you would like the Association to do.

In the meantime we have a full agenda for the autumn. I hope in particular that we have a good turnout for the October discussion on working with NGOs; we hope for a lively exchange of experience and ideas with past and current staff.

I hope you enjoy this latest edition and that we have volunteers to help Marc in future. Please let him know of your interest.

We welcome your feedback on this newsletter and look forward to your ideas and contributions for future editions.

With best wishes for the summer,

Simon Ray

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ministerial appointments, June 2017

No party secured a majority in the general election on 8 June. The Conservative Party leader Theresa May formed a minority government. She reappointed Priti Patel as Secretary of State for International Development, with three Ministers of State: Rory Stewart, Alistair Burt and Lord Bates.

Their responsibilities are listed on page 3. Two of them were DFID Ministers before the election. All three now hold joint appointments as Ministers of State in both the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and DFID. James Wharton MP, a DFID junior Minister since 2016, was defeated in the election.

In May 2017, DFID celebrated 20 years as a separate department with a Cabinet Minister. (From 1979 to 1997 it was part of the FCO, as the Overseas Development Administration.)

DIARY

EVENTS AND MEETINGS

w/b 18 September – Seminar on agricultural development

13 October – Seminar on NGO engagement in the international development field

Late September/early October – A tour of the Underground Postal Rail Network

Mid November – World Bank 1818 Seminar on international finance

11 December - Christmas Gathering at the Rubens Hotel, Buckingham Palace Road

Priti Patel reappointed International Development Secretary

The Rt Hon Priti Patel MP said on 12 June

“I am delighted and honoured to be reappointed as Secretary of State for International Development. Every day UK aid helps millions of people and makes a powerful and positive statement about Global Britain’s place in the world. Our development work helps build a safer, healthier, more prosperous world, which protects Britain’s interests.

This country leads the world when it comes to development and we will continue to show strong leadership by improving the results and value we achieve with taxpayers’ money. With a smart approach to aid, we can keep saving and transforming lives and tackle the big global challenges this country faces.”

DFID’s three Ministers of State

Rory Stewart MP now leads on Africa (covering FCO and DFID policy); Innovation and research; Ukraine; Climate and environment; and Corporate Performance Group

Alistair Burt MP now leads on Middle East and North Africa (covering FCO and DFID policy); Asia; Conflict, Humanitarian, and Security; Human Development, including Children, Education and Youth; Global Funds Department; and Cross Government Funds (CSSF, Prosperity, Empowerment)

Lord Bates now leads on Caribbean; Overseas Territories; Europe; United Nations and Commonwealth; Global Partnerships and Emerging Powers; Education and Youth; Inclusive Societies (disability; ageing; faith; LGBT; VAWG); Supporting Secretary of State on Economic Development, International Finance Institutions, and International Trade; Corporate Performance within his areas of responsibility; Parliamentary champion and House of Lords relations; Supporting Rory Stewart engaging on Scotland and with Abercrombie House; Supporting on Governance, Open Societies, and Anti-Corruption.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM DFID IN APRIL TO JUNE 2017

April

- The Prime Minister visited Saudi Arabia and Jordan
- The UK increased its support for action against land mines
- The UK increased medical aid to Syria following a chemical attack on Idlib
- The FCO Minister for the Middle East visited Iraq
- DFID Minister James Wharton visited Ethiopia
- The UK doubled its support to fight neglected tropical diseases
- The International Development Secretary made a written statement on humanitarian aid and the UK’s systems for efficient delivery of aid
- The UK announced support for security reform in Somalia

May

- The UK hosted a conference on Somalia in London
- The United Nations appointed DFID’s Permanent Secretary Sir Mark Lowcock as Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs

June

- Following the election on 8 June, the Prime Minister reappointed Secretary of State Priti Patel and appointed three Ministers of State to DFID jointly with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.
- The International Development Secretary visited Ethiopia and Somalia
- DFID staff were recognised in the Queen’s Birthday Honours
- The Prime Minister announced measures to tackle the migration crisis in the Mediterranean
- The government pledged to improve access to UK markets for the poorest countries after the UK leaves the European Union

International Development Secretary visits Ethiopia and Somalia

In June, International Development Secretary Priti Patel called for a new concerted global push to prevent millions of people losing their lives across East Africa to the threat of starvation and disease. As the first Cabinet Minister to visit Africa since the British General Election on 8 June, Ms Patel saw how UK leadership has saved the lives of many facing the risk of extreme hunger. But she warned that the crisis had reached a critical point and that a loss of momentum in the international response could rapidly reverse the progress made, cost lives and further destabilise the already fragile region.

She made clear that the UK will continue to set the pace. The quick response from the UK earlier this year to the growing food crisis in East Africa – including pledging £110 million for Somalia, £11.5 million for Ethiopia and matching £10 million of public donations to the Disasters Emergency Committee's (DEC) appeal – led the international response. This support has been integral to preventing starvation in Somalia and Ethiopia, but the risk is far from over.

In Somalia British support is not only helping people survive, it will help give them a choice about their lives and their futures, so they aren't forced to turn to extremism or make the dangerous journey to Europe. This in turn means a safer UK. The Ethiopian Government showed strong leadership in the 2016 drought and put forward more than US\$700 million to meet the needs of their own people. We are working with the Government to ensure they respond effectively this year, to prioritise, plan effectively and step up their own finance for the response.

International Development Secretary Priti Patel said:

Global Britain is leading the way in providing a lifeline for millions of people in Somalia and Ethiopia who are at risk of starving to death as extreme hunger stalks East Africa. I've seen UK aid in action, doing what it does best – saving and changing lives. This is also helping to stabilise the world's most fragile countries and giving vulnerable people a chance to build lives closer to home and therefore increasing the UK's security. The UK stepped up early with support and lobbied others to do more which has prevented the spread of famine. We are showing our continued leadership with more food, more water and more medicine for those at imminent risk of dying from drought and conflict. The world must follow our lead

THE FOUR CORNERS NEEDS A NEW EDITOR

Could you edit (or help to edit) The Four Corners?

Marc Taylor is in his fifth year as editor. It is time for a change. We would welcome a new editor or assistant editor. Could you bring new ideas and new interests to keep the quarterly newsletter relevant to DFID alumni around the world?

Please contact Marc

(c.marc.taylor@gmail.com) or another member of the DFID Alumni Committee to find out more.

and act now to put an end to humanitarian crises that threaten our global stability and help accelerate progress on peace, security and prosperity – which is firmly in everyone's interest.

Ms Patel has also pressed international partners – including the World Bank – to disburse funding more quickly. The Bank has since pledged \$1.8 billion to respond to the crises, including \$50 million to Somalia and \$100 million to Ethiopia to help people in drought affected areas access food assistance, water and health services.

The world has faced an unprecedented number of humanitarian crises in 2017, including a famine in parts of South Sudan, the first declared globally since 2011. Severe drought conditions, cholera and measles outbreaks, losses of livestock and increasing numbers of people fleeing their homes have put people in Somalia and neighbouring Ethiopia back on the brink of starvation, threatening millions of lives. Half the population of Somalia have no reliable access to food and are facing the possibility of a third famine in 25 years. The UK continues to work with the Governments of Somalia and Ethiopia, and partners such as UNICEF, World Food Programme, Food and Agriculture Organisation, and NGOs to ensure aid reaches those most in need.

Ms Patel saw crates of UK aid ready to be loaded onto aircraft at Mogadishu airport, to reach people across the country. Following the London Somalia

Conference earlier this year, Ms Patel reaffirmed the need for the international community to continue to support Somalia, not just through emergency aid but also by strengthening security to keep Somalia on course for increased peace, stability and prosperity.

For Ethiopia this is the second severe drought in 2 years. As the second largest refugee hosting country in Africa, Ethiopia's resources are being stretched to the limit with 880,000 refugees who have fled war and violence in neighbouring countries. The UK is working with its international partners to improve the infrastructure, local services and job opportunities in Ethiopia to help the country cope with the increase in refugees and prevent onward migration.

As part of her visit, the Secretary of State announced a £90 million package of urgently needed support which will help more than 2 million more people in desperate need of clean water, food, and basic medical supplies in Somalia and Ethiopia. This includes £60 million in new funding for Somalia, and a £30 million allocation for Ethiopia.

Priti Patel visited a food distribution centre in Ethiopia to see at first hand how UK aid is supporting people at risk of hunger and to meet the UK aid workers on the front line. She also visited a health centre, one of many UK aid is supporting across Ethiopia, to see how malnourished children are receiving life-saving support, including an innovative peanut paste which gives them vital nutrients.

Before February, there had been only 1 certified famine globally since 2000. Parts of South Sudan are now in famine and in 2017 there is a credible risk of another 3 famines: in Somalia, Yemen and North East Nigeria, with Ethiopia and Kenya also suffering from severe drought. More than 20 million men, women and children face the very real risk of dying from starvation in the next 6 months because of relentless war and drought

In Ethiopia, 7.8 million men, women and children are at risk of going hungry, while in Somalia over 6 million do not have reliable access to food. The UK has now pledged £321.5 million in response to the humanitarian crises in East Africa this year.

- £60 million pledged for Somalia is new money – not previously allocated to DFID's Somalia budget – for the rest of 2017
- £30 million pledged for Ethiopia is an allocation of money from DFID's Ethiopia budget for the rest of the financial year of 2017/18

- In Somalia, £60 million of UK aid will provide:
 - 350,000 people with emergency food
 - access to clean water and sanitation to over 1 million people
 - shelter for 100,000 people
 - vaccinations for 2 million livestock
 - protection for 20,000 vulnerable women at risk from violence and trafficking
- The number of people in need of food in Ethiopia has risen sharply, £30 million of UK aid will provide:
 - emergency food support for 1.5 million people
 - life-saving nutritional support to more than 154,000 starving children and pregnant and breastfeeding women
 - safe drinking water for 100,000 people
 - livestock support for 500,000 people
 - 10 mobile protection teams to provide child protection, support victims of sexual violence and help internally displaced people and their host communities.

Prime Minister announces new migration programme

Speaking at the June European Council on Friday 23 June [the Prime Minister announced](#) a new three year DFID programme to tackle the migration crisis. This will meet the urgent humanitarian needs of migrants and refugees, facilitate voluntary returns and build the capacity of governments to manage migration. The announcement was widely covered in the media.

A new phase of support for refugees and migrants

Recognising the continued needs and vulnerabilities faced by refugees and migrants, the programme will assist people on the move, along the key transit routes towards Europe. It will retain a degree of flexibility to allow prioritisation of emerging needs, but the initial focus will include:

- Supporting those who want to return home by facilitating travel and helping with reintegration
- Providing lifesaving food, clean water and medical care, including to those making desert crossings
- Providing support to create the necessary infrastructure and systems in countries capable of hosting resettled refugees
- Supporting governments on transit routes to improve the management of migration and make it safer

- Providing flexible funding for unexpected humanitarian needs.

To meet the Secretary of State's ambitions, the recent Portfolio Quality Review allocated £125 million over the next three years to migration programming. This £75 million programme will be centrally managed, whilst an additional £50 million will be programmed by country and regional teams. The Migration and Modern Slavery Department (MMSD) is working on a programming guidance note for country offices, to support the delivery of the £50 million and wider relevant programming.

This new assistance will sustain our considerable humanitarian support to the Mediterranean migration crisis.

So far, the UK has provided:

- 1.5 million relief items to people affected by the Mediterranean crisis
- More than 1.9 million meals for refugees and migrants in Europe
- Over 1.6 million emergency interventions, including psychosocial support, for refugees and migrants travelling to and within Europe.

DFID has also assisted voluntary return for migrants in Niger, through the International Organisation for Migration.

MMSD is shaping international frameworks for global migration, promoting migration that is safe, orderly, regular and responsible. The UK is building a strong evidence base to inform and shape policy and programming. We work with country offices to reduce the drivers that force people to move irregularly and harness the development benefits of regular migration.

First anniversary of the London Anti-Corruption Summit

12 May marked the first anniversary of the London Anti-Corruption Summit which produced a Global Declaration and statements by countries and international organisations setting out actions they will take to fight corruption.

What's happened since the Summit? There has been progress delivering UK commitments and we are supporting summit partners to take concerted global

action which reduces corruption in both developing and developed countries. The UK is the first G20 country to launch a public register of company beneficial ownership setting out who owns what, making it harder for the corrupt to hide their assets. The UK has undergone the first IMF fiscal transparency evaluation for a G7 country to strengthen our fiscal accountability.

The government is also consulting on a new register of overseas companies that own UK property or bid in government procurement processes. The new Open Contracting Data Standard makes the process of awarding public sector contracts visible for the first time. The first ever International Anti-Corruption Coordination Centre was set up to boost collaboration between national law enforcement agencies to pursue the corrupt. More recently, the landmark Criminal Finances Act passed in April significantly strengthened the UK's anti-money laundering regime.

Working internationally

Governance, Open Societies and Anti-Corruption Department has helped design a capacity development facility for the Egmont Group of international financial intelligence units to combat money laundering and terrorist financing.

The UK also funded an open ownership register, which maps who controls and benefits from companies and has registered 190 million entries of global company beneficial ownership. Additionally, our support to the International Centre for Asset Recovery helped conclude a landmark case returning \$17 million of stolen assets.

In our partner countries

Afghanistan has established an innovative Anti-Corruption Justice Centre which brings together law enforcement and justice institutions to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate cases without interference. So far, eight major corruption cases have been prosecuted.

In Kenya, UK assistance to strengthen the investigations capacity in the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission has led to a three-fold increase in the number of individuals charged, with approximately Ksh791 million restrained.

Nigeria committed to joining the open government partnership and has set up a civil society-government steering committee which has developed a national action plan.

There's one born every minute....

When the taxi dropped me at Nairobi airport I was greeted by an elderly man with a trolley. "Can I take your luggage?" he said. "By all means" I replied. So he placed my case carefully on the trolley, and pushed it for about one yard towards the door. "Sorry" he said, "this is as far as I'm allowed to go." So I removed the case and went in, leaving a generous tip. The reward of chutzpah.

Another time, at Accra airport, I was walking up the stairs for the next stage of the exit formalities when a voice came from behind a hedge. "Good morning" it said. "Good morning" I replied. "I have put your suitcase in a very favourable position in the plane" it went on to say, "it will be among the first out". "Oh good" I said. "Surely this deserves a reward" said the voice, at which point a hand emerged through the hedge. "Of course" I said, putting a wad of cedi into the hand. It was only as I continued up the stairs that I remembered that I was hand baggage only.

Colin Roth

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2017 Annual General Meeting took place on 19 June 2017. The Secretary has circulated the minutes. Elections were held for the appointment of the Chair, Treasurer and several other committee members. The results were:

- Simon Ray was re-elected Chair
- John Burton was re-elected Treasurer
- Jim Drummond, Janet Grimshaw and Marc Taylor were re-elected as Committee Members
- Pam Jenkins was elected as a Committee Member

Four Committee members continue - they were not up for re-election this year:

- Isobel Doig,
- Helen Darling,
- Kathy Marshall
- John Stuppel (Secretary).

Jackie Creighton and Amisha Patel did not stand for re-election to the Committee.

DFID Research Advisory Group (RAG) Chair and Vice-Chair Vacancies

DFID is recruiting an independent Chair and Vice-Chair for its RAG, leading strategic engagement with DFID, he or she will provide independent and impartial leadership of the RAG.

The RAG provides independent scientific advice to the DFID and reports to the DFID Chief Scientific Adviser. The provision of independent scientific advice by the RAG assists DFID to assure the quality and appropriateness of Research and Evidence Division's research portfolio for DFID's objectives. The current RAG membership consists of 15 senior international academics. The Group is currently chaired by Professor Sir Andy Haines, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

The successful candidate will be a very senior leader (at Professor level), with proven expertise in national and/or international level research management and a demonstrable understanding of the impact of science and research on delivering the UK's international development objectives. He or she will have strong networks at national and international levels, experience of engaging with HMG ODA-research (such as DFID research), and the independence of mind, communication skills and strategic nous to build credibility and confidence with a range of stakeholders across DFID, wider Government and wider academic and research community.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. Interviews will be held late July or early August 2017. All applications should be emailed to RAGRotation@dfid.gov.uk. [RAG vacancy information pack](#) (PDF, 334KB, 15 pages).

Closing date for applications is 5pm (UK time) 24 July 2017.

See the Back Pages of this edition for a current example of a major research collaboration between DFID, the Medical Research Council, the Department of Health's National Institute for Health Research and the Wellcome Trust.

EVENTS

Summer Gathering

The DFID Alumni Association Summer Gathering was held on Monday 26 June at the House of Lords. The event was well received with just under 70 people attending.

As always it was a good opportunity for members to meet colleagues from the past, and for others to network. It also allowed for some existing senior staff members from DFID, including Nic Dyer, who is acting Permanent Secretary, to learn more about the Association, and its continued relevance to keeping links between ex-staff members and DFID today. We are also grateful to Lord Malcolm Bruce for hosting the event.



DFID Alumni tour of Apsley House and Wellington Arch, 12 May 2017

On 12th May several Alumni members visited Apsley House and Wellington Arch at Hyde Park Corner, London. We were given a guided tour of Apsley House which is a beautiful Georgian building and was the London home of the first Duke of Wellington and has changed very little since his great victory at Waterloo in 1815. It contains one of the finest art collections in London with paintings by Velazquez and Rubens as well as a wonderful collection of silver and porcelain.



Then we crossed the road to the traffic island and visited Wellington Arch which is set in the heart of royal London and built as an original entrance to Buckingham Palace. It later became a victory arch proclaiming Wellington's defeat of Napoleon. It is hollow inside and once contained the smallest police station in London.





It now contains exhibits detailing an exhibition “Waterloo 1815 – The Battle for Peace”. It is crowned by the largest bronze sculpture in Europe which depicts the Angel of Peace descending on a four-horse chariot of War. We were taken to the top of the arch where there is a panoramic view over London.



Something to feel sheepish about

Colombia has a vast area of grassy uplands – the páramos – which were not used for anything. ODM’s animal health adviser thought “just the place for sheep”. So he invented the Colombian sheep project, which was duly approved. He arranged for a large flock of lady Scottish blackface sheep to be flown out, accompanied by a Scottish shepherd.

A subsequent animal health adviser thought the choice of sheep a little odd, the Scottish blackface being in his view primitive and rather aggressive. But these were the least of our troubles. In Scotland sheep stick to their allocated mountain because when they look around they see that other mountains are occupied by other sheep. But when admiring the view over the páramos all our sheep saw was empty space. So they set off to explore.

To avoid losing the flock we had to build fences. Then it turned out that blackface wool was so hard and wiry that it caused the local textile machinery to break down. The factories were anyway about to turn to synthetics. And on top of all this the local population, while keen on juicy steaks, were unenthusiastic about lamb chops and mutton stew.

Lambing time revealed the biggest problem of all: 100 ewes would normally be expected to give birth to just over 100 lambs, allowing for twins and triplets. But our flock was only producing about 20 lambs per 100. The maternal instincts of British lady sheep are triggered by the arrival of the short daylight hours of winter – a trigger which was missing on the equatorial páramos.

Our team decided to fool the sheep by shutting them into a wooden barn. But the sheep were not to be fooled; they could see through gaps in the planks that they were still enjoying long hours of daylight. The team’s next step was to buy a large quantity of black plastic sheeting to wrap round the barn – “that will fool you” they told the sheep. They never found out if it did, though, because the sheep all developed serious coughs and sneezes for want of fresh air and the plan had to be abandoned. As was the project soon afterwards.

All that remained was the occasional sight of a local going for a walk with his pet blackface sheep on a lead.

Colin Roth



the most. With her permission, I am reproducing Ayako Ebata's article first published by the IDS:

Why will no one listen to the pig farmers of Yangon?

As the G20 gathered and revisited global pandemics, Ayako Ebata asked why world leaders are not spending more time addressing the concerns of those whose lives are quietly devastated on a daily basis.

Sitting in a pig farmer's house in the Yangon region of Myanmar, I heard a question I'd heard many times before from backyard farmers: "What will your project provide us with?" It was my last month of a year in Myanmar, undertaking fieldwork for the social science component of the Myanmar Pig Partnership, a project looking at zoonotic diseases that cause gastrointestinal infections in pigs and people as well as antimicrobial resistance (AMR). I've been part of a team investigating the understandings and perceptions of diseases, the socioeconomic costs of pig diseases and the veterinary health care systems that farmers in the Yangon region rely on.

It is not surprising that the pig farmer helping us with our research wanted answers. Zoonoses – diseases that pass from animals to people – can hit pig farmers hard. As a non-medical expert, before taking part in this project zoonotic diseases for me meant the Ebola crisis in West Africa, SARS, avian influenza, and swine flu – dramatic and scary disease outbreaks. These zoonotic diseases draw our attention and encourage policymakers to react and respond with urgency.

Through taking part in this project, however, I have learned that there is much more to zoonotic diseases. The bacterial zoonotic pathogens we are investigating in Myanmar, Salmonella and Streptococcus suis, are endemic among many poor people. Gastrointestinal (stomach and intestine) infections from these pathogens are shown to damage the youngest members of our societies, for example inhibiting vital brain and nerve function development. While global mortality from diarrhoea has declined over the past years, approximately 2 million people remain affected, many of them aged under five.

Damaged livelihoods

The effects of such zoonoses are not just about people's health but also about their livelihoods. Worldwide, two thirds of resource-poor rural households keep livestock. These animals can be a source of household income, nutrient-rich food and assistance in agricultural labour;



Community development in Myanmar

Marc Taylor

During a holiday in Myanmar, my wife and I were lucky to spend a night at a [community tourism project in Myaing](#) in the countryside not far from the magnificent temples at Bagan (which was the capital of Burma until the king executed the emissaries of Kublai Khan, who sent an avenging Mongol army to destroy it in 1297).

The accommodation in Myaing was simple, but the hospitality was very warm. We were able to join a large group of village women of all ages exchanging stories about their successes in achieving locally decided priorities for development, using the advocacy skills that [ActionAid](#) had helped them to build up through its training and support.

Given Myanmar's history of military rule, the sense of empowerment and self-confidence among these women was remarkable. It was convincing evidence of the power of patient local work in the community. The resulting village plans are now valued not only by the villagers who are carrying them out, but also by development agencies and by government representatives who need to test local opinion about priorities for public spending.

On return to the UK, I saw another striking example of farming communities in Myanmar taking the lead to look for solutions to the problems that affect them

they provide manure for crop production, a means of saving and a way to gain social status. When animals infected by zoonotic pathogens fall ill or die, it can threaten the future of poor, rural or marginalised people.

In addition, inappropriate treatment of these zoonotic pathogens in animals with antimicrobials and the use of these products to promote growth are leading to AMR. This makes it more difficult and costly to treat the infection both in animals and in people. The dimensions of the problem are not yet well understood in Myanmar, but experience in China, Vietnam and elsewhere suggests that it is the poor who will be hardest hit.

So why has there been such little attention paid to these zoonotic pathogens? Why is it that the world talks about health catastrophes and crises but not about these endemic pathogens that affect millions of people's everyday lives? One reason is that the burden of diseases is calculated in such a way that it fails to reflect under-documented, yet damaging and important, diseases. In particular, gastrointestinal infections are difficult to trace back to microorganism infection without laboratory-based diagnosis. As a result, many cases of, for instance, diarrhoea receive no microbiological scrutiny and therefore fail to show up in the statistics.

Another reason is policymakers are influenced by particular understandings of diseases that need to be prioritised. These are often motivated by issues of power and social justice. Too often, those who live with zoonotic diseases on a daily basis are not well represented in the policy-making environment. Consequently, policy actions fail to benefit those most affected.

Strengthening health systems

How can we help design effective interventions? One way forward is to strengthen health systems. This is essential – and must take a One Health perspective, recognising the many interconnections between human and animal health. Drawing on what we're learning in the Yangon Region, these strengthened systems must include not only veterinary health care providers but also, for example, veterinary antimicrobial providers, the knowledge providers behind them, their qualifications and experiences, social relations and diagnostic capacity. Strengthening health systems may not be as catchy as discovering vaccines. Yet it is more likely to reach the poor. In fact, a stronger veterinary health system is what many of our farmers interviewed in Myanmar asked for.

Fieldwork

In Myanmar, pigs are known to become ill during the rainy season. We started our fieldwork in June 2016. In every village we visited, there were pigs falling ill or dying and you could see the desperation of those who were raising the animals. "We want sustainable, long-lasting support from qualified veterinarians. Will you please help us achieve this?" many villagers asked. Villagers and farmers

told us about their concerns, ranging from economic loss from diseased animals to insecurity when applying antimicrobials without technical expertise. Quick access to high-quality veterinary care would make a difference to many of them.

The more time we spent in these communities, the more we realised that they have coping strategies even when access to qualified veterinarians is limited. But perhaps we can do better by shifting the focus from catastrophic and frightening zoonotic diseases to those that are endemic yet affect the lives of many poor people. In the end, that's what those who are affected wish. Why don't we start listening to what people at the frontline say?

First published by the Institute of Development Studies

A memorable put-down

Before I went to live in Thailand I was a frequent visitor to the National Film Theatre in London. The management sometimes invited the director to say a few words after the screening of his film, and to answer questions from the audience.

On this occasion the film was from Taiwan, about the time when the island was overwhelmed by the arrival of Chiang Kai Shek and his army, recently defeated by Mao Tse Tung.

There is always at least one questioner who has prepared a particularly obscure question, more to show what a clever chap he is than to provide illumination for the rest of us. One of the characters in the film was deaf and dumb, and this questioner suggested to the director that this was meant be symbolic of some deep malaise in Taiwanese society.

Director: "Not really. For box office reasons our backers insisted that the cast should include a famous Hong Kong film star. As the film was in Mandarin, which the famous film star couldn't speak, we decided to make his character deaf and dumb rather than have him dubbed."

There was no further comment from the deflated questioner.

Colin Roth

Whatever Happened to Mick Foster?

After a long career in development, including 25 years as an economist with DFID, Mick Foster retired in 2012.

When he mentioned to a friend that he was writing a novel, the cynical response was 'No, neither am I!' Mick was only slightly discouraged. After writing hundreds of reports over the years, how hard could it be to write fiction?

An embarrassing number of years later, Mick has finally published his first novel, 'Hamlet's Bastard' as an e-novel (amazon.com/author/mickfoster). It took longer than planned, but the displacement activity to avoid sitting down to write had some benefits. He improved his drumming enough to start gigging fairly regularly with a jazz quartet, and he was able to spend much more time hanging out with friends and family.

The novel imagines that young Prince Hamlet has a bastard son, and it weaves together the son's story with the events of his father's life. It developed from Mick's experience of directing Hamlet with his wife Lynne, and the realisation that the wonderful verse in which the Prince speaks rather blinds audiences to his appalling behaviour.

Having written it, Mick now wants people to read it. He promises that no knowledge of Shakespeare is required, and that it has more of a feel-good factor than the play from which it is derived.

Mick and Lynne live in Chelmsford, and would be delighted to see any old DFID colleagues who may be passing that way.



Spending more time with the family



Cast and crew of Chelmsford Theatre Workshop production of 'Hamlet', 2013



Blues jam at the Bassment, Chelmsford

DFID staff recognised in Queen's Birthday Honours

Seven of the people in the Queen's Birthday Honours list were recognised for their work at the Department for International Development.

International Development Secretary Priti Patel said:

"I congratulate all the DFID staff who have been recognised for their contribution to international development. Their awards reflect the important and life changing work being done across the world by people in this department, sometimes in challenging circumstances and dangerous environments. The commitment and hard work of people like those honoured this year makes an important contribution to the transformative power of UK aid across the globe."

- CBE – Mike Hammond, for services to international development
- CBE – Jane Rintoul, for public service
- OBE – Mehtab Currey, for services to global international development
- OBE – Sebastien Fouquet, for services to humanitarian aid in Africa



- OBE – Wendy Phillips, for services to international development
- OBE – Robert Watt, for services to international development
- BEM – Mel Hipwood, for services to public administration



The Rt Hon Alistair Burt MP

Alistair Burt was appointed Minister of State for the Department for International Development and Minister of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth office on 13 June 2017.

He served as Minister of State for Community and Social Care at the Department of Health from May 2015 until July 2016. Previously he served as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State in the Foreign & Commonwealth Office from May 2010 until October 2013. Alistair entered Parliament for the first time in 1983 and was elected Conservative MP for north east Bedfordshire in 2001.

Alistair was educated at Bury Grammar School, and studied at St John's College Oxford, where he was president of the university law society. Alistair became a solicitor in 1980 and served on Haringey Council in London from 1982 to 1984. He and his wife Eve have 2 grown-up children

Political career

- Member of Parliament for Bury North 1983 to 1997
- Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for the Environment, for Education and Science and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 1985 to 1990
- Parliamentary Under Secretary of State then Minister of State, Department of Social Security 1992 to 1997
- Member of Parliament for north east Bedfordshire 2001 to present
- Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition 2002 to 2005
- Shadow Minister for Communities and Local Government 2005 to 2008
- Opposition Assistant Chief Whip 2008 to 2010
- Parliamentary Under Secretary of State Foreign & Commonwealth Office May 2010 to October 2013

Farewell message from James Wharton

Friends and colleagues. I wanted to write to say that I have really enjoyed working with you all. During my ten months in DFID I've flown over an active volcano in DRC, and lined up as Jessie J's support act at Wembley, but most importantly I've seen first hand the amazing life-saving work that DFID and the UK provide to some of the world's most vulnerable and marginalized people. This is critical, humbling work, and my sincere thanks to all of you on the front line who make it possible.

I am really proud of the UK's approach to international development. I voted to enshrine the 0.7% target in law in 2015 and I believe we are setting the standard that the world should follow. But there is nothing inevitable about our approach. Too often, we in DFID preach to the converted. There is no room for complacency here, and I urge you to keep thinking about how we engage and communicate with those British taxpayers who don't currently support what we do. Think about the new narratives, always bear in mind the UK national interest, get the branding right (!), and be self-critical when you think about interventions and new business cases.

I will continue to champion 0.7% outside Parliament and I really hope to work with you again in the future. So this is farewell but not goodbye. Many thanks for all your help, and hope you continue delivering the same excellent support to the Secretary of State and her new Ministerial team.

Sir Mark Lowcock

Mark has been appointed by the United Nations' Secretary-General António Guterres to the role of Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, taking over from Stephen O'Brien later this year.

Responding to the announcement, the British Secretary of State for International Development said:

"I would like to thank Stephen O'Brien for his outstanding leadership of OCHA and the reform he has brought to improve our global responses to humanitarian crises. He has worked tirelessly for the benefit of the United Nations and for the cause of humanitarian relief across the world.

I wish Mark Lowcock every success in the future in his role as Under-Secretary-General for OCHA. I would like to thank him for his long standing service to the Civil Service and his work to deliver DFID's commitments to the poorest people in the world."

Sir Jeremy Heywood, Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Civil Service, added:

"I am delighted that Mark Lowcock has been appointed to this critical UN role. Mark has been an outstanding Permanent Secretary of DFID and a great colleague. With humanitarian crises right now affecting so many parts of the world, Mark will bring long-standing practical expertise and British know-how to this important international position."

Mark said:

"It has been an enormous privilege to serve DFID for the last thirty-two years, especially as Permanent Secretary since 2011. And I cannot imagine anything more worthwhile than joining the Secretary General's new team to realise the inspiring vision he has set for the United Nations. I am particularly looking forward to building on Stephen O'Brien's excellent legacy in ensuring OCHA does the best it possibly can to relieve the suffering of people whose lives continue to be devastated by humanitarian crises across the world."

Sir Mark was the Patron of the DFID Alumni Association. We hope he will stay in touch. Here is his final message to DFID staff.

One last thing...

Office life has changed over the last 32 years. When I joined the Overseas Development Administration (ODA, the precursor to DFID) in 1985 we had typing pools, file registries, a mid-morning and mid-afternoon tea trolley patrolling the building (which I liked) and a culture of lunch time drinking (which I didn't). When you talked about office technology, people thought you meant Tippex and carbon paper, or possibly the telegram system. I remember when the first computer arrived in International Financial Institutions Department when I was working there in 1986 – it was immediately locked away for safe keeping.

The ODA occupied an ugly 12 storey 1960s concrete tower block called Eland House just near Victoria Station. The building has since happily been knocked down. Each floor comprised two long corridors of closed offices. Most people shared rooms, but A2s and more senior staff occupied offices in sole splendour, and in a surprising number of cases seemed never to leave them from the beginning of the day to the end. It was, outside the typing pools and the file registries, a predominantly male environment, hierarchical and patrician, but there was a strong belief in the importance and value of the work of the Department and a genuine and warm welcome for newcomers.

Most of my working life in DFID, as with everyone, has been spent reading, writing, listening, talking and (I admit it) at least occasionally day dreaming in meetings of one sort or another, and a great deal of it has washed through my memory and out the other side. But here is a selection of the things that have stuck.

My first job was in the team working on famine relief and recovery in Ethiopia in 1985-6. The RAF had been doing food air drops and airlifts for a year when I arrived, and we had to decide how long they should continue (until the Spring of 1986 was the answer), but the real policy choice was how we should support the recovery process. Ministers had announced a budget for that, and I was sent on a mission (as we really did call visits then) tasked to work out what to do with it - I was the bag carrier for an advisory team comprising an engineer, an economist and an agriculture specialist. The Government, in the latter, losing, stages of the civil war, wanted bulldozers and other heavy equipment, ostensibly for agricultural modernisation but we wondered about their real intentions.

We travelled around the country for a bit and ended up financing imports of seeds, hand tools and pesticides and some water drilling rigs. Having visited Ethiopia maybe 15 or 20 times in the subsequent 30 years, I have had periodic snapshots of its transformation, which is one of the most impressive things I have seen in Africa. One of the reasons I remain optimistic about future development progress is the experience of seeing with my own eyes the pace of recent change, not just in Ethiopia, but in many other countries too. The path is not the same in every country, but one key and universal ingredient is leadership, and a vision.

In 1994 the family moved to Malawi, where we had both got jobs in the then regional office covering central Africa. While we were there, Julia was pregnant with Dominic, and was at the same time working to design a big new safe motherhood project in Malawi. Maternal and child mortality ran at horrific rates in Malawi then – a quarter of children never seeing their fifth birthday, and every woman facing a one in 17 risk of dying from causes related to maternity. We had a tiny personal insight into that. The man who worked as a cook at the house we lived in had recently remarried, to a teenager, as was and still is quite common. One morning he came and asked for advice on looking after a new-born. It transpired that the mother, his wife, had died in the hut at their rural home giving birth to the baby.

There has been progress in Malawi over the last 20 years, helped by programmes we have financed. Infant mortality has halved, and maternal mortality rates fallen by a third. But you don't need much imagination, or to read many relevant books, to understand the enormous reduction in human suffering that could be achieved just by getting infant and maternal mortality rates in the poorest countries even up to the levels of the emerging ones.

In 1999, after a brief return to London, we were back in Africa, this time in Nairobi where I was appointed to be the head of the DFID regional office for East Africa. This was the era in which Clare Short and a group of like-minded European development Ministers were pushing for a new deal for the poorest developing countries: debt relief and new financing from donors and the international finance institutions in exchange for reform programmes prioritising poverty reduction, and especially investment in health, education and market friendly economic policy. It became clear that successful pursuit of this agenda was helped by continuous, supportive and good quality technical and policy dialogue between governments and representatives of the external financiers. That requires development agencies to have good people on the ground, with local knowledge and listening skills.

The then office structure of DFID, with teams of advisers based in a regional capital and periodically flying around the neighbouring countries did not look like the best model. My boss, Graham Stegmann, the Africa Director, commissioned me to do a review, the upshot of which was that we would move to a country office structure. So while I was in Nairobi, we opened DFID country offices in Dar es Salaam and Kampala,

and scaled back the Kenya based regional team. This model was replicated more widely across DFID. I still think delegating as much responsibility as possible from HQ to people living and working in the countries we are aiming to support is the right approach for major development agencies, and others would do well to get closer to it. That's one reason why I am pleased that most of my new colleagues at OCHA are based in the crisis countries rather than at HQ.

It was while I was in Nairobi that DFID first engaged with Vodafone on the collaboration that led to M-Pesa, the first and leading example of mobile money. I knew nothing about what my colleagues were doing at the time – and I prefer to take the view that that speaks well for the benefits of delegating authority to skilled professionals and encouraging them to experiment and take a few risks in the spirit of progress. This is just one of many examples of scientific and technological innovation, often financed by aid, creating better new paths for development.

But the thing people sometimes miss about M-Pesa is that it was not just the technology that made it, but the combination of that technology, and the advice we gave to the central bank of Kenya which licensed its use to transfer money by text – which no country in the world had done or permitted up to then. And that is the key trick we need to focus on with all the research and innovation we finance: how and by whom it will be used.

One of the things we have consistently been better at in the Department than we have given ourselves credit is surging into new issues and building capability to deal with new challenges. We saw that in the early 1990s, when with the FCO we created new teams to assist the countries newly freed from the Soviet block to make their transition to democratic, market based economies and societies – a challenge handled sufficiently successfully that we were able to declare victory and dismantle those teams within a decade or so.

We have seen it in the response to numerous humanitarian crises, especially the biggest ones, like the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the West Africa Ebola outbreak and the Middle East crises since 2011. And we have seen it in the regular testing and updating of our understanding of the process of economic and social development – and I have tried in these blogs over the last ten years to point to interesting updates in thinking.

This flexibility and responsiveness is a major and often unremarked strength of the DFID culture. It arises from some key features which I hope you will all work to preserve into the future. Things like the curiosity and practical capability of the advisory cadres. Like the set of systems and processes which focus on what is needed to get real action underway to tackle problems quickly. (And by the way, those systems and processes need regular review and streamlining to deal with the tendency of all bureaucracies everywhere to accrete ever more of them unless checked). And most importantly, the culture which values and supports collaboration and collective action, towards inspiring goals.

From our amazing network of support staff, to our programme delivery staff, and everyone in between, we have an organisational attitude which seeks and attracts committed and passionate people, who are bound by a desire to improve the prospects of those who, generally by the random shakeout of life's lottery, have ended up as the most disadvantaged

The world will carry on changing fast. Continued progress in the poorer countries at the rate we have seen over the last 25 years, especially in Asia and Latin America, but in other places too, is far from guaranteed. But it is possible and, I think, likely in lots of places – and what you all do here will make a difference

Julian Lambert

Julian Lambert, former DFID Senior Health Adviser, died on 2nd June. Julian's wife Maggie (maggielambert4@hotmail.com) invited DFID friends and colleagues to the funeral which was held on Wednesday 21 June at St Peter's Church, Limpsfield.

Fellow DFID Alumni shared their memories of Julian.

Julian seems too young to have passed so soon and will be sadly missed. I worked closely with him during my Africa regional days in 2000-2004 and always found him a friendly, consummate professional and a caring human being. I remember well sitting in his office seeking his guidance and picking his brains over health trends in Sub Saharan Africa and to discuss the latest

challenge and how to encourage action on maternal mortality. He was never short of an answer and always a willing pleasant colleague. RIP

Jeremy Clarke

So sad to hear this news. I worked with Julian when I was Chief Adviser. He was always an enthusiastic and dedicated colleague and a pleasure to work with. He always saw the positive side to development challenges and was committed to supporting his counterparts and health service development in Africa. He will be missed.

Julian Lob-Levyt

One thing I remember about Julian was his persuasive advocacy for action on HIV in South Africa in 1993 when the prevalence was about 1%. As an economist I looked at the current Mortality impact and thought other issues were more important. Julian thought otherwise and was so clear and persuasive you had to listen. He was vindicated by history in that AIDS became so tragically prevalent, despite the support Julian mobilised. Nevertheless he made a difference and no doubt saved many thousands of lives through his passion and expertise.

John Burton

I shared a room with Julian in Palace Street and we had many intensely interesting conversations, going well beyond Governance and Health and usually inspired by Julian, who was interested in everything. Typically, he left DFID early to work with a team developing low cost, self-adjusting spectacles. I never heard how this worked out, but with Julian it would not be for want of effort.

Garth Glentworth

Having shared the same office as Garth with Julian, yes he was a good colleague. Lots of innovative ideas and passionately interested in development issues. His departure to work on low cost specs exemplified his commitment to finding solutions, and he was certainly good company on missions with a wicked sense of humour!

Carew Treffgarne

John Goldsack

John Goldsack died at home in mid May. He was formerly Deputy Chief Natural Resources Adviser and UK Rep at FAO. He served in East Africa and Development Divisions in Africa and retired in the early '90s.

Ron Wootton writes:

I was indeed saddened to learn of John's passing.

We first met in March 1963 when he was in a Kenya delegation to the Colonial Office led by Bruce MacKenzie, the Minister of Agriculture, (also included Dermott Kydd, the Senior Land Valuer) to discuss the progress of the Land Transfer Programme and the start of the 2nd year of the Mixed Farms 'Million Acre Scheme'.

John had been a leading light in the setting up and operation of the scheme which involved using the farms for high density settlement. – The scheme was due to run for 5 years at a cost of £19m which seemed a huge sum in those days. Farm purchase was on a 'willing buyer/willing seller' basis (fortunately there had been a valuation exercise in 1959 which the valuers were able to use) and no element of compensation was involved. The scheme ran on for a number of years after Kenya's independence beyond its due closure date.

John and I were discussing how things had worked out after my wife and I had visited Kenya in 1986. (I had been involved with the programme for a total of 7 years). He commented that things had gone so much better than they had hoped and I was delighted for John to hear subsequently that the settlement programmes were highly regarded at Oxford. I was also pleased to learn, a couple of years back, that this extended to New Zealand's Canterbury University.

But something on a lighter note. John and I had both visited a Victoria cinema after a new sound system had been installed to see Out of Africa, the film in which Meryl Streep played the part of Karen Blixen. (Karen arrived in Kenya in 1913 and a Nairobi suburb where she had her coffee farm is named after her). John commented that when a lion had roared behind him (from one of the new loudspeakers) he had nearly jumped out of his seat! It is on that cheery note that I shall also remember him.

Fellow DFID Alumni shared these memories of John.

I was a fledgling TCO in The Gambia when John Goldsack came to visit our project in 1984. The desk officer at Eland House, Mair Townsend, had told him I was planning to propose to a VSO nurse but for some reason hadn't got round to it. John Goldsack invited me and aforementioned VSO girlfriend to dinner. I gladly accepted. Then he added that, if we were engaged by the time we arrived, he would pay for the dinner since HMG wasn't going to get much out of me unless the matter was settled. We were engaged two days later, John did pay for dinner, and Ali and I are looking forward to our 33rd anniversary later this year! Sadly I only saw John only briefly once after that, looking very dapper in a 3-piece suit, in an elevator at Eland House. For all the years we haven't forgotten his generous spirit.

Duncan Boughton

I worked with John Goldsack from Dar es Salaam when he was Senior NR Adviser in BDDEA, Nairobi; later I worked with him on personnel issue within the NR cadre. In Southern Tanzania we did major monitoring of a Rural Dev Project, one which had suffered every form of difficulty humankind could produce. John's colour faded progressively as we went from disaster area to catastrophe and he was white-faced, head shaking from side to side on return to the vehicle. But not for long.

He soon recovered, entertaining himself with some vigorous barracking of a snake-charmer in the local market, in fluent and colloquial Swahili, of course, but with a giveaway Kenyan accent, enabling the performer to advise him that "Despite being from the North, mzee, you are very funny". The same sardonic humour sustained John through the more difficult personnel cases in the late 80s. Lala salama.

Geoff Williams

In 1973, when I was head of the Southern African Development Division, John Goldsack came out from London to evaluate progress with the British Integrated Rice Project at Dwangwa in northern Malawi. Immediately before his arrival the Malawian authorities had informed the Division of their wish to convert it to sugar production. I asked John to find answers to (I think) six questions. On his return to Blantyre he immediately provided six clear concise answers.

Some months later, the Establishment Officer sent a telegram to say that he proposed to post my Agricultural Advisor, who was doing a good job, to

Trustee wanted

Bob Goldspink is looking for a new board member at Opportunity International United Kingdom - someone with development economics experience in Africa. OIUK is an Oxford based charity and part of the Opportunity International worldwide network. Its object is to relieve poverty by providing small loans to local entrepreneurs, who are then able to establish and grow their businesses. Most of the entrepreneurs are women.

OIUK's current board consists of 6 Trustees who come mostly from a City and Finance background. It aims to add another 2-4 trustees over the course of the next 6 months. Typically there are 4 board meetings a year, normally in Oxford, with occasional telephone meetings in the interim as the need dictates. The paper work involved is not typically onerous but requires a couple of hours of reading.

OIUK typically raises about £5m a year from governments (DFID; Scotland; Jersey), companies, foundations and high net worth donors. A high proportion of these funds are sent 'into the field'. OIUK runs programmes predominantly in Malawi, Uganda, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, DRC and Rwanda - using local partners to administer the programmes on a day to day basis, with staff in Oxford and Edinburgh having oversight and responsibility for the programmes. In recent years it has expanded beyond its traditional diet of microfinance business loans in Africa (which were made both to groups and to individuals) and we developed specialist edufinance and agrifinance programmes. It is also piloting loans for water and sanitation.

OIUK has developed extensive skills in telephone banking for the poor also. We own a few local banks and licensed microfinance institutions but are in the process of divesting ourselves of these, to enable us to concentrate more on the programmes than on the business of running banks - not to say that it is quite challenging for charities to meet the infrastructure and capital requirement of banks now.

OIUK is a faith based charity and there is a requirement that trustees have a Christian faith. But the people we work with in Africa - the people to whom we make the loans - are of all faiths and none: there is no faith requirement for any poor entrepreneur to benefit from our programmes.

To find out more, contact Bob:
robert.a.goldspink@gmail.com

another division and offered, as replacement, a newly promoted advisor named Goldsack. He then awaited the inevitable explosive reply. To his surprise and relief he received an immediate reply accepting John.

John displayed a highly professional approach and a ready ability to establish a rapport with the members of both the Division and of our client governments. As well as a colleague he and his wife Madeleine became close friends with my wife and me. John was a talented sportsman and a particularly good tennis player. I recall standing bemused as his first serves whizzed by virtually unseen. John was kind, thoughtful, talented and friendly. My condolences go to his family.

Derek Smith

Bob Smith

Geoff Williams tells us:

I have heard from his son Les that the former Outdoor Messenger, Bob Smith, died on Easter Sunday, aged 89. He had contracted pneumonia and went very quickly.

Bob had worked in the docks before joining ODA (or possibly DTC) as a 'Runner', an essential job in those pre-digital days. Asked if he thought he could handle the job, he apparently replied, "Give us an A to Z an' I'll get on with it."

He retired around 1993, but continued to be seen at ODA/DfID discos d-j'd by son Les. He remained cheerful however badly Charlton Athletic were performing, and attended matches up to the age of 87. A stalwart of the early years of the office.

100 Club: contributions by November

In 2015 we set up the 100 Club to encourage members to make a voluntary contribution to the Association's costs, with the chance of winning a small financial prize. The exercise was repeated in 2016 and has so far proved worthwhile as we managed to raise additional funding for the Association, and for many of you it was an opportunity to win one of the three prizes. Some members were not comfortable with the concept of the 100 Club, so instead made a voluntary contribution to the Association.

We are going to repeat the exercise this year, but instead of having two draws a year as we did in 2015

and 2016, we will have one draw at the Christmas Gathering (which this year is at the Rubens Hotel on Monday 11 December 2017). As before you make a contribution of £20 to buy one ticket (you can buy multiple tickets if you wish). £10 of this will be set aside for prize money, and £10 will be used to boost the Association's funds to pay for more activities, including the Summer and Christmas Gatherings.

If you wish to participate please make a contribution either by electronic bank transfer or by setting-up a regular standing order to the DFID Alumni Association bank account: Sort Code: 40-01-13 Account No.: 51705032 and let John Stuppel, Secretary to the DFID Alumni Association, know when a payment has been made.

(This is the preferred method of payment. It simplifies the administration of the scheme, but if it is not possible for you to make a bank transfer then you can send a cheque made payable to DFID Alumni – to John Stuppel, Secretary to the DFID Alumni Association, c/o DFID 22 Whitehall, London SW1A 2EG).

Please make your contribution by 30 November 2017 if you wish to be entered for the draw.

The 100 Club is voluntary, but we encourage as many to participate as possible. If you do not wish to be linked to the 100 club, but wish to make a donation to the running costs of the Association, then we welcome any donations large or small (use the banking details given above).

Welcome to Pam Jenkins,

our new committee member



Colleagues made this farewell poster for Pam's retirement.

Your Committee

The members of the Committee are:

Simon Ray	Chairman
John Burton	Treasurer
Helen Darling	
Isobel Doig	
Jim Drummond	
Janet Grimshaw	
Pam Jenkins	
Kathy Marshall	
John Stuppel	Secretary
Marc Taylor	Editor of The Four Corners

New Members of the Association

We welcome our new members who joined the DFID Alumni in April to June 2017.

Rod Galilee
Eric Korsten
Anuradha Rajan
Wajahat Anwar
Shantanu Das
Kate Lloyd Morgan
Pam Jenkins
Soma Misra
Pyone Thet Thet Kyaw
Marshall Elliot
Les Campbell
Sruthi Chandrasekaran
Philip Harding

CONTACT

This newsletter is produced by DFID's Alumni Secretariat. For any queries, please contact:

Editor: C Marc Taylor

Email: c.marc.taylor@gmail.com

Secretary: John Stuppel

Email: john-stuppel@dfid.gov.uk or alumni@dfid.gov.uk

DFID Rep: vacant

Our web site is www.dfid-alumni.org

Follow us on Twitter: @DFID_Alumni

Our Facebook page is @dfidaa.

Joint Global Health Trials scheme – call 8

- **Closing date:** 14 Sep 2017 16:00 GMT+1

The UK Department for International Development (DFID), the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) the UK Medical Research Council (MRC), and the Wellcome Trust are pleased to announce the launch of the eighth call for proposals under this initiative to fund global health trials.

Background

DFID, MRC and the Wellcome Trust each have a strong history of supporting research that aims to improve health in low and middle income countries. The NIHR is now also joining as a partner, under Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) funding. The four partner agencies share the view that in order to have maximum impact on health we need to work together to provide evidence of the best, and most appropriate interventions to improve health in LMIC settings. Pooling resources brings the necessary funds and experience together to achieve implementable results which address health problems affecting low and middle income countries. Together we will fund up to £20 million for the eighth call to be launched under the joint global health trials partnership.

Objectives and remit

The purpose of this scheme is to provide funding for the best proposals to generate new knowledge about interventions that will contribute to the improvement of health in low and middle income countries.

The scheme will give priority to proposals that are likely to produce implementable results and that are designed to address the major causes of mortality or morbidity in low and middle income countries. For call 8, the joint funders would like to stress that applications must engage with the potential of research for future implementation and impact for policy. Stakeholders, such as policy makers, should be engaged throughout the research process in order to ensure trial results are implementable, scalable and in line with policy needs.

The scheme is open to the best proposals which address any major health related problem affecting low and middle income countries, particularly those that affect the most vulnerable populations. Although the breadth of the scheme is deliberately wide, we particularly welcome proposals for research into chronic non-communicable

Where can I find out more about research funded by DFID?

Links to research outputs funded by DFID are at <https://www.gov.uk/dfid-research-outputs>

Where can I find out more about clinical trials?

International standards require a summary of each clinical trial of a health intervention to be placed on a public register. The UK-based [ISRCTN Registry](#) accepts registrations from any country. It is part of an international network of registries that operate to [standards agreed at the World Health Organisation](#).

diseases, including mental health, and reproductive, maternal and new born health.

The joint global health trials scheme is aimed at funding randomised controlled trials (RCTs), although other types of methodologies can be used alongside RCTs to explore implementation and operational issues. Nested studies to explore these issues and support future implementation are encouraged.

The scheme focuses on late-stage (equivalent to phase III/IV) clinical and health intervention trials that evaluate efficacy and effectiveness. We may consider Phase IIb trials of major relevance to the objectives of the call, but please contact the office to discuss this beforehand.

The scope of the scheme includes, but is not limited to:

Behavioural interventions; Psychological therapies; Disease management; Drugs; Vaccines; Hygiene; Diagnostic strategies

For call 8, the joint funders would like to highlight an interest in funding complex interventions delivered in community settings including primary health care.

Geographical scope: Studies funded through this scheme should be based in countries with low or middle income economies. World Bank definitions of low and middle income economies can be found at [DAC List of ODA Recipients](#). The scheme encourages Principal Investigators to apply from these countries.

Please see the guidance documents for further information on applying through either route.

[Development guidance](#)
[Outline guidance](#)

The MRC must receive your outline proposal by 16:00 British Summer Time on Thursday 14 September 2017. All enquiries should be directed in the first instance to the Medical Research Council: JGHT@headoffice.mrc.ac.uk