

# **SDGs Framing the Global Challenges Research Fund**

**Professor Helen Fletcher**

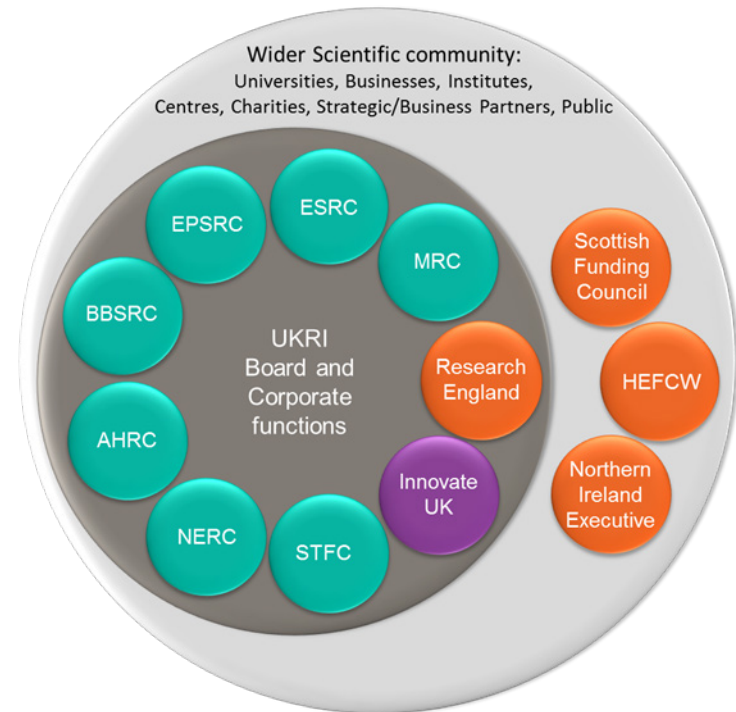
London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

**GCRF Challenge Leader in Global Health**

# What is UK Research and Innovation?

UK Research and Innovation,  
launched in April 2018

- Seven UK research councils
- Innovate UK
- Research England



# Background to GCRF

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- Address global challenges with research and innovation
- Strengthen capability for research and innovation,

*Cutting edge research which addresses the problems faced by developing countries*

2015 Government Spending Review Outcomes

- £1.5 billion ODA funding
- 2016-2021
- Distributed across 17 delivery partners
- Currently >800 research projects and growing

# GCRF Delivery Partners



## *Equitable access to sustainable development*

- Food (SDG2, SDG14, SDG15)
- Education (SDG4)
- Global Health (SDG3, SDG6)



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## *Sustainable economies and societies*

- Cities (SDG11, SDG7)
- Resilience (SDG9, SDG13)





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## *Human rights, good governance and social justice*

- Conflict (SDG16)





# Six Challenge Areas

## ***Equitable access to sustainable development***

- Food (SDG2, SDG14, SDG15)
- Education (SDG4)
- Global Health (SDG3, SDG6)

## ***Sustainable economies and societies***

- Cities (SDG11, SDG7)
- Resilience (SDG9, SDG13)

## ***Human rights, good governance and social justice***

- Conflict (SDG16)



# Challenge Leaders

| Challenge Leader  | Portfolio                   | Title  |
|---|-----------------------------|--|
|   | Resilience Challenge Leader | Professor Mark Pelling<br>(King's College London)      |
|   | Resilience Challenge Leader | Dr John Rees<br>(British Geological Survey)            |
|   | Conflicts Challenge Leader  | Dr Neelam Raina<br>(Middlesex University)              |
|   | Conflicts Challenge Leader  | Dr Laura Hammond<br>(SOAS University of London)        |
|  | Cities Challenge Leader     | Dr Jaideep Gupte<br>(Institute of Development Studies) |

| Challenge Leader   | Portfolio                      | Title   |
|--|--------------------------------|---|
|  | Food Systems Challenge Leader  | Professor Nicola Lowe<br>(University of Central Lancashire)         |
|  | Food Systems Challenge Leader  | Dr Tahrat Shahid<br>(University of Oxford)                          |
|  | Education Challenge Leader     | Dr Kelsey Shanks<br>(Ulster University UNESCO Centre)               |
|  | Global Health Challenge Leader | Dr Helen Fletcher<br>(London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine) |

## UK Research and Innovation

# Key Responsibilities

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- Challenge Leaders are involved in building the six GCRF portfolios
  - building strong and mutual relationships with key academic leaders, GCRF Hubs, Growing Capability and Foundation projects
  - shaping future investment, by scoping future proposals and encouragement of innovative/interdisciplinary approaches
  - working with governments, development agencies, NGOs and other national and multilateral organisations
  - drawing out potential impacts (new products, practice and policy influence)

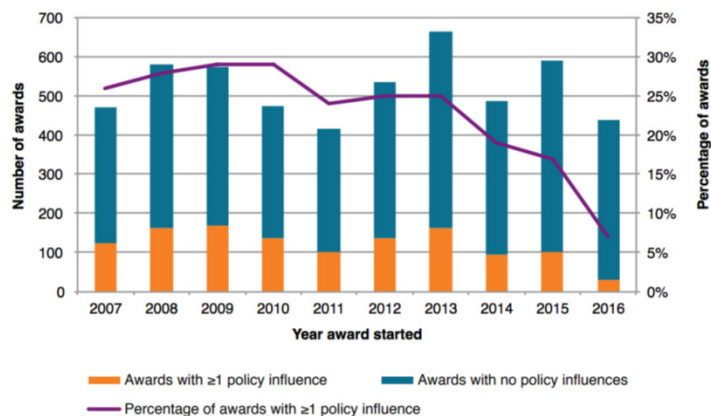
# Interdisciplinary research excellence

- Capacity to think across, between, within SDGs
- New knowledge and insights
- Strategically build on previous investments



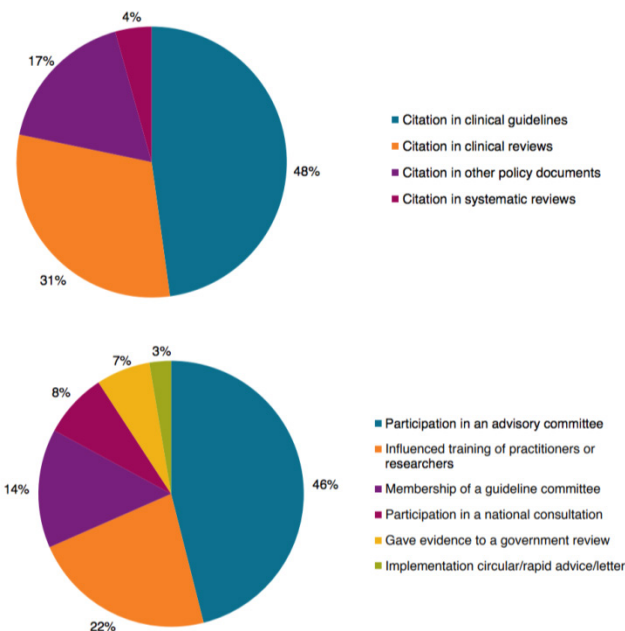
Image: British Academies

# How to maximize impact through Research & Development



MRC funding - policy influence by award start year

**25% of awards have at least one policy influence but could take 10 years to reach this level – how to achieve impact more rapidly?**



Nature of policy influence from MRC funded grants

## Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages



Photo credit: Anthea Katelaris, LSHTM, church-based TB clinic in Timor Leste

### By 2030

- Reduce global maternal mortality to less than 70 per 100,000 live births
  - End preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age,
  - End the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and negNTD's and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases
  - Reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases
  - Universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services
  - **Substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination**
  - Halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents
- 
- Achieve universal health coverage
  - Strengthen the implementation of WHO Convention on Tobacco Control
  - **Support the R&D of vaccines and medicines for communicable and NCD's and provide access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines**
  - Substantially increase health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce
  - **Strengthen the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of**

## **Considerations for equitable partnerships;**

- Structural and resource inequalities between partners
- Who initiates, who designs, who leads, who benefits?

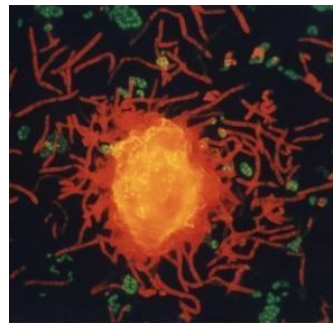
## **Increasing the ‘centre of gravity’ to LMIC partners;**

- Resource transfer and auditing
- Fund is often seen as ‘donor’ activity OR as promoting excellent science

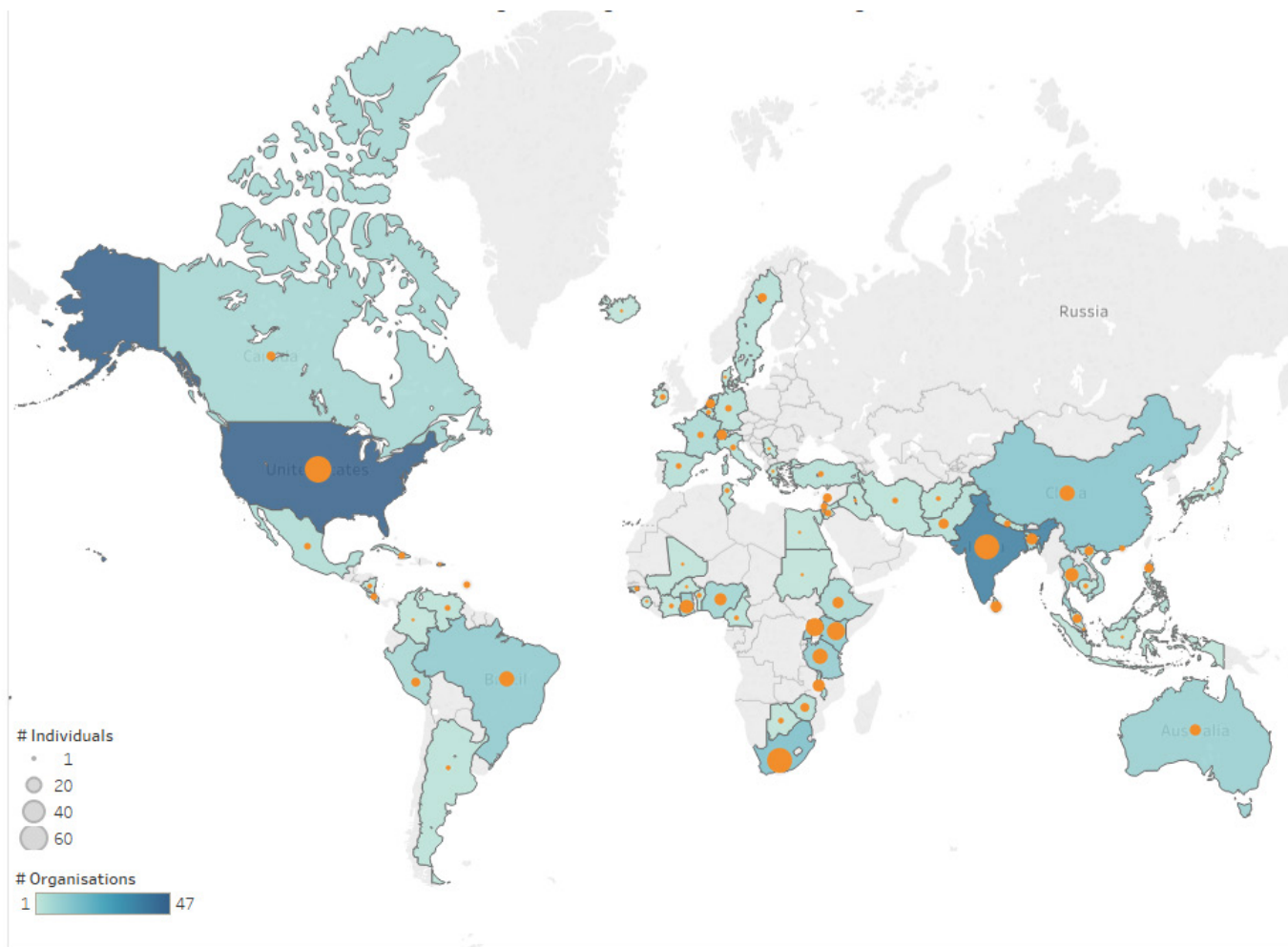
What we are striving for is to move FROM donor activity TO partnership FOR excellent science



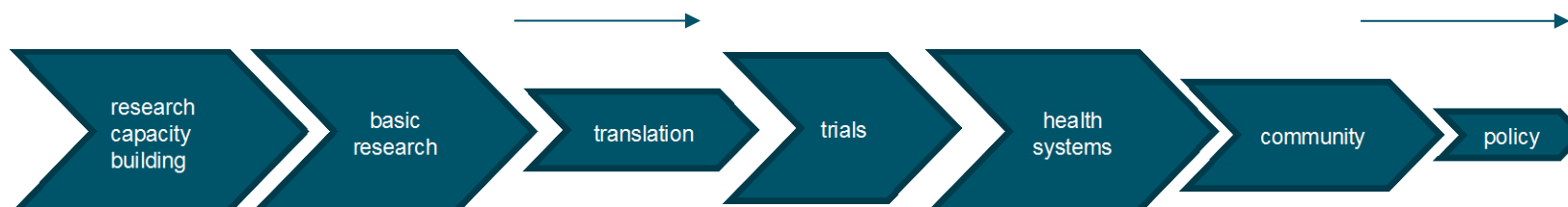
- Launched in 2014, total UK investment of **£735 million through to 2021, with partner countries providing matched resources**
- Uses science and innovation **partnerships** to promote **economic development and social welfare**
- **Building strong, sustainable and systemic relationships** by working together on bi-lateral and multi-lateral programmes



## Where are the GCRF Research Partners in global Health?



## GCRF Global Health Translational Pipeline



- Capacity building
- Basic research
- Health systems research

ESRC Antimicrobial resistance (pump priming and large collaboration n=14), GCRF GROW (research capacity development n=37), EPSRC GCRF engineering and Digital (n=10), GCRF infection (n=20), GCRF non-communicable disease (n=20), Health System Research Initiatives (MRC/joint funded n=58), Joint Global Health Trials (MRC/DFID/Wellcome Trust/Department of Health n=41), AHRC-MRC Global Public Health (n=12).

## GCRF Foundation Awards (2016)

- 1) Infection
- 2) Non-communicable diseases

- Scientific Excellence
- Small awards (<600K) to develop new partnerships and interdisciplinary approach's



MR/P024920/1: Drinking-water under a "One Health" lens: quantifying microbial contamination pathways between livestock and drinking-water

MR/P025447/1: Cultural, social and economic influences on ongoing *Schistosoma mansoni* transmission, despite a decade of mass treatment, and the potential for change

MR/P025153/1: Dietary transitions in African cities: leveraging evidence for interventions and policy to prevent diet-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs)

# Growing Research Capability (2017)

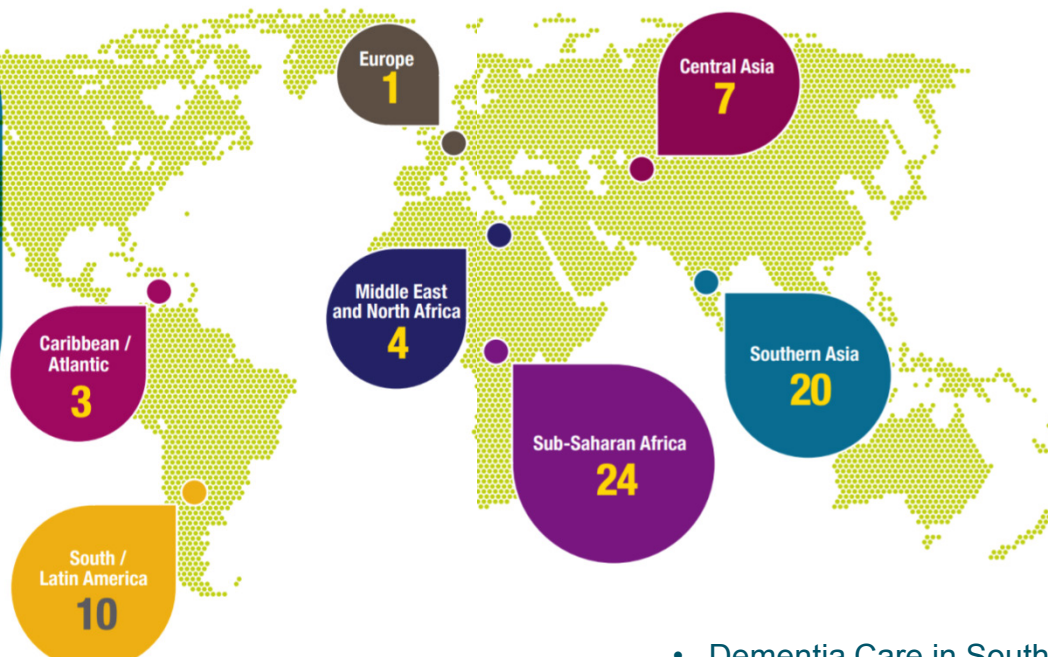
## Key figures

**37** projects

**£225M** invested  
over 4 years

**69** partner countries  
across the globe

**11** challenge  
areas addressed



- Dementia Care in South Africa
- Diabetic eye disease
- Health systems Malawi
- One Health Somalia
- Tobacco
- Chagas
- Vector Control
- Safe Drinking water

## Global Challenges Research Fund

[Global Engagement Networks](#)[Interdisciplinary Research Hubs](#)[Strategic Advisory Group](#)[Challenge Leaders](#)[GCRF Agile Response to Emergencies](#)[UKRI International Development Peer Review College](#)[Funded projects](#)[Home](#) > [Research](#) > [Global Challenges Research Fund](#) > [Interdisciplinary Research Hubs](#)

## Interdisciplinary Research Hubs to address intractable challenges faced by developing countries

The Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) is a five-year £1.5 billion fund and a key component in the delivery of the UK Aid Strategy: tackling global challenges in the national interest. The fund aims to ensure that UK research takes a leading role in addressing the problems faced by developing countries through:

- challenge-led disciplinary and interdisciplinary research
- strengthening capacity for research and innovation within both the UK and developing countries
- providing an agile response to emergencies where there is an urgent research need.

Following a highly competitive call for outline proposals, UK Research and Innovation invites 52 outline proposals representing a broad range of development challenges to develop full proposals. Between £8 million and £20 million (100% full economic cost) will be available for each Hub, provided over a five-year period starting on 1 December 2018. Depending on the quality of the applications received we anticipate awarding 12-15 Hubs.

- Challenge and impact focus
- Interdisciplinary research excellence
- Equitable Partnerships



Thank you

UK Research  
and Innovation

