



UK Collaborative on
Development Research

ANNUAL REPORT

2021/22



About UKCDR

UK Collaborative on Development Research (UKCDR) is a collaborative of government and research funders working in international development, governed by the Strategic Coherence for ODA-funded Research (SCOR) Board. Our core contributing members include the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS); the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO); the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC); UK Research and Innovation (UKRI); and Wellcome. UKCDR exists to amplify the value and impact of research for global development by promoting coherence, collaboration and joint action among UK research funders. For further information on UKCDR, please visit ukcdr.org.uk.

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Contents

Foreword: Marie Staunton, CBE, Independent Chair of the SCOR Board	4
Introduction from Dr Maggy Heintz, Executive Director	6
1. About UKCDR	8
1.1. Who we are	8
1.2. Our 2021-22 priority areas	8
1.3. Moving into a new strategic period for UKCDR	9
2. A year at a glance: Programme highlights 2021-22	10
2.1. Embedding good equitable partnership principles into practice	11
2.2. Providing a better understanding of research capacity strengthening investments and opportunities	13
2.3. Driving data transparency through Mapping ODA Research and Innovation (MODARI)	14
2.4. Increasing coherence in climate-development research	16
2.5. Mapping and analysing global COVID-19 research funding data	18
3. Monitoring, evaluation and learning	20
4. Governance updates	22
5. Value for money as an effective mechanism	23
6. Future plans	24

Foreword: Marie Staunton, CBE, Independent Chair of the SCOR Board



Over the last few years, we have all witnessed the devastating power of pandemics. They have no passports and respect no borders. Thankfully, we have also seen that research can alter their trajectory. Years of long-term UK Overseas Development Assistance (ODA)-funded research laid the foundations for vaccines against MERS and Ebola which were used in the speedy development of the Astra Zeneca and Johnson & Johnson vaccines against COVID-19. The ripple effects of this changed the course for millions of people who received the vaccine both in the UK and across the globe.

Global development research can help change the trajectory of the world's most pressing challenges from climate change, poverty, inequality and migration as well. Through its work over the years, the UK Collaborative on Development Research (UKCDR), overseen and guided by the Strategic Coherence on ODA-funded Research (SCOR) Board, has tracked success factors for global development research for greater impact, in particular the importance of interdisciplinarity, strong partnerships, fast reliable funding, and coherence.

Understanding how to foster genuine **interdisciplinary research**, such as bringing together vaccine development and behavioural science across the natural and social sciences, was crucial for helping turn the tide on HIV, slow the progress of Ebola and COVID-19.

Existing **strong partnerships** between research institutions and funders were critical in enabling

them to pivot quickly to tackle COVID-19, as we heard from funders and COVID-19 researchers from 87 countries at an event hosted by UKCDR (as part of its COVID CIRCLE initiative) in March 2021. Conversely, researchers have said that UK government cuts in development research contracts had given them less confidence in developing partnerships with UK institutions.

Fast funding through the system set up by Wellcome and FCDO for Ebola was successfully used to rapidly distribute funding in the very early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. Mechanisms such as the SCOR Board are crucial for this as they bring together international development funders. Together we learn how to maximise impact through UK spend.

As COVID-19 hit there was a danger of a proliferation of small-scale studies and a duplication of research. UKCDR has ensured **coherence** to the global research response through its COVID-19 research project tracker, the development of a set of principles for a common approach by funders, and through convened meetings of funders and researchers with our partner GloPID-R (Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease)

Board Updates

I started as Chair of the SCOR Board in May 2021, taking over from Professor Peter Piot. We also said goodbye to Sir Chris Whitty, a founding member of the SCOR Board as he was appointed Chief Medical Officer and welcomed Professor Lucy Chappell his successor as Chief Scientific Adviser of DHSC. Professor Jo Beall the economist and urban development expert stepped down at the end of her term.

The Board was strengthened by two new independent members. Professor Ernest Aryeetey Secretary General of the African Research Universities Alliance and former Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana and Mavis Owusu-Gyamfi of the African Centre for Economic Transformation. Both are based on the African continent and are already leading the Board's consideration of research on the impact of climate change and COVID on economic growth.

UKCDR is overseen by a management committee of Officials, and we would like to thank Mark Claydon-Smith who stepped down after years of valuable oversight and advice.

Executive Director updates

Producing the COVID-19 Research Project tracker at pace was just one of UKCDR's former Executive Director Marta Tufet's many achievements during her three years at UKCDR and we wish her well in her new post at GAVI. John Kirkland brought 30 years' experience in international research for development to the Interim Director post in 2021. He supported the external review of UKCDR by David Parsons and his team which identified the organisations success as a "trusted convenor with a reputation for high performance quality and timeliness of its outputs".

In January 2022 we welcomed Dr Maggy Heintz as UKCDR's new Director. She has already developed UKCDR's new strategy to 2025. Mapping, convening, and sharing evidence of what works for research for international development will continue to be core methodologies, which will inform the collective voice of the SCOR Board. The COVID-19 Tracker will be transformed with our partners

GloPID-R into a global tool for pandemics. The considerable UK funding in climate change research will be tracked, building on UKCDR's work for COP26 which drew lessons from the funding and identified different research needs across high, middle and low-income countries.

Future priorities

Working closely with UKCDR, the SCOR Board will prioritise achieving coherence in subject areas which are interdisciplinary, relate to major policy priorities and are not covered by other organisations.

We will also bring together learnings from UKCDR's research on equitable partnerships and research capacity strengthening to deliver best value for money and development impact. The Board can apply these lessons to their own practice as funders and come together to use their collective voice to support the types of funding, systems and practices that produce excellent impactful research for development. Together we will contribute to an evidence-based transnational research system.

Marie Staunton CBE was formally appointed the new Chair to lead the Strategic Coherence of ODA-funded Research (SCOR) Board in May 2021. The SCOR Board brings an overall perspective on the funding, expertise and experience across HM Government as well as helping ensure that coordination efforts are impactful and that the UK provides a strong voice of leadership to the international development research community. The SCOR Board also provides strategic oversight to and is supported by UKCDR. Ms Staunton replaced Professor Peter Piot, who served as the SCOR Board's first chair since November 2017.

Introduction from Dr Maggy Heintz, Executive Director



In 2021-2022, despite many challenges from the continued pandemic, staff turnover and a sector in flux, UKCDR have continued to nimbly produce work of high quality and in scope to support UK funders to deliver impact through research for global development.

It has been an important time for ODA-funded research over the past financial year as the sector has adapted to the UK government's spending review and departments are putting new strategies in place. This UKCDR Annual Report provides a snapshot of what has been achieved by the team in partnership with its valued members and stakeholders over the past financial year.

I started at UKCDR as Executive Director in January 2022, mid-way through the UN Sustainable Development Goals' agenda and in a very rapidly evolving funding landscape. I believe the role of UKCDR in bringing key actors together around a collective agenda promoting strategic coherence in international development research has never been so important. I look forward to what impact we can bring in the future as we put the next three-year strategy in place.

In line with the vision and previous strategy defined by my successor, Dr Marta Tufet, and thanks to the direction provided to the team

by interim Executive Director Dr John Kirkland, who stepped in from July 2021 to January 2022, UKCDR has developed as a respected, agile organisation, quick to adapt and react to a changing landscape.

We support our members by providing them with high quality data to inform evidence-based decision-making processes to better coordinate research responses in the face of emerging crises. Over the upcoming new strategy period, we will keep building on our vast network of stakeholders and convening power to broker dialogue between funders and sectors.

UKCDR has contributed to relevant debates in several important areas from the research enablers that need to be in place to ensure that research partnerships are equitable to the value of investing in ODA research and the UK's contribution to climate-development research at COP26.

At UKCDR we believe that the way research is conducted is as important as its outcomes, and research funders have a key role to play in ensuring research partnerships are equitable. Together with ESSENCE on Health Research, this year we launched our **Equitable Partnerships** Resource Hub, hosted on our website. It is a live resource bringing together tools and guidance from global partners focused on ensuring equity in international research partnerships. With over 40 resources, including the Research Fairness Initiative tool, and a blog series, this has become an invaluable asset for the research community and funders alike.

Research capacity building is about developing people and institutions, as well as providing a strong enabling environment for research and research uptake. Over the past year, we have undertaken a cross-funder review of UK-funded research capacity strengthening (RCS) programmes in Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs). Informed by experts across our funders and through synthesis of evidence from stakeholder's interviews, this work highlights the lessons learnt from these investments in terms of best design, implementation and evaluation of RCS funds and programmes.

The crucial importance of better funding transparency, especially in the current climate, has been supported by UKCDR's work on **Mapping ODA Research and Innovation** (MODARI) across government departments to improve availability and consistency of data. The database contains over 2000 projects from all major UK ODA funders (FCDO, BEIS, DHSC, Defra) and across delivery partners, and it has been viewed over 6500 times. Tailored reports have been produced to answer queries from HMG Data Teams to members of the project Steering Group, Heads of Mission and country-based Development staff.

As the UK hosted COP26, UKCDR provided insight into UK investments in research on **climate change** and international development, with the aim to improve the coherence and visibility of these investments, inform future research priorities and support the UK at COP26. It also provided an early opportunity to examine the impacts of COVID-19 on the climate change and international development research landscape. It has positively contributed to UKCDR's reputation and credibility in the climate-development research landscape, an area that we want to focus on moving forward.

Finally, as we reach two years since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, another highlight of 2021-22 has been the pioneering role UKCDR

has played in the continued development of the **COVID-19 Research Project Tracker**, quoted as the most comprehensive database of its kind tracking COVID-19 funded research projects across the world. In the WHO Overall Achievements Report, the Tracker was further described as "instrumental in reaching global funding decisions".

Alongside tracking data and in line with our objective to share information and convene, UKCDR and GloPID-R established a **COVID CIRCLE Researcher Community** (CCRC) to help researchers supported by COVID CIRCLE funders to share resources, identify research synergies, and learn about opportunities for interdisciplinary and international collaboration. By providing resources, guidance, and news, COVID CIRCLE helps members of the community engage with and learn from broader COVID-19 research networks with a focus on LMICs.

Joining UKCDR at the end of the 2018-22 strategy period, I was tasked with setting up the new strategic direction towards 2025. Beyond the current financial context and overall importance of international development research, my task was informed by an independent review that UKCDR underwent towards the end of 2021. The recommendations provided in this review will guide us operationally to ensure we continue to be an effective, impactful and cost-effective mechanism to support UK-funded research and our members to achieve the greatest impact.

Looking to the future, I acknowledge the challenges ahead, but I believe that beyond challenges often lie opportunities. Let's make this challenging period an opportunity to highlight the effectiveness, value for money and impact of the UK's investment in international development research and to support the development of a transdisciplinary research ecosystem for international development research.

1. About UKCDR

1.1. Who we are

The UK Collaborative on Development Research (UKCDR) is a dedicated team of experts working to amplify the impact and value of UK's research investment to address global challenges through mapping, improving best practices, coherence and joint action.

We are a neutral and impartial entity providing the secretariat for, and governed by, the Strategic Coherence for ODA-funded Research (SCOR) Board. Our core contributing members include:

- Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS)
- Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)¹
- Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC)
- UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)
- Wellcome Trust

1.2. Our 2021-22 priority areas

For the financial year 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, UKCDR engaged in a range of projects in line with the following SCOR Board's strategic priority areas:

1. Embedding good **equitable partnership** principles
2. Providing a better understanding of **capacity strengthening** investments and opportunities
3. Driving data transparency through our **Mapping ODA Research & Innovation (MODARI)** project
4. Increasing coherence in **climate change research funding** in the lead up to the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26), through our funding landscape analysis
5. Continuing to **map and analyse global COVID-19 research funding data** to inform funder priorities and practices, as governed by the COVID CIRCLE principles.

¹ The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office was created through a merger of the Department for International Development (DFID) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in September 2020. Prior to the merger, DFID was a core contributing member of UKCDR, while FCO was not. Where DFID has been used, this indicates that the activity/event discussed was prior to the formation of FCDO.

1.3. Moving into a new strategic period for UKCDR

At the core of our current strategy (2018-2022) is a principal commitment to data mapping, analysis and foresight, with our remaining activities built upon this strong foundation of knowledge and evidence. We have four integrated and overlapping aims



Mapping, analysis and foresight



Convening for collaboration and joint action



Sharing information, learning and best practice



A collective voice to shape policy

On 1 April 2022, UKCDR will begin a new three-year strategy period that will be outlined in Annual Report 2022-23. Over 2022-25 we intend to:

- Enhance the SCOR Board's **collective voice** by continuing to provide the data and tools for our members to highlight the value and effectiveness of international development research
- **'Bridge the gap'** between what research is funded (coherence at portfolio level, effective funding decisions to maximise impact) and how research is delivered and managed (program set-up according to best practice, monitoring, learning and communications)
- Become a **generator and repository of knowledge and good practice** to enable and support the development of a transdisciplinary research ecosystem for international development research, and to address the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- **Develop our identity in the international development research and funding landscape** by working with a range of influential funding bodies and foster relationships with core users such as the academic research community (UK and international) and the international development community. We aim to foster dialogue, draw on complementary skills, initiate discussions and ensure representation and understanding of our international stakeholders needs and priorities to jointly address global challenges
- **Improve the ways of working** for UKCDR, including clear prioritisation criteria for new projects, and improved MEL and impact analysis
- Implement a **new communications strategy** to increase reach and impact of UKCDR activities.

A refreshed Theory of Change will be included in the Annual Report 2022-23, which will also describe the enablers needed for UKCDR to achieve its role and ambitions.

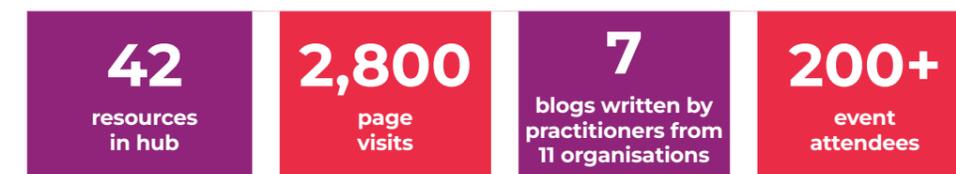
2. A year at a glance: Programme highlights 2021-22

Despite challenges in the sector and internal changes, UKCDR has continued to deliver impactful, high-quality, valuable work across the board with its expertise of the research landscape and programme of mappings, collaborative meetings and events, and best practice tools. Here are a few highlights from the year

2.1. Embedding good equitable partnership principles into practice



IN NUMBERS: Equitable Partnerships



At UKCDR, we believe that research funders have a key role to play in ensuring research partnerships are equitable. Many in our membership, and in the broader research funding community, have taken strides to supporting greater equity in research partnerships.

This year, we continued our work on equitable partnerships, building on our 2017 report² and 2019 workshop at the International Development Research Funders Forum³, in which we identified remaining barriers and enablers of equitable research partnerships among funders of research globally.

Equitable Partnerships Resource Hub



To tackle some of these barriers, in March 2021, we launched the [Equitable Partnerships Resource Hub](#) on our website, in partnership with ESSENCE on Health Research, which quickly became a go-to source of information for those seeking to improve their practices. This is a live resource bringing together tools, guidance and resources from global partners to support all those involved in the research process to embed practices which ensure equity in the design, delivery and dissemination of research. It now hosts 42 resources including the Research Fairness Initiative tool. Over the year, it was visited over 2800 times.

² UKCDR: Finding and building effective and equitable research collaborations or partnerships (2017): <https://www.ukcdr.org.uk/resource/finding-and-building-effective-and-equitable-research-collaborations/>

³ <https://www.ukcdr.org.uk/international-research-for-development-funders-forum-irdff/>

UKCDR also produced the 'Equitable Partnerships: Lessons from Practitioners' Blog Series. Each blog was written by guest authors and provides best practice and learning examples informed by their experience in the field.

New Blog Series

Addressing the global health crisis: epidemiologists attempt to bring back harmony with the BRIDGE guidelines

Building trust with rural communities: how we developed partnerships with rural Indian villages

Three characteristics identified of all higher-value partnerships – funding level isn't one of them

Equitable partnerships: Learning from research consortia

In March 2022, we hosted our UKCDR Annual Stakeholder Event, 'Looking to the long-term: sustainable research partnerships between LMICs and the UK'. The panel, including several members of our SCOR Board, came together to discuss barriers and approaches to equity in global development research partnerships between Low-and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs) and the UK. Presenters included Marie Staunton, CBE, SCOR Board Chair; Prof. Charlotte Watts, Chief Scientific Advisor, FCDO;

Mavis Owusu-Gyamfi, Executive Vice-President, African Center for Economic Transformation; Prof. Ernest Aryeetey, Secretary-General, African Research Universities Alliance; Dr Dajana Dzanovic, Head of Strategic Partnerships, Universities UK international; Prof. Melissa Leach, Director, Institute of Development Studies and presenters from UKCDR. It was attended by 200 people virtually, demonstrating the interest and importance of this topic

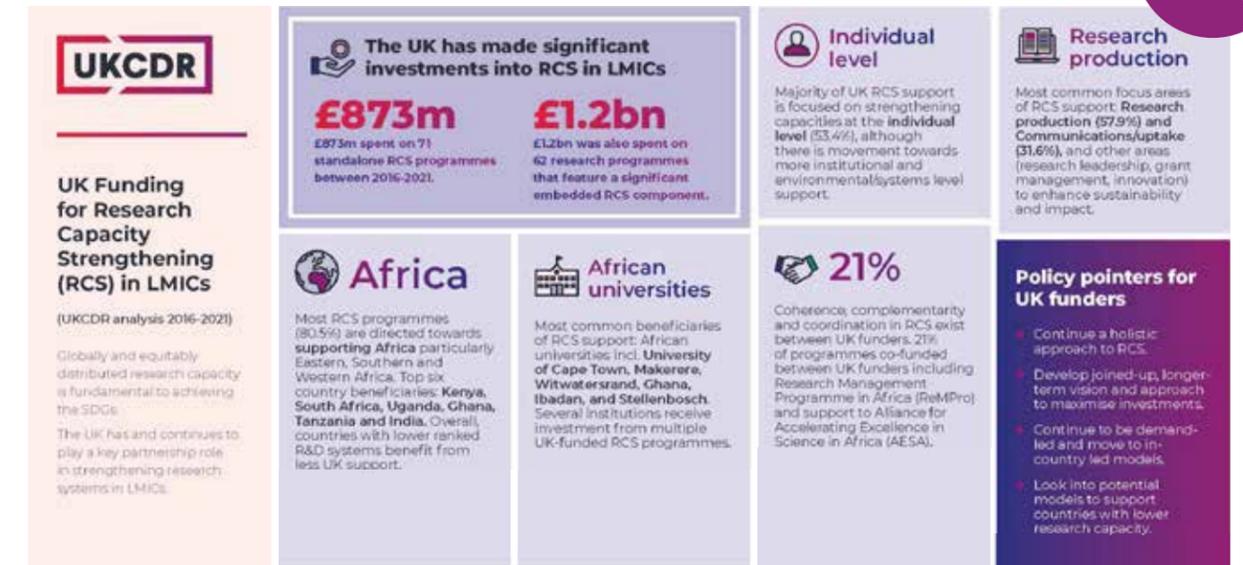


Looking forward

Over the last few years UKCDR, in partnership with ESSENCE on Health Research and in consultation with a taskforce of global research funders, have developed and are finalising a good practice document to support funders

to embed equitable partnerships practices into their activities. This will be published in September 2022. We hope this guidance will support equitability at the funder, institution and researcher level.

2.2. Providing a better understanding of research capacity strengthening investments and opportunities



UKCDR defines Research Capacity Strengthening (RCS) as initiatives aimed at 'enhancing the ability and resources of individuals, institutions and/or systems to undertake, communicate and/or use high-quality research efficiently, effectively and sustainably'. It is a key area of investment for the UK, particularly through the UK's ODA research spend across Government departments.

We want to increase the visibility of these investments to help identify gaps and opportunities for better coordination.

We have a track record of excellence in mapping data which we have applied to RCS. In our [2021 briefing paper](#), we looked at UK-funded contributions to this landscape in LMICs, mapping the extent of UK funders' RCS investments from 2016-2021, along with policy recommendations to UK funders.

UK ODA and Wellcome-funded research capacity strengthening in LMICs

Over the period 2016-2021, UK funders' RCS investments totalled £873 million in standalone RCS programmes and £1.2 billion in programmes that embed a significant component of RCS.

Based on our analysis, we recommended that UK funders:

- Call for joined-up, longer term vision and approach to maximise the value of investments and for the sustainability of UK RCS investments
- Provide longer-term support across different levels of the research ecosystem for a holistic approach
- Support equitability in partnerships as they are key to supporting research capacity strengthening

Looking forward

UKCDR is working on building on these recommendations through a more detailed learning report to understand what has been learned from designing, implementing, and evaluating UK-funded RCS programmes.

2.3. Driving data transparency through Mapping ODA Research and Innovation (MODARI)

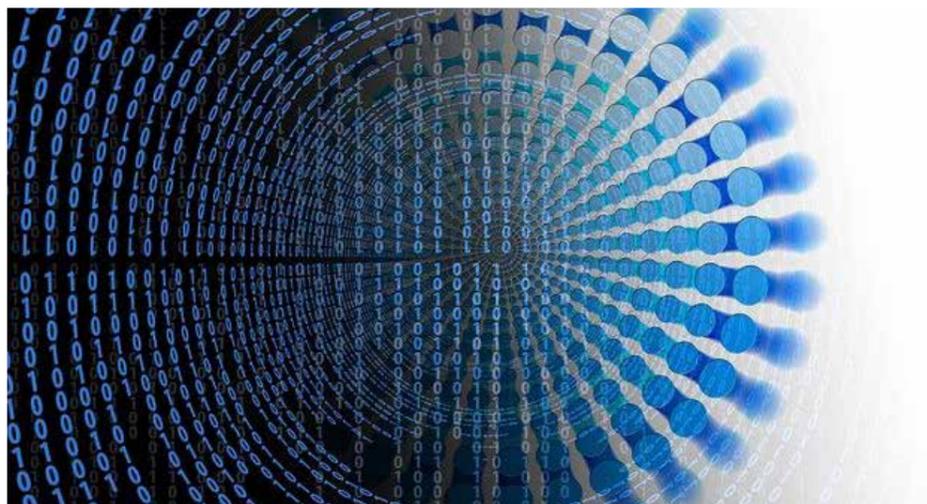


IN NUMBERS: MODARI



Accessible, up-to-date and reliable data on funding is critical for successfully delivering ODA-funded research and innovation across Her/His Majesty's Government (HMG). Data on ODA research and innovation funding has previously been difficult and time consuming to gather and analyse across departments and implementing partners. This has affected the ability of senior civil servants and the SCOR Board to make effective and timely decisions.

The Mapping ODA Research and Innovation (MODARI) project aims to map the ODA research and innovation investment across HMG to deliver timely, tailored outputs to HMG funders. We have concluded Phase I and delivered an [interactive database](#) of UK ODA research and innovation project data. This is the first time that this crucial information has been made easily accessible in a standardised format. It is searchable by Country, UK Funder/Fund, Partner organisation and Keyword. Data is easily exported into Excel.



It is used by Senior HMG decision makers, UK Heads of Mission, ODA R&I data analysts and Programme managers.

In addition to semi-automated country project lists for Heads of Mission and country-based development staff, at least 15 tailored reports have been delivered (some within an hour of the request being received). Examples include:

1. List of active programmes/projects relevant to Ukraine and Occupied Palestinian Territories
2. FCDO-funded ODA project detail for projects involving Welsh universities ahead of meeting with Welsh Government
3. Breakdown of FCDO Research and Evidence Directorate (RED) programmes by gender equality marker to feed into Treasury Spending Review discussion
4. List of UK organisations receiving ODA funding through RED programmes
5. Data on FCDO programmes relevant to climate change with spend by financial year.

Expected benefits of MODARI include:

- Quicker and less manual ODA R&I portfolio analyses (weeks instead of months)
- Improved descriptive details on projects
- Reduced frequency of data requests to external partners
- Improved visibility of cross-HMG R&I relevant to a specific country (including UK partners)

Looking forward

UKCDR is hoping to continue the project with a focus on improving data coverage, further developing the database to decrease manual processing required, delivering relevant and timely analyses and promoting the use of available data in planning and policy development.

2.4. Increasing coherence in climate-development research



IN NUMBERS: UKCDR's work on climate change



Climate change presents a challenge to sustainable development that is both complex and urgent.

Without climate-informed development an estimated 100 million additional people could be forced into poverty by 2030.⁴ At COP26, hosted by the UK in November 2021, countries were called on to make bolder science-based commitments to address climate change. Understanding the complex interactions between climate change and international development is essential if we are to meet both climate commitments under the Paris Agreement and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Research gives us the critical tools to do this.

[UKCDR's report](#), published in April 2021, gives an overview of the collective UK ODA and Wellcome-funded offer on climate-development research since the 2015 Paris Agreement.

UK-funded research on climate change and international development (2015-2020)

The report found that since 2015 the UK has invested over half a billion pounds on ODA and Wellcome-funded climate-development on at least 694 research projects.

This has led to significant impacts including:

- shaping policy
- innovative solutions to reduce emissions
- building resilience, and strengthening research capacity, amongst others

⁴ Source: World Bank

By providing insight into UK investments in research on climate change and international development, we aimed to improve the coherence and visibility of these investments, inform future research priorities and support the UK's engagement in the lead up to COP26 on the important role of research and innovation. It also provided an early opportunity to examine the impacts of COVID-19 on the climate change and international development research landscape.

We also attended COP26 on the 8th November 2021 for Adaptation Day as a part of the UKRI COP26 delegation, contributing to the **UKRI-hosted exhibition in the Green Zone**, alongside the Met Office, Royal Meteorological Society and Belmont Forum. As part of the exhibition, UKCDR used our presence to demonstrate the importance of research and innovation for informing and inspiring climate action.

Additionally, UKCDR, by providing data on funding, supported cross-funder projects on research for adaptation and resilience, nature-based solutions and cities leading up to COP26.

Our report has positively contributed to UKCDR's reputation and credibility in the climate-development research landscape. UKCDR is now regularly sought out to present and consult on climate-development research, an area it had not worked on since 2011.



2.5. Mapping and analysing global COVID-19 research funding data



When the COVID-19 outbreak was declared, the global research community was forced to react rapidly and the danger of research duplication and multiple clinical trials addressing the same questions came to the fore.

Together, UKCDR and the Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness (GloPID-R) recognised this challenge and pulled together to form the joint [COVID CIRCLE](#) initiative to facilitate global collaboration, share learnings, inform funder priorities and practices, as governed by COVID CIRCLE's [seven funder principles for research in epidemics & pandemics](#), and maximise the impact of research, especially in lower resourced settings.



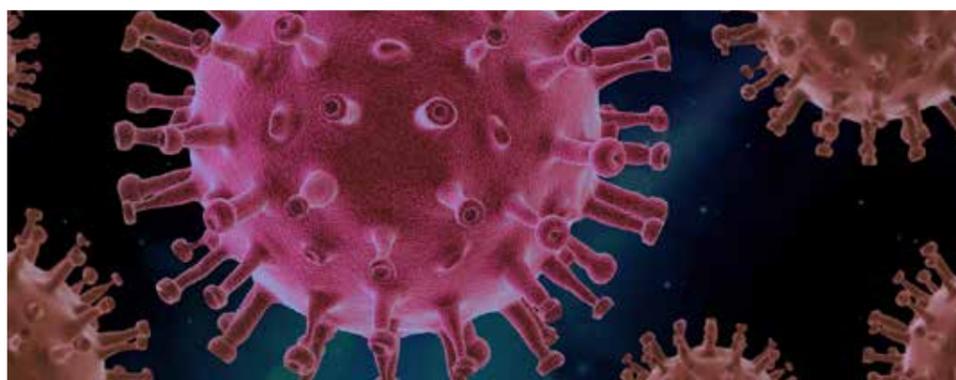
To date, COVID CIRCLE has:

- Aligned funders to a set of principles for effective funding in epidemics and pandemics
- Established a world-class tracker for funded COVID-19 research projects
- Produced quarterly analyses of trends, gaps and opportunities for future COVID-19 research
- Established a COVID CIRCLE researcher community
- Published a report capturing key learnings for COVID-19 funders and researchers

Tracking COVID-19 research in real time

Our Tracker has been quoted as the most comprehensive database of its kind tracking COVID-19 funded research

In April 2020 as part of the COVID CIRCLE initiative, we set up the [UKCDR & GloPID-R COVID-19 Research Project Tracker](#), a live database of funded research projects related to the COVID-19 pandemic mapped against the WHO R&D Roadmap priorities.



IN NUMBERS: UKCDR & GLOPID-R COVID-19 RESEARCH PROJECT TRACKER (March 2022)



As of March 2022, the Tracker had been viewed over 36,000 times and contained over 16,000 projects, worth at least 6 billion USD. With research projects being conducted in 158 countries, the Tracker provides a comprehensive view of the global distribution of COVID-19 research. From therapeutics to human geography, we map and analyse current research projects and trends to help direct investments to where they are needed most.

Types and numbers of institutions using the COVID CIRCLE tracker



Using our comprehensive database, we have produced six [Living Mapping Reviews](#) analysing research trends, gaps and opportunities for future COVID-19 research funding in more detail, helping funders and researchers channel resources to areas of greatest need. We have also taken a closer look at four key research trends: **Long COVID, Research Capacity Strengthening, Indirect health impacts and New variants.**

- We know of at least **87 organisations who have used the Tracker**, including but not limited to funders, governmental bodies, researcher institutions, data sharing platforms, and news portals.
- We have produced **bespoke analyses** for bodies, such as FCDO, BBSRC, GloPID-R, MRC, Wellcome, Parliamentary Office of Science & Technology, IDDO, and the WHO.

From equity to priority setting: Where we can improve funding epidemic and pandemic research for the future

Learnings from the experience of funding and undertaking COVID-19 research should inform future epidemic and pandemic responses. As part of our commitment to helping the

international research community improve its preparedness, we published a report, '[Funding and undertaking research during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic](#)', in November 2021. In line with UKCDR's sustained focus on equitable partnerships, this report identifies enablers and barriers to enacting our Funder Principles commonly experienced by researchers and funders across LMICs. These findings provide learning opportunities not only for our funders, but for the global research community at large.

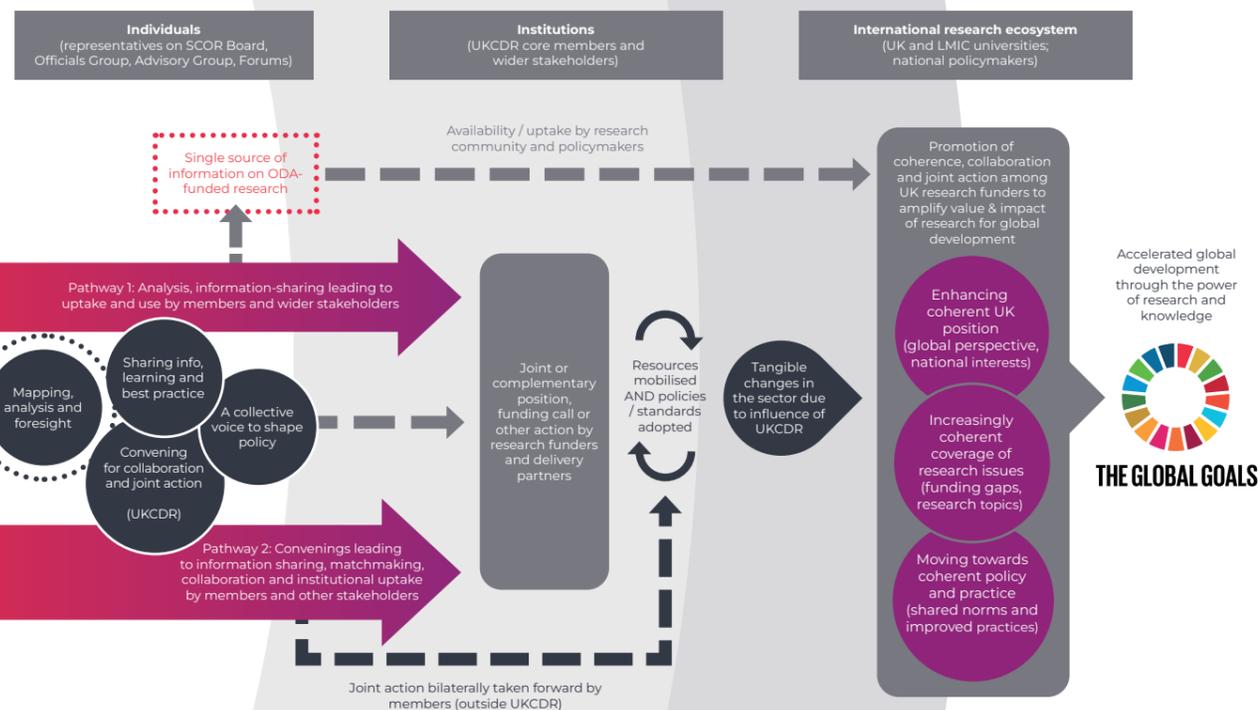
Looking forward

COVID CIRCLE will continue to expand data sources and improve overall data quality for the Tracker, ensuring that it remains one of the most comprehensive databases of its kind. Tracker Highlights will continue to be produced as new topics of interest emerge. We will continue to support a coherent funders' response by incorporating evolving priorities into the international development funding landscape through COVID CIRCLE outputs. Furthermore, we will draw attention to learnings from the COVID-19 research response by providing a one-year update for the report, in November 2022, including additional insights from LMIC-based funders.

3. Monitoring, evaluation and learning

How we expect our work to have impact

UKCDR's Theory of Change describes interventions (what UKCDR does), desired outcomes (how others respond), and ultimate impact (what difference it makes). We will be launching our new three-year strategy in 2022, and with that will be sharing a new Theory of Change.



How our work delivered impact

UKCDR measures Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) aligned with the impacts, outcomes and outputs described in our Theory of Change. We focus on evaluating UKCDR convening activities, mapping, analysis and foresight projects, UKCDR communications, and overall UKCDR impact. In 2021-22 UKCDR performed well against its performance targets with strong evidence that, we:

- Delivered valuable and impactful outputs and activities
- Focused on topics that are of high relevance for UK funders of development research
- Managed our portfolio of projects effectively
- Communicated effectively with the international development research community
- Contributed to increased funder coherence at strategic and tactical levels
- Promoted best practices and facilitated cross-sector information sharing

IMPACT: Accelerated global development through the power of research and knowledge

KPI: Coherence of UK position for the development research sector (UK position)

Achieved:

- UKCDR (via SCOR Board) fed into HMG decision making by submitting principles for prioritisation of ODA research spend to the 2021 Spending Review
- Supported the SCOR Board in developing and communicating a joint narrative on the importance of UK ODA funded research in tackling key global challenges
- Supported the SCOR Board in identifying strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for UK international development research in the global context and setting a long-term strategy for the Board

KPI: Coherence & coordination around research issues and challenges (responding to funding gaps)

Achieved:

- MODARI (Mapping ODA Research and Innovation) project delivered the first cross-HMG database on UK ODA funded research, increasing transparency of funding decisions and improving decision making
- COVID-19 Research Project Tracker/Living Mapping Reviews continued to provide the basis for UK and global funding decisions by identifying funding gaps and opportunities, in support of the WHO Research Roadmap and UN Recovery Roadmap
- Climate Change project played an important role in aligning UK stakeholders in the lead up to COP-26 meeting by providing high quality data on the UK Climate Change Research Landscape
- Delivered a mapping report and briefing paper on research capacity strengthening (RCS) programmes in low- and middle-income countries over the last five years.

KPI: Coherence of policies and practices (setting standards)

Achieved:

- UKCDR and GloPID-R worked with UK and global funders on identifying important lessons learned on "Funding and undertaking research during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic"
- COVID-19 Researcher Community played an important role in supporting research community and embedding good research practices in pandemic research (in partnership with GloPID-R)
- Virtual event on sustainable research partnerships between LMICs and the UK and Equitable Partnerships Resource Hub were instrumental in disseminating good practices in equitable partnerships and enabling debate among stakeholders
- Delivered a policy briefing on UK ODA and Wellcome-funded research on climate change and international development

Independent External Review of UKCDR

In February 2022, the SCOR Board received the results of an independent evaluation of UKCDR⁵, commissioned on behalf of FCDO, BEIS, DHSC, UKRI and Wellcome and conducted by Leeds Beckett University. The review looked across UKCDR's strategic aims and activities to assess its achievements and impacts against expectations, and implications for future strategy and funding. It was based on stakeholder consultations between August and November 2021 (160 individuals across 51 organisations), and a review of secondary sources.

The review was very positive in its tone and concluded that UKCDR "has achieved a great deal since 2018 in delivering its work programme and within limited resources". UKCDR is perceived as a trusted convenor and has a reputation for high performance and the quality and timeliness of its outputs. Synthesis and insight pieces on cross-cutting issues such as safeguarding were highlighted as being of particular value to stakeholders. In a subsequent discussion SCOR Board members agreed that UKCDR should be seen as a "major achievement", emphasised its value to research funders and as part of the wider international development research landscape, and highlighted its continued relevance to key issues in this sector.

4. Governance updates

In May 2021 Marie Staunton, CBE, succeeded Prof. Peter Piot as Chair of the SCOR Board. Marie Staunton has over 25 years of international development and human rights experience, with a broad career in the public, private and NGO sectors. Having qualified as a lawyer, she has worked on many human rights issues and held senior positions at Pearson and UNICEF UK. She has also served as Chief Executive Officer of the child-centred development agency, Plan UK and Plan Canada. Marie currently Chairs the Board at SOAS University and has been on the boards of a variety of local, national and international organisations including the Disasters Emergency Committee, the EU Fundamental Rights Agency and Amnesty International.

In 2021 the SCOR Board also appointed two independent Africa-based academics: Prof. Ernest Aryeetey, Secretary-General, African Research Universities Alliance and Mavis Owusu-Gyamfi, Executive Vice-President, African Center for Economic Transformation. The SCOR Board's membership is now more diverse and better aligned with its mission.

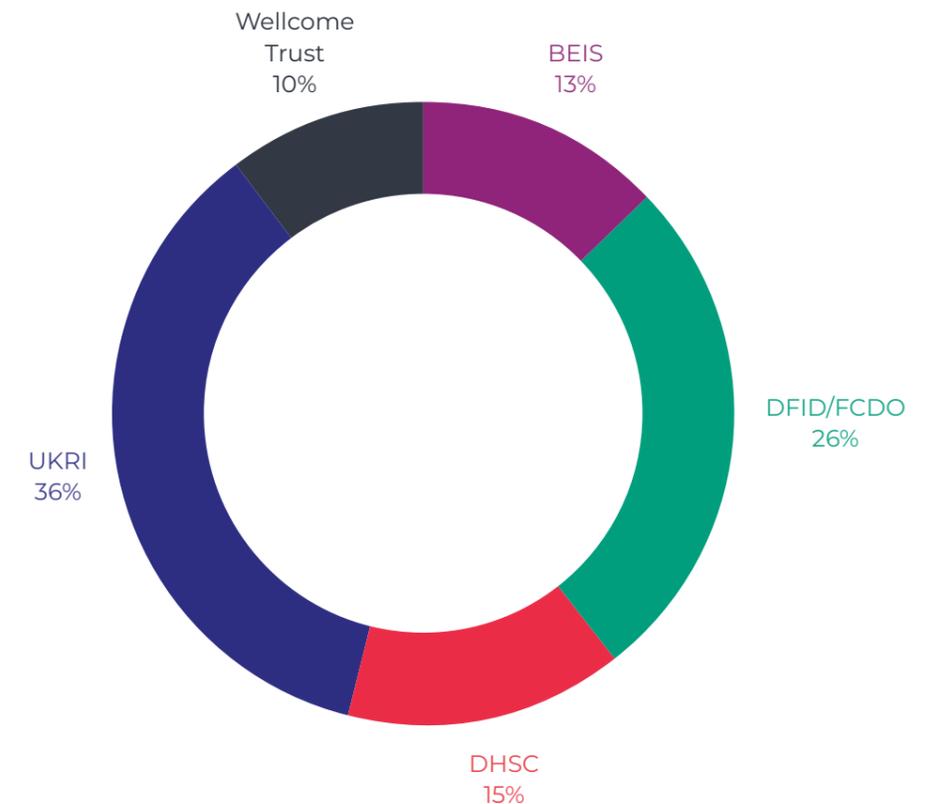
⁵ External review of the UK Collaborative on Development, Research (UKCDR). Final Report of the Independent Review by: Prof. David Parsons, Dr Kate Dashper and Kenneth Walsh (January 2022). Copy available from UKCDR.

5. Value for money as an effective mechanism

UKCDR adds value by allowing each member and the UK to be greater than the sum of its individual parts, enabling the best of UK science and research to achieve greater international development objectives and outcomes. We provide access to a range of expertise across our members, and the external research and international development community – more quickly than any member could hope to access independently.

UKCDR ensures delivery of value for money by maximising the impact of each core member's investment, whilst reducing the financial risk of any given member. Our team also follows good procurement practices and leverages the existing infrastructure and supplier networks of our funders.

Figure 1: Percentage by member of total funding committed (£693,000)



6. Future plans

In the next financial year, 2022-23, working closely with the SCOR Board, we will continue to demonstrate the impact that research has had on development over the last decade and highlight value and effectiveness of research for international development. We also look forward to delivering the outputs of initiatives we have been working hard on throughout 2021 to enable high-quality research in our sector. This includes

- Launching our **new three-year UKCDR Strategy**
- **Mapping COVID-19 projects** against the UN COVID-19 Roadmap to recovery and exploring future pandemic preparedness tools
- Publishing new guidance **promoting equity** and achieving balance to transform the global research partnership ecosystem
- Charting the path to quality, sustainable and **impactful research capacity strengthening** through sharing learning from funders and researchers.

Thank you

We have achieved all this work through successful collaboration and partnership with our core members and wider stakeholder group, who have provided data and time to all our reports, advice and guidance, and contributed to our funder fora.



Get in touch

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