

# **annual review 2019–20**



**Delivering world-class research, learning and teaching that transforms the knowledge, action and leadership needed for more equitable and sustainable development globally.**

## Director's foreword

### Melissa Leach



This is an extraordinary time of challenge and change. The Covid-19 pandemic and its economic, social and political fall-outs continue to rock the world. At IDS, we have engaged at multiple levels. Through forums such as the Social Science in Humanitarian Action Platform (SSHAP), we contributed expertise to public health responses, drawing on our longstanding research on the social dynamics of epidemics, not least the West African Ebola outbreak. While working with partners to support recovery, we've also been addressing the broader implications of a crisis that has exposed and widened the 'cracks' – inequalities, vulnerabilities and fragilities – in systems of all kinds.

It is vital not just to 'build back'. This crisis challenges us to transform longer-term development approaches in ways that genuinely create more equitable and sustainable futures. That is, to make the universality of development a driving force for change; to build and connect solidarities for collective action, locally and globally; to engage effectively with uncertainty; to value diverse knowledge and expertise; and to understand, address and confront power relations.

These are all imperatives at the heart of our new 2020–25 strategy, *Transforming Knowledge, Transforming Lives*. We build on our last strategy period, especially in reducing inequalities, accelerating sustainability and building more inclusive, secure societies. We set out how we will work more ambitiously, collaboratively, politically and internationally than ever before to meet the global challenges in an era of disruption.

The Covid-19 crisis has also tested us institutionally. Like many others, we have adapted our projects, teaching and operations. We have sought to do so with compassion and kindness, seizing positive opportunities to work innovatively and digitally while respecting and supporting vulnerabilities – all the time maintaining the collegiality and community spirit for which IDS is renowned.

An uncertain future will require ongoing adaptation. IDS, fortunately, has a solid base from which to work. Over the past year, we have enhanced our financial sustainability and are pleased to be on track to exceed our budgeted financial contribution to reserves for the second year running. Together with the University of Sussex, we have retained our ranking as best in the world for Development Studies in the QS University Rankings 2020, now held for four years in a row. We also secured the title of top International Development Policy Think Tank in the Global GoTo Think Tank Index.

We have had a highly successful teaching year. In 2019/20, we welcomed 354 new students, including nine PhD students, all now part of our growing alumni network. We launched our first online degree (MSc in Sustainable Development) in collaboration with the University of Sussex. Our professional development and learning portfolio evolved steadily, with successful short courses on topics such as participatory methods, digital technology, nutrition, social protection, evidence and policy, and impact evaluation. We offered ongoing learning support to UK government and donor agencies through programmes such as the DFID-supported Knowledge, Evidence and Learning for Development programme (K4D). We continue to explore how best to deliver our learning services both on and offline.

Our research this year has been exciting and productive. This Review highlights a small selection of achievements, from collaborating with highly marginalised groups to shape Indian policy, to strengthening Ethiopia's national youth policy. We have initiated new research in emerging areas, such as the backlash against gender justice, and decent jobs for young people. Our major research programmes have convened many debates, including on universal health coverage, inclusive cities, freedom of religion or belief, and the power of partnerships. We have expanded our international networks, establishing mutual learning hubs to co-generate research, teaching and policy engagement in Brazil, China, Ghana and Pakistan, where we already participate with a critical mass of projects and partners.

Only through global cooperation and collaboration can we address crises such as Covid-19 and realise our shared visions of a more equitable and sustainable world. I hope you enjoy this Review and are inspired to work with us over the next year and beyond.

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Workers pick tea in Chiangmai, Thailand. Workers in farms, factories and plantations are among the most vulnerable people in global trade. © Jung Getty

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**We want a more equitable and sustainable world, where people everywhere can live their lives free from poverty and injustice**

**Our commitments**

- Upholding climate and environmental justice
- Reducing extreme inequities
- Fostering healthy and fulfilling lives
- Nurturing inclusive, democratic and accountable societies

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**We will transform the knowledge, action and leadership needed through our world-class research, learning and teaching**

**Our priorities**

- 1** Collaborate across sciences and disciplines, sectors and communities to do research that brings about progressive change
- 2** Build future leadership for development
- 3** Champion the use of evidence for social and environmental justice
- 4** Work with partners to expand international research and mutual learning networks for development
- 5** Create a sustainable, resilient and equitable institution

**for better lives globally**

# Our achievements ... at a glance

QS World  
Rankings 2020

**Nº1**

Development  
Studies

**290**

active research  
and knowledge  
projects

**354**

students from 60+  
countries joined  
us in 2019/20

**88%**

of all IDS publications  
co-authored with  
external partners

2019 Global  
Go To Think Tank  
Index Report

**Nº1**

International  
Development  
Studies

**310**

knowledge,  
research and  
funding partners  
(formal)

**155**

published journal  
articles authored  
by IDS staff

**35%**

of our contracted  
partners located  
in the global  
South

**150**

participants completed  
IDS professional  
development short  
courses



A woman wears a protective mask while making an essential journey during the Covid-19 pandemic. Photographer: Anna Shvets

**1**

# **collaborating across sciences, sectors and communities in research for progressive change**

**The way in which research is undertaken matters. We collaborate innovatively across social, natural, medical and other sciences and disciplines, as well as with governments, non-governmental organisations, civil society and communities. Through these collaborations we are generating and applying evidence in ways that ultimately make a difference to people's lives. For example, in the past year we have contributed insights that have informed emergency responses to disease outbreaks for Covid-19, Ebola and cholera. Our research has supported the German development agency GIZ to improve job creation and youth employment in Africa. Extending our legacy on participatory methods, we have collaborated with India's most marginalised communities to help ensure their voices are heard and shape the policies intended to ensure they are not left behind.**

## Our work strengthens responses to epidemics

Integrating social science perspectives into epidemic responses is now an established area of IDS expertise. Our work has helped to shape the Global Task Force on Cholera Control, the World Health Organization's (WHO) R&D Blueprint process, and UK government and international agencies' responses to outbreaks of Ebola and the Covid-19 pandemic.

From the early weeks of the Covid-19 outbreak, IDS researchers were working with the World Health Organization and UN agencies to provide advice and analysis to strengthen the global response as the novel disease spread from China, across the global North and beyond.

IDS Director Professor Melissa Leach and Research Fellow Dr Hayley MacGregor contributed to a WHO forum in February 2020 that gathered stakeholders to discuss using social science expertise in the pandemic response, alongside other key thematic research areas. Their contribution built on wider work by IDS researchers through the Social Science in Humanitarian Action Platform (SSHAP) and the Knowledge, Evidence and Learning for Development programme. SSHAP is a partnership between IDS, Anthrologica and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

SSHAP hosted a timely roundtable meeting in February on Covid-19 that brought together researchers from China, the UK and Singapore. They explored themes of social contexts and dynamics of transmission and spread; public health responses; communication and messaging – all central to managing the pandemic.

Since then SSHAP has continued to bring real-time evidence and analysis of the social dynamics of pandemics to help shape responses by, among others, the UK Department for International Development, multilateral institutions and academic organisations. For example SSHAP's work has shaped the development of the UN's Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines on Covid-19 in low-resource and humanitarian settings. We have also contributed input to home care guidelines for Covid-19 in low-resource settings and with consideration for different health system realities.

## Informed by Ebola insights

IDS work in this area began during the West African Ebola outbreak when researchers collaborating with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, the University of Sussex and Njala University set up the Ebola Response Anthropology Platform. This work and collaboration has continued with the Pandemic Preparedness in Africa project, led by Professor Leach and Dr MacGregor with a collaborative award from the Wellcome Trust, and SSHAP to inform what they have described as 'a more sensitive and effective response' to epidemics that focuses also on understandings of 'preparedness from below' at local levels. They see social science as increasingly integral to ensuring pandemic and epidemic preparedness.

Formed in 2016, after the West African Ebola outbreak, SSHAP had early support from UNICEF. It supports networks of social scientists and practitioners with regional and subject expertise to provide insight, analysis and advice on the social, political and economic contexts of emergency responses.

From January 2020, the Wellcome Trust and DFID provided additional funding, both to support the core platform and to enable further expansion to respond to the increasing demand for material relating to epidemics.

## Impact and reach

SSHAP provides technical support to operational partners and agencies on aspects of response strategy and on contextual issues. It was actively involved in recent Ebola outbreaks in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), with work here led by Anthrologica. In providing support SSHAP develops and draws on multidisciplinary expert advisory groups with in-depth knowledge of key geographic areas, at-risk communities, and thematic issues that are significant for preparedness, response and recovery. Its Ebola and Covid-19 work has been quoted in media including *The New York Times*, *The Guardian* and *The New Humanitarian*.

Alongside its work on acute response issues the platform provides input into preparedness, for example it has fed into the Community Engagement component for cholera, drawn up by the Global Task Force on Cholera Control, and the WHO Blueprint's disease prioritization process as well as now the WHO Covid-19 Roadmap process.

SSHAP also extends its impact by connecting and collaborating with other networks, such as the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN) and the SoNAR GLOBAL network led from Institute Pasteur.

## A pathway to include the most marginalised in policymaking

If the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are to be meaningful, the knowledge of people in the world's most marginalised communities must be included and new understandings generated. To that end, we have seen encouraging signs in planning and policy circles in India, following an IDS-led research collaboration with some of the country's most disadvantaged people.

For generations, the denotified, nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes, or DNTs, have been among India's most stigmatised communities. Yet there has been lingering resistance to tackle their 'exclusion'. That perception is now starting to shift, thanks to dedicated efforts to win recognition of the DNTs as marginalised and to feed their views into government planning on the SDGs.

Those efforts are being spearheaded by one of IDS' participatory research partners, Praxis, as part of an ongoing research collaboration begun in 2016 to undertake participatory research processes with participants in highly inequitable and extremely unaccountable contexts. The work is supported by several UN agencies, with funding from the British Academy Sustainable Development Programme.

IDS Research Fellows Joanna Howard and Jackie Shaw co-directed the research programme with former IDS Researcher Erika Lopez Franco, in collaboration with five local partners in India, Egypt, Ghana, South Africa and Uganda, building on the long-running IDS-led Participate Initiative.

### Shifting perceptions from the ground up

India's DNT communities are diverse – including forest dwellers, fishers, street performers and traditional sex workers – and have been stigmatised since 1871 when colonial government designated 192 ethnic communities as 'criminal tribes'. The lack of collective identity among them has partly undermined attempts to influence governance.

With the Indian government poised to launch its national SDG Index in late December 2019, Praxis was invited to facilitate a dialogue with the DNTs to ensure the process was more inclusive of communities' voices. By collating DNT views about progress on the SDGs generated during the research process, and channelling them, via a civil society intermediary, into the official planning pipeline, Praxis is helping to shift thinking about how the DNTs are perceived.

There are also signs of policy shifts in terms of asking the Anthropological Survey of India to conduct a survey of all DNT communities.

Earlier, Praxis ran a two-day Ground Level Panel (GLP) with representatives from eight DNTs and an expert panel and influential state and civic actors to debate the research. The GLP was linked to a national campaign to raise awareness of the DNTs' plight. It began by exploring everyday difficulties experienced by the participants in accessing health care, education and the police, which generated collective identification to increase leverage. The group deliberated on research evidence from the wider study in 50 locations in eight states using household surveys, focus group discussions and digital story-telling to produce a set of policy recommendations.

### Visual impacts

Jackie Shaw supported members of the DNT Campaign and Praxis researchers by contributing to and accompanying their research and communications processes, as well as helping them develop their use of visual methods.

During the 14-month research and learning process, five digital stories were produced on the intersecting inequalities that DNTs face. Praxis and IDS took the videos to national and global policy spaces. During the GLP a further video was made with Jackie's help, on the DNT's policy demands. Praxis presented this at a side-event at the High Level Political Forum in July 2017 in New York, at a session facilitated by UNICEF, where it brought the issues to life.

Jackie also directed a film, *Building Sustainable Inclusion*, that communicated lessons on navigating towards accountability, from partners in all five countries, which was showcased at an event organised by the British Academy.

Rwandan women selling eggs to people visiting the Kimironko market in Rwanda's capital city. Photographer: Sarine Arslanian



## IDS research shapes enterprise development action in Africa

This past year has seen IDS expand our wide portfolio of long-term research on the private sector through dedicated work for the German development agency GIZ. We provided evidence to assess and shape its programme on enterprise development in East Africa – and in the process, stimulated debate on wider lessons for job creation across the continent.

Thousands of people in the target countries have benefited from new employment or increased incomes through the GIZ-run Employment and Skills for Eastern Africa (E4D/SOGA) programme funded by DFID as well as other public and private partners.

Using foreign investment, E4D/SOGA promotes employment and addresses skills gaps in Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda. The programme designs and funds interventions with the private sector to ensure these are demand-driven. It pursues opportunities in natural resource-based industries and adjacent sectors such as construction, maintenance, logistics, manufacturing and food supply.

Our involvement with E4D/SOGA spanned all of 2019. The IDS team – Research Fellows Jodie Thorpe and Seife Ayele, Research Officer Peter O’Flynn and Honorary Associate Lizbeth Navas-Aleman – focused on supporting GIZ to refine the enterprise development aspects of E4D/SOGA. They studied how to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), micro-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs with the aim of creating jobs.

In reviewing phase one of E4D/SOGA, the team sought to understand the types of enterprises most likely to create the greatest economic opportunities and how programme interventions could best support those enterprises.



**Thousands of people in the target countries have benefited from new employment or increased incomes**

## Well-received findings

The team worked closely with GIZ’s E4D/SOGA staff to build the research plan. They then fed concrete findings into the emerging programme design for phase two, helping to shape future directions.

This approach ensured considerable buy-in from within the E4D/SOGA community. Our research is now influencing the design of the next phase of the programme, which runs until 2023.

According to Svenja Brachmann, GIZ portfolio adviser on the programme, ‘E4D/SOGA colleagues were really impressed by how well IDS analysed and understood our programme, and by how constructive and detailed the recommendations were.’

Given the strength and relevance of the team’s work, IDS was invited to present the research to the annual meeting of GIZ economic development advisers in Africa in September. Jodie Thorpe presented the findings to the closed meeting, which was held in Kigali, Rwanda, with GIZ advisers working on an African approach to growth and employment, including the private sector.

The IDS presentation and research were very well received, stimulating discussion of how lessons on job creation through foreign investment might be applied to other sectors, such as agriculture, across the African continent.

## Reaching poorer populations

Since E4D/SOGA began in 2015, more than 70 international and African partner companies have got involved in interventions in four different countries. More than two-thirds of the interventions have reached the poorer sections of the populations involved.

E4D/SOGA reports that 23,300 people have gained employment so far, of whom 30 per cent were women and 49 per cent were young people. Some 23,500 people, of whom 34 per cent were women and 56 per cent were young people, have seen their incomes rise by at least 10 per cent. Health and safety in the workplace measures have helped to improve working conditions for 11,200 people (44 per cent of whom are women).

GIZ programme data show that training measures have supported 1,030 micro, small and medium enterprises offering goods and services across sectors as well as 29,700 agricultural micro-enterprises.

# 2

## building future leadership for development

To respond to global challenges, we need new generations of informed and knowledgeable leaders and champions – from presidents and ambassadors to intellectuals and activists, entrepreneurs and journalists. In the past year we have worked hard to strengthen, expand and extend the opportunities for learning through our world-renowned postgraduate degrees, PhD research programme, and professional development courses for development practitioners and decision makers. Notable achievements included the launch, with the University of Sussex, of our first online Master's course; prestigious awards for alumni Sosan Aziz, Vibhor Mathurs and Yoko Inagaki for their social impact work; and an inspiring visit from IDS alum and now Vice President of The Gambia, Isatou Touray, whose fascinating Annual Lecture shared learning on contemporary politics in Africa and beyond.



Children in Jalawla, Diyala Province, Iraq, head to school past a wall pock-marked by shrapnel and bullet holes, a legacy of the battle to retake the city from ISIS, who occupied it for several months during 2014. © Abie Trayler-Smithy, Panos Pictures

## Attaining excellence and equity

We have continued to strive for excellence and equity in our learning and teaching over the past year, whatever the challenges confronting us.

For the fourth consecutive year we were ranked best in the world, together with the University of Sussex, for Development Studies in the QS University World Rankings. We also secured the title of top International Development Policy Think Tank in the Global Go To Think Tank Index.

In 2019/20, our student body counted 354 students, for both Master's degrees and PhDs, who come from more than 60 countries.

Our Master's graduates this year included five IDS Graduate Scholarship students. We were delighted to be able to offer these scholarships, which further enhance the diversity of our student body and offer the most able students from low- and middle-income countries the opportunity to study at IDS – and to go on to effect global change. Earlier this year, scholarship graduate Vibhor Mathurs told us how his year at IDS was 'one of the most incredible and transformative experiences of my life'. After completing his Master's he was offered a PhD scholarship at Bath University, his NGO (the Spinning Wheel Leadership Foundation) scaled up its operations considerably, and he received the *Karamveer Chakra 2019 award* from UNDP–iCongo for excellence in social service. The award celebrates social entrepreneurs and change makers who seek sustainable solutions to grass-roots problems.

IDS students and alumni have also been excelling in applied activities that demonstrate their commitment to promoting equal and sustainable societies.

Sosan Aziz (Sussex and IDS alumna) won a prestigious British Council Alumni Award in Pakistan's Social Impact Category. The award recognises the outstanding achievements of alumni with a UK higher education whose work has positively changed their society or community.

Yoko Inagaki (MA Globalisation, Business and Development) was awarded an £8,000 prize in the 2020 Startup Sussex Social Impact competition. Yoko's enterprise aims to reduce one of the most serious health threats to the local population and to empower women by providing the first public washing and drying facility in Madagascar.

Surya Darma (MA Poverty and Development) was invited to meet the UK's FCO Minister for Asia and the Pacific Heather Wheeler MP to talk about Southeast Asia cooperation with the UK and overall satisfaction of the education system and quality education in Asia.

In September 2019, IDS and University of Sussex Global Studies PhD researchers hosted the 8th PhD Conference on International Development working with the European Association of Development Institutes. Led by IDS PhD researchers Amy Riley-Powell and Stella Odiase, the event gathered more than 120 doctoral researchers to hear presentations and share ideas about innovative doctoral research during themed sessions on deconstructing inequalities, sustainability and uncertainty, collaborations in development, and inclusivity and reflexivity in research methods, among other areas.

## Innovations in learning

Our professional development and learning portfolio evolved steadily this past year, spanning an exciting range of topics, learners, contexts and learning approaches.

We convened training courses at IDS for more than 150 development professionals to help them strengthen and reflect on their practice in areas including participatory methods, digital technology, nutrition, social protection, evidence and policy, and impact evaluation. Inspired by the Engaging Evidence and Policy for Social Change course at IDS, we worked closely with government officials in Tanzania and Jordan, and the ReDSS network of humanitarian NGOs in East Africa to create bespoke learning programmes for their staff. We worked with participants on real-life policy problems, to help them gain the skills and competencies required to operate effectively at the interface between policy and research.

In these IDS training courses we have continued to develop and apply well-tailored learning approaches, just as we do in the multi-year Knowledge, Evidence and Learning for Development programme (K4D) which provides learning support to meet the various professional development and learning needs of DFID and other UK government departments. The Learning Journeys commenced during the year increase the emphasis on innovative learning approaches such as communities of practice and action learning groups to facilitate focused learning on priority themes, and online interactive learning resources. The Education and Conflict Learning Journey paired advisers focusing on different issues at country level to reflect on and incorporate interdisciplinary approaches. Learning resources such as a summary synopsis paper and 'talking head' videos were shared among participants, across the UK government, and in the public domain.

We continued to embrace and invest in technology to expand the reach, excellence and equity of our learning and teaching. In 2019 we launched our first online degree (an MSc in Sustainable Development) in collaboration with the University of Sussex. In response to Covid-19, we have rapidly and substantially enhanced and improved our use of digital technologies and methods in teaching both postgraduate students and development professionals. We are using the experience gained to accelerate our expansion into online and blended learning for the longer term. In 2019 we worked in partnership with e-Transform and socialprotection.org to develop the fully online 'Social Protection: A Primer'. This free course, funded by Irish Aid, will launch in June 2020.

As a higher education institution, IDS has been working with university partners in Africa and South Asia to strengthen their pedagogical approaches and teaching curricula. The Pedagogical Leadership in Africa (PedaL), funded by DFID's Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education Innovation and Reform (SPHEIR) initiative, works with university leadership to deliver participatory, learner-centred pedagogical training to higher education institutes across Africa. The European Union's Erasmus+ funded TRANS4M-PH project supports the re-design of curricula using participatory and competency-based principles. In January 2019 in Bangladesh, PedaL members worked with staff of BRAC University, the Asian University for Women and the International Centre for Climate Change and Development with the Independent University of Bangladesh to integrate innovative teaching methods and refresh their approaches to curriculum development.

In an innovative approach to research-based PhD training, we welcomed six PhD students with a special focus on pastoralism who are embedded within a long-term IDS-led research project. As part of an Advanced Grant European Research Council award, led by Professor Ian Scoones, the students are working with the PASTRES project in China, Ethiopia, Italy, India, Kenya and Tunisia on the social and political dimensions of uncertainty in pastoral areas, contributing to debates about pastoral development across the world.

## Postgraduate degrees



# 3

## **championing the use of evidence for social and environmental justice**

**We have been focusing our efforts to underline the value of evidence in decision-making in this post-truth era, and in bringing evidence to bear on policy and practice in ways that improve people's lives. The past year has seen considerable successes in Zanzibar, Ethiopia and Europe, through collaborative work to cultivate approaches and methods that effectively engage evidence with the realities of how change happens. We have enabled Zanzibar officials to enhance their skills in evidence-handling when making policy – with tangible results. A winning research collaboration has opened up a new channel of policy influence for Ethiopian young people, while persuasive argument has helped to push use of cash transfers up the EU development agenda.**

## Evidence-handling skills improve policymaking in Zanzibar

In much of our work, it takes time to discover if we have achieved the impacts hoped for. Just occasionally, that feedback comes more swiftly – as in the case of our capacity-building activities on evidence use in Zanzibar, where the impacts on policymaking appear to be almost immediate.

Through a series of workshops and training events during 2019, IDS staff worked with the Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH) and Zanzibar’s government ministries to help improve the way that evidence is used to develop and implement policy. COSTECH is the country’s main advisory body for the government on science and technology, and on their application.

Thanks to the debates and conversations that were stimulated during the activities, several participants were spurred on to develop policy ideas, using evidence in a completely fresh way. For some of the participants, this was the first time in their careers that they had worked on evidence syntheses or policy briefs.

These ideas have the potential to improve development outcomes in pre-primary education and in agriculture in Zanzibar. Near the end of our engagement with the participants, we asked how they intended to apply their skills in future work – to which some replied that they were already putting them into practice.

### A bespoke approach

The activities were part of a bespoke professional development engagement, an area that IDS is evolving considerably. The IDS team – Tony Roberts and Kevin Hernandez of the Digital cluster, plus Alan Stanley and Alistair Scott, with support of others in the Knowledge, Impact and Policy team – used in-depth interviews and focus groups with COSTECH to identify the needs of staff in government ministries.

This led to three in-country workshops with government ministries staff on building skills around evidence identification, quality assessment, synthesis and communication. Several of the COSTECH team came to IDS for the 2019 short course on Engaging Evidence for Policy and Social Change.

In the workshops, participants developed policy briefs on real-world priorities for the Zanzibar government. This included one brief on pre-primary education entitled Poor Creativeness in Rich Learning Contexts, which was then reviewed by the Zanzibar Institute of Education and presented in a validation workshop with government and non-government stakeholders. The Permanent Secretary for the Zanzibar Education Ministry planned to take the policy forward to the national government.

### Coconut production impacts

Following the workshops, participants also reported being able to use new skills and confidence in handling evidence to inform other policy initiatives. One participant told how in response to the problem of widespread clearance of coconut palms, they had used skills developed in stakeholder analysis and evidence synthesis to support a policy development process in the Ministry of Agriculture.

The result was a draft of Zanzibar’s first ever coconut development policy. The policy has now been approved and is currently being published for dissemination and implementation.

In Tanzania 600,000 families are supported by income from coconut production but production levels are falling due to land clearance for coastal development. The new policy will help to prevent palm clearance, increase coconut production, and so secure the livelihoods of families supported by coconut palm production. The IDS work was part of the DFID-funded Human Development and Innovation Fund (HDIF) project that spans Tanzania and Zanzibar.



**Participants were spurred on to develop policy ideas, using evidence in a completely fresh way**



About 70,000 families – 350,000 people – received cash grants of 15,000 rupees so they could buy what they needed most after the earthquake in Tanahun district, Nepal.  
© Poul Henning Nielsen / Danish Red Cross (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

## Our input pushes cash transfers up the European Union development agenda

IDS analysis of evidence on the use of cash transfers has been helping to influence thinking and shape the development agenda of the European Union (EU). Our input builds on IDS' extensive, long-term research and influencing work on social protection, not least several evidence and policy contributions over the past year.

Cash transfers as a means of social protection are now firmly integrated in both development and humanitarian policy. Yet they are rarely mentioned in EU development debates. This gap in the EU agenda presented an opportunity to press the case for more investment in them – an opportunity seized by IDS Research Fellow and Co-Director of the Centre for Social Protection, Keetie Roelen.

At a roundtable discussion on cash transfers at the European Parliament in Brussels, in January 2020, Keetie gave a presentation highlighting the excellent evidence on the effectiveness of cash transfer programmes to tackle inequality. The meeting was hosted by Green Party MEP Ellie Chowns and explored whether the EU could do more to support use of cash transfers as a development tool. It included speakers from the Overseas Development Institute, Save the Children and Tilburg University.

Since the roundtable, the European Parliamentary Committee on Development has agreed to commission a report into the use of cash transfers as a policy option for the EU.

### Sixth year for short course

In her presentation, Keetie argued for more investment in cash transfer models, which are used increasingly in low- to middle-income countries in government poverty reduction and social protection strategies. She also underlined the importance of additional social services to complement the use of cash.

The Brussels meeting was among several evidence and policy contributions from the IDS-led Centre for Social Protection over the past year. Research in Haiti prompted the local NGO Fonkoze to revise implementation to improve the impact of their graduation programmes on children. As part of a consortium to tackle worst forms of child labour in South Asia, the Centre is developing a cash transfer intervention in slum areas in Bangladesh. It has also expanded research, training and knowledge exchange in areas of graduation, child labour, stigma, and the links between social protection and food security.

Our short course Social Protection: Policies, Programmes and Evidence meanwhile enjoyed its sixth run in July 2019, attracting 30 participants from 20 countries. An online course on the basics of social protection launched in mid-2020, offering training to wider audiences. These various strands are all part of IDS' work to mainstream social protection in development policy and to encourage social protection systems and instruments that are comprehensive, long-term, sustainable and pro-poor.

## Enabling young people to shape Ethiopia's national policy

A winning research collaboration supported by the IDS-backed Impact Initiative has succeeded not only in getting young people's voices heard by senior decision makers in Ethiopia but has also fed into the design of the country's next national youth policy.

This new channel of influence for young people in Ethiopia was opened up thanks to a special National Youth Seminar on uncertainty, violence, poverty and rights, held in Addis Ababa in March 2019, with support from the Impact Initiative. Around 100 people participated, including 50 young people who shared their experiences of seeking ways out of poverty with government officials and senior decision makers.

Representatives from the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth attending the event affirmed the importance of listening to young people's priorities, and said that the research discussed at the seminar would contribute to the re-design of the national youth policy. The day-long event gave young people the chance to describe their struggles with multiple and intersecting barriers, in particular living with disability.

### From Delhi to Addis Ababa

The concept of the National Youth Seminar was first championed by the YOUR World Research partnership, who emerged as winners at a 'Dragons' Den'-inspired event in Delhi where research groups were invited to pitch ideas for working together to achieve impact.

YOUR World Research is funded by ESRC-DFID's Joint Fund for Poverty Alleviation, and is a partnership between Goldsmiths, Child Hope UK, the University of Addis Ababa and the Ethiopian NGO CHADET.

The Delhi event was held at the Power of Partnership conference in 2018 and was organised by the Impact Initiative, which is led jointly by IDS and Cambridge University's Research for Equitable Access and Learning Centre.

YOUR World Research set out to generate new knowledge about how marginalised young people are affected by insecurity and uncertainty, with a focus on Ethiopia and Nepal.

### Positive official reactions

The seminar highlighted research evidence from young people living with disability in Ethiopia and other African countries – Kenya, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Zambia – with a view to sharing lessons and recommendations for the Ethiopian government. Other themes were youth justice systems and street children.

'We strongly believe that the outcome of this research will help a lot, especially in the policy design process of the National Youth Policy,' Matiyas Assefa Chefa, Director General for Youth Participation in the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth, said at the event.

Estibel Mitiku, from the Ministry, described the seminar as 'a very important opportunity to listen to the youth and for them to tell us what is important to them'. She added: 'We need to strengthen our systems and create an inclusive strategy that incorporates all relevant youth issues.'

Officials have subsequently affirmed that research discussed at the seminar has contributed to the re-design of Ethiopia's national youth policy.



**A winning research collaboration succeeded not only in getting young people's voices heard by senior decision makers in Ethiopia but has also fed into the design of the country's next national youth policy**

A boy uses a sewing machine during vocational training for street children at a Retrak centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. ©Robin Hammond, Panos Pictures



# 4

## **expanding international research and mutual learning networks**

**To improve people's lives, we need to advocate for greater investment by funders, governments, civil society, academic institutions and others in equitable and sustainable partnerships. These collaborations must generate knowledge shaped by a greater range of perspectives. To this end, we have been promoting mutual learning, exchange and knowledge generation by establishing regional networks that shape new development research and learning agendas. Despite the challenges of Covid-19 in 2020, we have developed supportive alliances with universities, social movements and others across the world. Our researchers have both convened and contributed to timely, high-profile debates that enable mutual learning and advance thinking on themes such as universal health coverage and sustainable urbanisation. We have made significant progress towards our goal of developing a mutual learning hub in Brazil, drawing on our longstanding, fruitful links with partners there.**

## Convening debate and linking sectors at world-leading events

Whether we are contributing social sciences perspectives to emergency responses to Covid-19, stimulating discussion on the politics of uncertainty, or enabling exchanges of ideas from multiple countries, IDS engages actively with broader debates on how knowledge is privileged and prioritised.

In the past year, IDS has convened events in the UK that attracted international attendees and prompted various cross-media outputs. IDS researchers also joined wider events that have shaped global thinking on citizen participation, universal health coverage, and sustainable urbanisation.

The Impact Initiative hosted the 'Power of partnerships: maximising the impact of the UK's investment in interdisciplinary research for development' in July 2019, in collaboration with DFID, ESRC and UKRI. The London-based event drew 47 researchers, policymakers and representatives from DFID, University of Addis Ababa, University of Kenya, BRAC, and the Overseas Development Institute among others. A special issue of the *IDS Bulletin*, 'Exploring Research–Policy Partnerships in International Development', complemented the event.

Also in July, the STEPS Centre convened a major international academic symposium at IDS exploring the politics of uncertainty across finance, climate, migration, disease and infrastructure. Participants subsequently contributed chapters to an open access book on uncertainty, published in September 2020, as well as blog posts and a podcast series.

More than 80 faith leaders, activists, charity workers and academic experts from across faiths and sectors gathered in June for the 'Forum on Freedom of Religion or Belief and Inclusive Belief'. Hosted in London by the IDS-led Coalition for Religious Equality and Inclusive Development programme (CREID), attendees discussed practical, inclusive approaches to tackling extreme poverty. BBC Radio 4's Sunday programme broadcast interviews with key speakers.

## Substantive role in world-leading events

The value of our work as a convenor, linking debates across sectors, communities and continents, was at the fore in the Participedia Partners Conference 2019, hosted in October by the Action for Empowerment and Accountability (A4EA) programme at IDS. More than 60 researchers and practitioners, including students and guests of IDS, gathered to share ongoing work and examples of participatory governance.

In facilitating the event, IDS enabled the sharing of cutting-edge examples from under-represented regions in the global South. A4EA researchers also spoke at numerous high-profile events throughout the year, and engaged with target audiences such as the World Bank, UNICEF, UNECE, UN Women and the OECD.

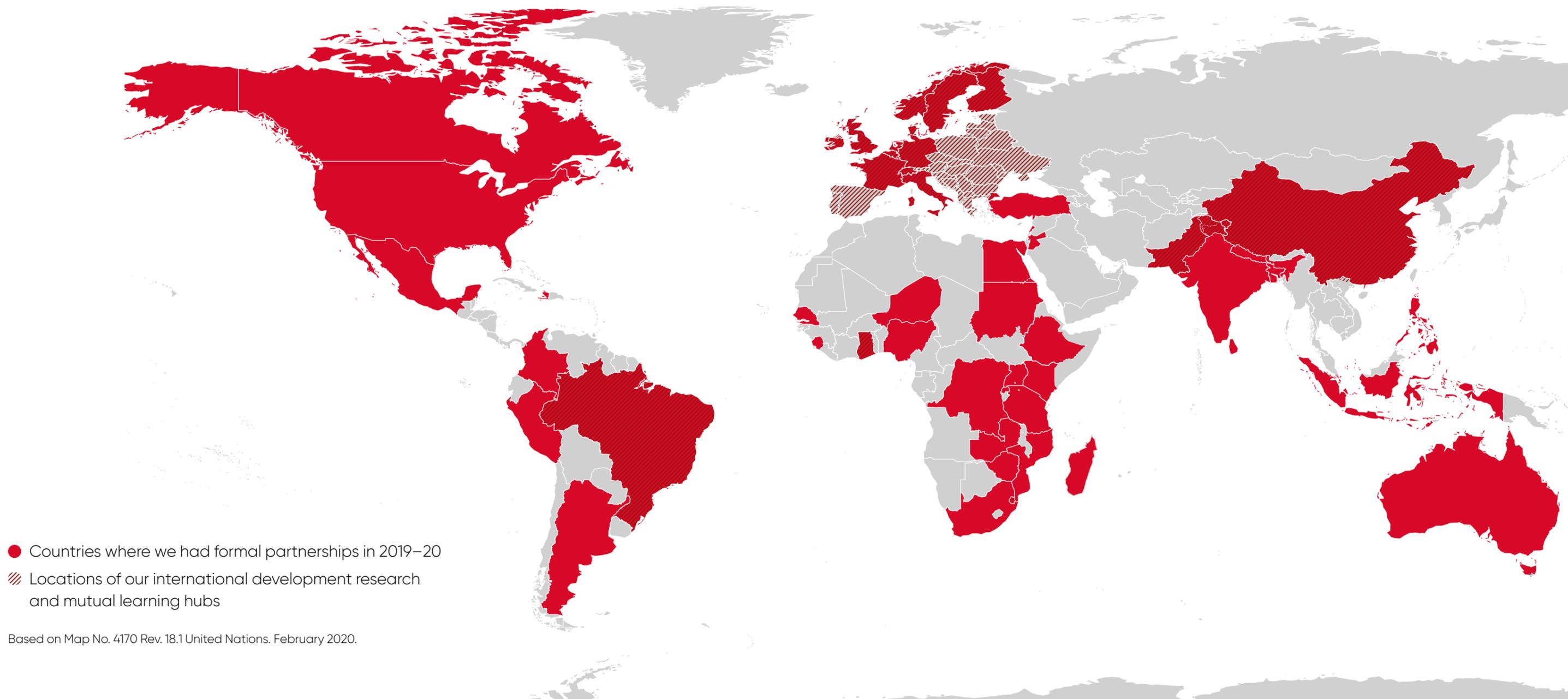
Ahead of the G20 Summit in Japan in June 2019, researchers from the Health and Nutrition cluster joined the T20 (Think 20) meeting – an opportunity to engage with leading international thinktanks and to feed into the deliberations of the G20. *The British Medical Journal* published a policy brief on universal health coverage (UHC), which was produced as part of the T20.

IDS Health and Nutrition researchers joined several consultation meetings on innovations for UHC in Asia and Africa. Deliberations from these meetings were presented at the World Health Assembly in May 2019. The events helped to build trust across sectors and could accelerate UHC.

In February 2020, IDS researchers were in Abu Dhabi for the Tenth Session of the World Urban Forum, hosted by UN-Habitat and now the premier international gathering for addressing the challenges of sustainable urbanisation. During multiple networking and panel events, the researchers outlined IDS research to international stakeholders, including our work on fostering inclusive cities in Sudan and Tanzania.

# Where we work

We collaborate with hundreds of individuals and organisations around the world, both formally and informally, to generate the knowledge, leadership and action required to achieve more equitable and sustainable development globally. In the past year, we had formal partnerships (i.e. direct contracts) with partners in 53 countries. We also established international development research and mutual learning hubs to intensify our engagements in key locations of strategic importance, namely Brazil, China, Europe, Ghana and Pakistan.



## Mutual learning hub builds on strong ties with Brazil

IDS made great progress over the past year with our mutual learning hub in Brazil, building on longstanding partnerships with Brazilian researchers, civil society, policymakers and the private sector.

The eighth-largest economy in the world, Brazil has been a site of both inspiring innovations and severe threats to sustainability and development. The new hub will explore and harness such challenges and opportunities, seeking to understand how these affect both Brazilian and global development through co-generated research, teaching and policy engagement activities.

The hub builds on more than 50 years' collaborative working with partners in Brazil on issues such as health, sustainability, South–South cooperation and inclusive economies. This vibrant set of relationships is already contributing to the hub, in a process we hope to replicate in China, Ghana and Pakistan.

### Building future leadership for development

IDS has finalised an exciting pilot teaching agreement that will forge future leadership for development with an established and prestigious partner – the Institute of International Relations at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio), ranked fourth best university in Latin America by Times Higher Education.

We already enjoy a long-term academic-exchange relationship with PUC-Rio. The pilot marks a shift towards a transformational relationship that will expand learning and networking for students in Brazil and the UK.

Another key relationship that evolved tremendously this year is with the School of Business Administration (FGV-EAESP) of Fundação Getúlio Vargas School, ranked fifth among world-leading thinktanks in 2019. The MoU under way with FGV-EAESP facilitates research, teaching and learning collaborations around shared interests – inclusive business, the SDGs, climate, participation and governance.

With the Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE), IDS researcher Jodie Thorpe and Alumni Ambassador Rebecca Rocha developed a project on gender inclusion and investing for Brazilian small businesses. Activities included training on integrating women's empowerment into business models and using a gender lens in enterprise investments.

IDS Research Fellow Miguel Loureiro worked on professionalising public services and strengthening state capacities in Brazil with the National School of Public Administration (ENAP), where he also contributed to its Master's in Governance and Development as part of an ongoing researcher exchange arrangement. With ENAP and the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA), Miguel is researching how policymakers use evidence in policymaking.

### New understandings on health and inequalities

Through our five-year MoU (2016–21) with CEBRAP (the Brazilian Centre for Analysis and Planning), we co-produced impactful outputs on health and inequalities. These included a set of flagship articles synthesising evidence on universal health coverage and accountability politics from Brazil and Mozambique, to mark the end of the Unequal Voices project.

Building on this work, a live-streamed webinar in March, hosted by CEBRAP, gathered leading researchers in Brazil to discuss lessons applicable to the Covid-19 response. With perspectives from anthropology, political science, economics and health systems research, the event combined insights from IDS staff and alumni, CEBRAP, Fiocruz (the research and training agency of the Ministry of Health) and IEPS (an independent Institute for Health Policy Studies). Reflections drew on collaborative projects that applied social science approaches to understanding epidemics and identifying strategies to reduce health inequities, an area where Brazil has made notable progress.

Other active collaboration projects in 2019–20 were with the Brazilian Cooperation agency (ABC), Articulação Sul (ASUL), DFID Brasilia, and with Embrapa.

*"Over the past decades, the IDS-CEBRAP partnership has made it possible to integrate national debates and the international agenda on potential paths for development in distinct social areas. IDS and CEBRAP collaborations have explored the link between democracy and development, bringing important insights to the formulation of social policies, institutional innovations and mechanisms to fight inequality and exclusion." (Felipe Szabzon, Researcher, CEBRAP)*

Find out more about our partnerships at [ids.ac.uk/partnerships](https://ids.ac.uk/partnerships)

# 5

## **creating a sustainable, resilient and effective organisation**

**We aim to be excellent, inclusive, resourceful and respectful across all of our work. We contribute to the change we want to see, not just through our research, learning and teaching work, but in the way in which our own organisation operates and in the way we support and nurture our people. In the past year we have seen successes particularly in three important areas. By enhancing financial sustainability, we are putting IDS on a firm footing to implement our 2020–25 strategy, Transforming Knowledge, Transforming Lives. By fostering equality and inclusion, we are ensuring IDS models its own values, with fair treatment of our people and those who wish to work with us. Through reducing our environmental impacts, we are playing our part in advancing further towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals.**

## Fostering equality, diversity and inclusion in IDS

At IDS we saw notable achievements this year in supporting excellence, enhancing the wellbeing and development of our people, and embedding our values throughout the organisation. These included becoming a Disability Confident Employer, and rolling out a suite of safeguarding policies, processes and training.

The Equalities Champions Group, convened by the Human Resources team in 2019, with volunteers from across IDS, has spearheaded much of the change. It developed and is implementing an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, with an action plan and various activities across IDS.

Among these are training workshops on unconscious bias (with more to be rolled out) and Accessible Publishing Guidelines to ensure that IDS publications and internal documents are accessible to people with reading disabilities. A trial to provide free menstrual products in the toilets has begun and six gender-neutral toilets have been created.

The Equalities Champions Group also analysed data on employment, including recruitment, pay increments, support for professional development and IDS governance issues, such as the diversity of the Board of Trustees and IDS sub-committees.

### Positive feedback from Annual Retreat

Feedback from staff, particularly from the 2019 Annual Retreat, suggests that our renewed emphasis on equality, diversity and inclusion is widely welcomed. The next Wellbeing Survey will include questions on these topics.

The Retreat considered the extent to which staff feel that IDS is living its values. Findings from workshops on equalities, and on rewards and incentives, both contributed to our new strategy.

IDS is part of the Disability Confident scheme, enabling people with disabilities to participate in recruitment. IDS guarantees an interview for a person with a disability who meets the essential requirements of a job specification, and has trialled the provision of work experience for people with disabilities.



The iconic Seven Sisters, part of the beautiful Sussex countryside that surrounds our campus. © Torres, Pixabay

## Reducing our environmental impacts

In early 2020, IDS submitted its first Communication on Engagement (COE) to the UN Global Compact. This voluntary initiative is based on organisations' commitments to implement universal sustainability principles and to take steps to support the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

In our 2020–25 strategy, *Transforming Knowledge, Transforming Lives*, we have committed to reduce our carbon footprint and our institutional environmental impacts. We are doing this by finding and modelling new and innovative ways to work, and embedding understanding of climate and environmental challenges and opportunities among all our staff and students.

Our Climate Action Taskforce, established in 2019, continues to develop and implement policies and procedures that minimise waste and conserve energy, and that promote sustainable modes of transport.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, we have also rapidly upgraded our use of digital technologies to convene and interact with global partners. This has helped to reduce our environmental impacts and we are actively seeking to embed these ways of working long-term as part of our future sustainability plans.

## Enhancing our financial sustainability

The past year has seen particular success in enhancing our financial sustainability despite a highly competitive funding environment and a challenging operational environment.

We have ended the financial year in a robust position with an operating surplus of £2,755k of which £1,402k relates to unrestricted funds.

Our total pipeline is currently £109.7 million – £44.5 million more than in March 2019 – the highest level that IDS has recorded to date.

We are pleased to be on track to exceed our budgeted financial contribution to reserves for the second year running.

## New grants

Our annual income has been boosted through securing several grants for long-term research programmes. This is important because IDS receives no core funding. Funds, which are secured from various organisations, represent a combination of research grants and fees from advisory work, teaching, publication sales, and some donations and legacies. Nearly all our research grants are competitively won and a significant proportion are transferred to partners, including research organisations, in the global South.

Major new grants in the past year include:

- An IDS-led project to identify and reduce involvement of children in harmful agricultural work in Africa. Awarded £8.3 million through DFID over seven years, the research will initially focus on children and their families working in agriculture in Ghana.
- A five-year research programme to build knowledge, capacity and opportunities to counter backlash against gender equality that is reversing women's rights gains and shrinking civil space. Funded by the ESRC, around 43 per cent of the budget will go to partners in the South.
- The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's £3.7 million grant to the International Centre for Tax and Development (ICTD) for a three-year research and capacity-building programme to investigate how digital financial services and ID infrastructure can improve low-income countries' tax collection.
- The Arts and Humanities Research Council's £580,000 grant to study community-informed approaches to promote restraint and de-escalation in conflicts. A consortium runs the two-year project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).
- Global Challenges Research Fund's Equitable Resilience grant (£1 million) on Islands of Innovation in Protracted Crises – a new approach to building equitable resilience, studying how localised areas have withstood multiple shocks. A project consortium in Côte d'Ivoire and the DRC.

These achievements put IDS in a better position to pursue our 2020–25 strategy, *Transforming Knowledge, Transforming Lives*.

### Growing student numbers

Our growing student numbers have also contributed to financial success. Boosted by the QS number 1 ranking, first achieved in 2015, student numbers have grown year on year to more than 350 in the 2019/20 academic year. Student fees are now around 15 per cent of IDS’ annual income – a valuable source of more flexible, non-project-hypothecated funding. We have thus been able to increase our unrestricted reserves, enabling us to ensure greater financial resilience and flexibility to be more agile, more independent and more forward-thinking – particularly important in these uncertain times.

### Transparency

We are committed to ensuring the highest level of accountability and transparency regarding the funding we seek and receive, as set down in our funding ethics policy. Transparify has recognised this commitment in their global rating of the financial transparency of major think-tanks. In its most recent assessment, Transparify awarded IDS the highest five-star transparency rating.

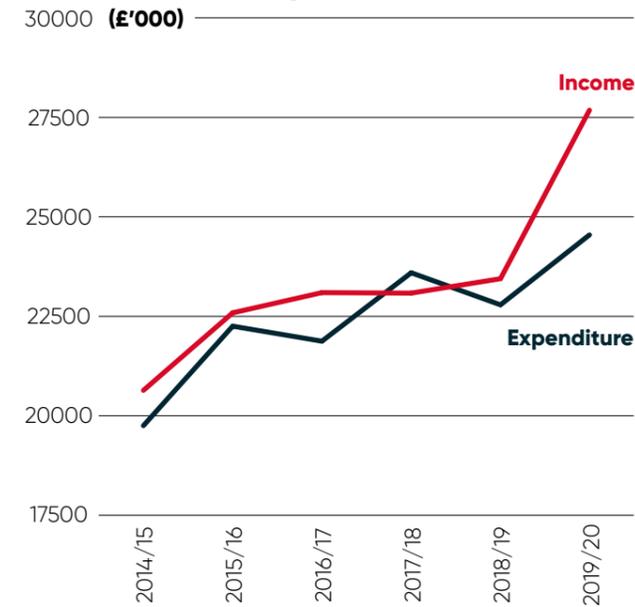
### Accountability

IDS is registered in England and Wales as a charitable company (no. 00877338) limited by guarantee, and with registered charity number 306371. You can see detailed information about our finances and compliance history on the Charity Commission and Companies House websites.

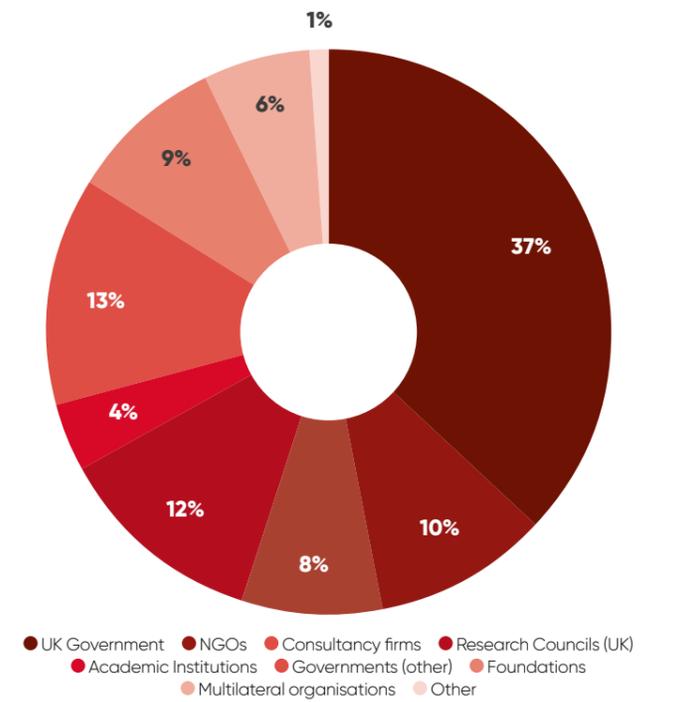
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## Finances and governance

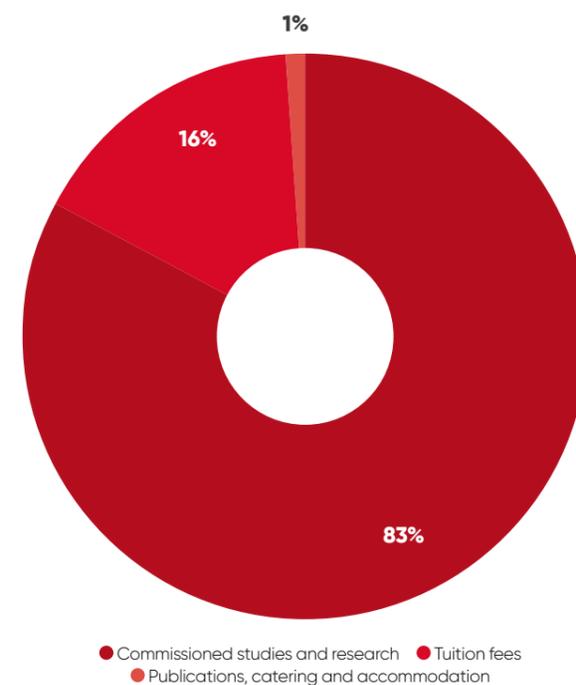
### Total income and expenditure



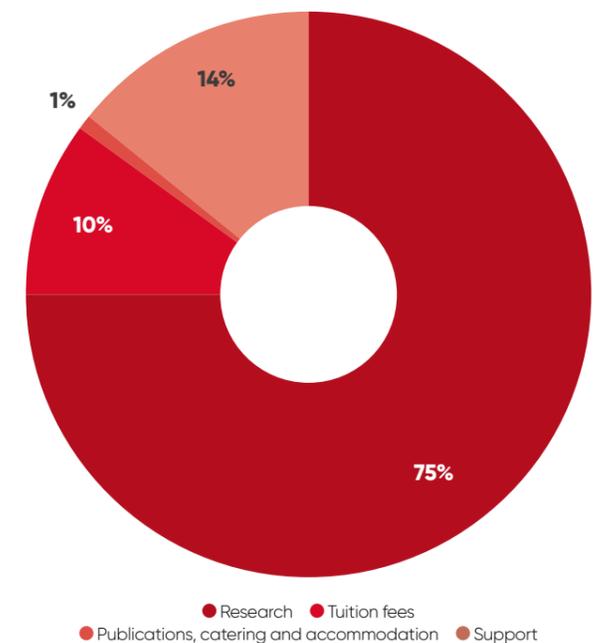
### Research income by direct contractor category



### Total income by type



### Total expenditure by type



Installation of an internet connection in Girevi, Tusheti, Georgia.  
Web access is particularly valuable in villages like this one, which are beyond  
the reach of phone connections. © Nyani Quarmyne, Panos Pictures





Delivering world-class research, learning and teaching that transforms the knowledge, action and leadership needed for more equitable and sustainable development globally.

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