ESRC International Development NGO Workshop
Woodhouse Suites, University of Leeds
22nd January 2018

Workshop Report
Summary and Next Steps
Workshop Background

The Showcase has been organised by the Leeds Social Sciences Institute and Centre for Global Development.

The workshop has been funded by the Economic and Social Research Council via an Impact Acceleration Account top up fund which was awarded to the LSSI in March 2018.

The main purpose of securing the ESRC NGO Data top up award was to:

- Explore opportunities for data reuse within Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) and implementation agencies that operate in an Official Development Assistance (ODA) context.
- Building relationships with NGOs working in international development to explore the potential of secondary NGO data
- Enhance the scope for researchers to increase the impact of NGO data through secondary data analysis.
- Provide opportunities to researchers at Leeds to build new partnerships with NGO partners internationally or strengthen existing partnerships.
- Build on a strong track record at Leeds of conducting global development research which is underpinned by a significant funding research grant portfolio in excess of £20 million across many GCRF-facing projects. Social science research is embedded in many of these projects.

Within the award by the ESRC the LSSI were able to award several projects to researchers at Leeds via the IAA, of which we will hear about at the showcase session this morning.

The objective of the workshop was to:

- To showcase the ESRC NGO awardees and other research projects conducted by researchers here at Leeds.
- To hear from NGOs, the research they have been involved in and the important work they do.
- To discuss the problems and practicalities of working within international development from current researchers already active, and discuss potential solutions.
- To network with NGO partners and researchers at Leeds who are working with or have an interest in international development.
- To hear about potential future funding calls and opportunities
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| 08:45 – 09:00| Arrivals and tea/coffee  
Introduction to the day - Professor Caroline Dyer (Centre for Global Development) |
| 09:00 – 10:30| **International Development NGO Showcase**  
Professor Caroline Dyer & Dr Ben Alcott  
Dr Lena Jaspersen & Dr Samit Chakrabarty  
Dr Mahua Das & Dr Helen Elsey  
Dr Lata Narayanaswamy  
Dr Anne Tallontire  
Dr Anna Mdee  
Q&A(15mins) |
| 10:30 – 10:45| Break and tea/coffee                                                 |
| 10:45 – 12:00| **Collaborating with NGOs Discussion Panel**  
NGO representatives  
Carly Koinange – UN Environment  
Jim Walker & Bron Thornton – Walk 21  
Shahab Adris – MEND  
Chair – Professor Karen Lucas (Institute for Transport Studies) |
| 12:00 – 13:00| Lunch                                                                |
| 13:00 – 14:30| **Round table discussions around international development challenges**  
Table 1 – Ethics  
Facilitator – Dr Kahryn Hughes  
Table 2 – Data  
Facilitator – Dr Robin Lovelace  
Table 3 Partnerships  
Facilitator – Dr Lata Narayanaswamy  
Table 4 – Impact  
Dr Lena Jaspersen & Dr Samit Chakrabarty  
30 minutes feedback |
| 14:30 – 14:40| Summary and Close                                                    |
| 14:40 – 16:00| Informal networking and Information Exchange                         |
Speaker Presentations
International Development NGO Showcase

PAL Network
Professor Caroline Dyer (Professor of Education and International Development) & Dr Ben Alcott (University of Cambridge)
The session began with presentations on various projects being implemented to strengthen evidence that impacts on education policy. Sources of data in education policy are not always disaggregated and may not be of quality. Current big surveys on education are biased towards indicators for in-school and out of school children are not captured. Subtle, but important indicators like in-school but overage, correct age and underage can be captured through the People’s Action for Learning (PAL). PAL is a citizen-driven household data collection at community level. Identified members in the community receive training on the data collection tools and methods. Results indicate that data quality from the citizen driven approach is of high quality and a number of countries are using the PAL with a sample size of over a million children making the results valid and representative.

Data Sharing for Open Innovation in Community Based Rehabilitation
Dr Lena Jaspersen (Leeds University Business School) & Dr Samit Chakrabarty (Lecturer, Faculty of Biological Sciences)
The project is focusing on Open Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) and co-creation of appropriate collaborative strategy to deal with disability problem. CBR is a strategy for general community development that provides rehabilitation, poverty reduction, equalisation of opportunities, and social inclusion for all people with disabilities. Society disables the impaired people by not creating an enabling environment for them to function normally. Identified constraints include lack of human resources, appropriate services, and assistive devices/technologies. More critical, is also lack of data to improve services especially in countries like India where a scoping study has been done and disconnect among actors who can assist the people living with disability i.e. academia, industry, government and third sector. University of Leeds is taking a lead on research in rehabilitative medicine, biomedical sciences and medical technology. However, there is lack of social science involvement and experience of working in low resource settings. The project is an opportunity for research, open and collaborative innovation with NGOs.

Immediate priorities for the project going forward include:

- Creation of a new data collection tool and joint CBR database for comparative research (across India, baseline data)
- Development of a new CBR assessment tool that aims at the discovery of unmet needs as well as the assessment of known conditions and associated challenges.
- Ensure ethical practices when collecting, storing and analysing data on CBR
- Supporting front-line services - and in particular doctors - with information/ training how to support people with disabilities and their families

Building collaborations to support sustainable day-care for under 5-year olds in disadvantaged communities in Jharkhand, India
Dr Mahua Das (Teaching Fellow, International Health)
The Day-Care or Creche project is being implemented in India targeting 3200 under five children and 20 000 women in 7 blocks of four states (mostly tribal) Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Bihar. The project at Leeds aims to: build collaborations with the local NGO’s implementing the crèche intervention in the four states, explore the potential of secondary data, analyse and produce outputs such as policy briefs and academic papers to accentuate impact for a sustainable scale-up, share experiences, best practice and document approaches to ECD in different low middle income countries (example India) and within high income countries (UK). The emphasis is on community engagement in this intervention where members in the states take an active role in the implementation of the project. The project is positively impacting on children’s nutritional health, increasing opportunities for mothers to work supplementing family income and elder siblings are now able to go to school instead of taking care of the younger children.

Exploring research partnerships with development NGOs to enhance student skill-building and future employability
Dr Lata Narayanaswamy (Lecturer in International Development)
The pilot project is looking at the feasibility of enhancing student skills by attaching them to ongoing projects in the NGO sector. This increases the chances of employability and balancing the requirements of making a living post graduation (i.e. rentals, food etc). The project feeds into Leeds Institute of Teaching Excellence (LITE) Teaching Enhancement Project (2017-18). Currently, the project is relying on academic staff personal contacts with the NGOs to second students especially at Masters level. Challenges identified include:

- Limited freedom to define the broad terms of the research
- Managing feedback and communication loops not just with supervisor but with external organisation
- Greater demands on your time over a longer period
- Diverse set of expectations
- Intellectual Property (IP) issues

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Towards a collaborative approach between practitioners and academics
Dr Anne Tallontire (Senior Lecturer)
The project was PhD imbedded working with an NGO, Fair Trade International (FTI). The aim is to contribute to building an understanding of how collaborative research and specifically processes of co-production, between NGOs and academics can be achieved more effectively. Academic-NGO collaboration helps in agenda setting, exchange of knowledge and it becomes the main driver for policy. The main outputs of the collaboration were: a learning typology; relationship visualization, (inputs for reflective dialogue); best practices for engagement and training tools for FTI. Challenges in the collaboration included:
- Time
- Institutions
- Valuing knowledge
- Experience often embedded need to generate institutional memory

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Reflections on Academic and NGO Collaborations
Dr Anna Mdee
Associate Professor in International Development
The presentation gave a reflection of common issues that arise from the academia-NGO collaborations. The main question was on how academics bring their analytical tools into learning NGOs. Fruitful collaborations hinge on relationship building and funding plays a big role. However, there are always tensions on modus operandi. In situations where academics become critical of projects being implemented especially through project evaluations tensions arise on who controls the narrative. NGOs and funders usually don’t put research budgets in their programs but prefer to call research in other forms e.g. baseline surveys, evaluations etc. Key questions are where do NGOs fit in Government and who owns the data (power dynamics).

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Collaborating with NGOs Discussion Panel
Carly Koinange
Share the Road, Global Programme Lead
UN Environment
Currently leading UN Environment’s Share the Road Programme – which works with countries around the world to prioritize investment in infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians in order to create benefits in the areas of environment, road safety and accessibility.
Carly has been working in the field of sustainable transport for ten years in the area of non motorized transport, road safety, bus rapid transit, congestion charging, low emission zones and cycle share schemes.
Prior to her time with UN Environment Carly was the Programme Manager for the UN-Habitat Sustainable Transport for East African Cities Programme supported by the Global Environment Fund. Working with city leaders in Nairobi, Addis Ababa and Kampala to plan for implementation of bus rapid transit systems.

Carly.Koinange@un.org

Key points from Carly’s presentation
- Road safety and fatalities, Africa
- More deaths than malaria and HIV
- Cities designed and built – not designed to walk, cycle or for children, or people with disabilities
- Cities designed for the rich > those with cars
- Want to design cities for majority > walkers and cyclists
- Access to jobs, opportunities etc
- ‘Practitioners are scared of research & researchers are scared of practitioners’
- Co-design project topic* (collaborative)
- No practitioners read journal articles > MUST disseminate
Jim Walker
Founder of Walk 21

Jim founded Walk21, the international conference series on walking and liveability, in 2000 when managing a European LIFE project focusing on walking at the City of London. He has since led 15 international conferences including 13 in the top 20 places independently accredited as the most liveable places in the world. Between conferences Jim works with mayors, professionals and communities to encourage more of the needs of people on foot to be understood and met. The International Charter for Walking, published by Walk21 as an outcome of several conference discussions led by Daniel Sauter, has been signed by more than 500 politicians and 5,000 professionals with responsibility for improving the safety and attractiveness of walking in their communities. He has enjoyed being part of several European projects specifically including the COST walking research project; Active Access, Switch-Travel and the congestion-busting FLOW.

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Key points for Jim’s presentation
- Key terms – public health, road safety and gender equality
- If it isn’t counted, it doesn’t count
- 60 country study – only measure road safety i.e. fatalities. Other measures needed on walking, cycling etc.
- Physical inactivity 4th reason for global deaths (WHO)
- SDGs useful framework

Shahab Adris
Yorkshire & Humber Regional Manager
MEND

MEND is a not-for-profit company that helps to empower and encourage British Muslims within local communities to be more actively involved in British media and politics.

Shahab is a graduate of International Development with East Asian Studies (Leeds University) and will soon be completing his postgraduate MA in Media and International Development from UEA. He has travelled to Europe on a ‘journalism and conflict’ trip coinciding with the centenary of the first world war and completed an ‘Essentials in Humanitarian Practice’ course, helping him understand the dynamics of humanitarian and emergency assistance, courtesy of UEA School of International Development.

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Key points from Shahab’s presentation
- Working groups, including universities, schools, colleges, women’s organisation, mosques, police, media, politicians etc
- Addressing ethnic and religious group inequalities to promote inclusive societies
- Important for people to feel valued, empowered, sense of belonging
- Involve partners throughout process, especially in earlier stages
- Exclusion operates at the macro, meso and micro level

Collaborating with NGOs Panel Q&A
The main issues that came out from the Panel Discussion were
- Joint agenda setting in the collaborations.
- Universities are in strategic position to collaborate with NGOs because of their credibility which comes with scholarly approach. Evidence from academics is respected by policy makers.
- Evidence gives NGOs power and ‘teeth’ in their engagements with governments
- The main issue is also to make evidence relevant to the end users and packaged for dissemination in new ways that are understandable.
- Balancing research interests of academia versus what is required by NGOs
- There is need for academia to go beyond producing evidence and ask the question ‘So what’? i.e. what are the implications of the evidence produced?
- Collaborations and partnerships often happen in highly politicised spaces and require tact in navigating those spaces.
- Networking, creating personal contacts and maintaining networks

All presentation slides are available on the LSSI website
**Breakout Discussions**

The breakout discussion groups were split into four challenge areas Partnerships, Data, Impact and Ethics

A summary of these discussions are below:

**Partnerships**
- Institutional vs. individual relationships
- Timescale challenges, esp. short-term projects
- Scalability and replicability
- Differences between public and private sector
  - Maintaining independence and academic integrity challenging, especially if working with large private companies / industry / corporates.
- Building partnerships between academics, business, NGOs, policy challenging
- Shareholders also an important, but neglected stakeholder with huge influence
- Different language, concepts, organisational cultures and incentives
- Assumption that university ‘better’ than partners > co-production not equal
- Shared spaces for collaboration - neutral spaces
- Good practice
  - Bring stakeholders on board early in process
  - Academics can leverage backlash / take on risk that NGOs may not want to take (due to academic freedom etc)
  - Manage expectations – ensure communication and clarity
  - Need resources for impact agenda and building partnerships

**Data**
- New tools for research, business – esp. digital technology (global phenomenon)
- Capacity and literacy (inclusive)
- Harness untapped datasets e.g. smartphone location tracking / Open Source

**Ethics**
- No clear strategies for internal conversations > reaching high-level University structure
- The group defined ethics and the basic principles of respect for persons, beneficence and justice. Universities mainly concentrate on procedural ethics without looking at the bigger picture of the research and its outcomes as well as principles of engagement with external partners (NGOs, different countries-global zones). Therefore, it is important to reflect on the university relationship with external partners and its ethical responsibilities as an organisation. This implies a closer look on contractual processes, respect, values and ensuring participatory relationships. There is need to devise an easy way of identifying international partners and their national ethical bodies for compliance in partnerships
- The University needs to come up with a strategy on external partner engagement on an ethical footing and should provide leadership in best practise approach not just concentrate risk aversion. In the same vein, resources for this work can be lobbied for through the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) within the research grants available. As universities rarely do we audit own internal systems of ethics.
- University does not have effective or ethical relationships with NGOs and other countries (hierarchical; University sets terms e.g. contracts)
- How to begin a high level conversation with external partners about ethically driven approaches to research delivery? In most cases University ethical process interfering with relationship with partners.
- The conversation should begin outside the remit of Faculty Research Committee and inside UREC. If the University is to be included in the partnership, there is need to provide the resources as well.
- Chair of AREA Research Ethics Committee (Kahryn Hughes) agreed to take back the discussion to the committee

**Impact**
- Long or short-term impact
- Important to question impacts – focus on positive and negative (must understand agendas)
- Impact can also be conceptual e.g. inspiration / aspiration (not only physical)
- How develop long term partnerships for impact > to institutionalise relationships
- Encompass different measures of impact e.g. storytelling, conceptual
- Build this into organisational structures at the UoL, e.g. IAA reporting
• Scaling up research a challenge from small studies to wider policy and practice > Need to do better at co-designing research projects

Next Steps

Funding Opportunities for Engagement and Collaboration

Leeds Social Sciences Institute ESRC Impact Acceleration Account can be utilised to collaborate with the DWP. Three funding streams have been in operation since 2015 that UoL colleagues can access in partnership with NGOs as an external collaborator:

• **Responsive Mode Impact Fund** (<£15k)
• **Knowledge Exchange Fellowships** (<£10k) – incoming and outgoing fellowships
• **PGR Placement Scheme** - funding PGRs to work on research projects with external partners. PGR’s time commitment of 130 hours (£1,950 bursary (plus additional travel costs).

For full details please click [here](#)

If you have any questions please contact Hannah Crow [h.e.crow@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:h.e.crow@leeds.ac.uk)