



DFID Science and Engineering Assurance Review: Annex C – External Stakeholder Consultation Analysis Report

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Summary

A range of stakeholders (120 organisations) were consulted. Stakeholders included organisations from; private sector, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), charities, international development donors and organisations, science and engineering specialist organisations, universities and key research funders. Stakeholders were decided in consultation with Department for International Development (DFID) officials.

A 28% response rate was achieved (34 responses). A list of consultation respondents is given in Annex 1 of this paper. This paper has analysed, consolidated and interpreted all stakeholder responses, summarising key findings. Details of how stakeholder responses were analysed is found in the methodology section of the SEA DFID Review Report. Written stakeholder responses have been used alongside evidence from interviews conducted with DFID officials to develop the report recommendations.

In brief, stakeholders are encouraged by DFID's greater focus on evidence and research and DFID's use of scientific evidence in decision-making and policy.

SEA Criterion 1: Science and engineering evidence is effectively used to inform strategy, policy making and delivery.

1.1. Cultural change across DFID

Stakeholders **strongly support** the following:

- a) Cultural change within DFID regarding the role of research and institutional considerations of how to harness research findings.
- b) DFID's active promotion and leadership in evidence-based policies and strategies.
- c) DFID is seen as a forward looking donor, investing in areas where science indicates it should and ahead of time when compared with its counterparts in other countries.
- d) DFID is praised for and encouraged to continue to be flexible, enabling other partners to lead when appropriate.

1.2. Structure and function of Policy and Global Issues directorate

Stakeholders **strongly support** the following:

- a) Restructuring of Policy and Global Issues directorate to produce a centralised Research and Evidence (RED) division working closely with Policy teams.
- b) The role of the Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA) in DFID and his leadership effort.
- c) Creation of the DFID Research Strategy 2008 – 2013.

- d) Increase in DFID's research budget (£1 billion over five years) and the fact that the CSA now holds responsibility for it.
- e) Establishment of the Global Outreach Team (GOT) in RED, with the aim of better uptake of research at country level. The expertise of DFID technical staff available through GOT has been praised.

SEA Criterion 2: Science and engineering is strategically prioritised, accessed, resourced and delivered.

2.1. Senior officials in DFID

Stakeholders **strongly support** the following:

- a) Ongoing strengthening in links across the civil service and the academic boundary by:
 - i. Appointing CSA, deputy CSA (DCSA) and Chief Economist (CE) from academia.
 - ii. The use of Senior Research Fellows (SRFs).
 - iii. Appointment of the Informal Research Advisory Group (iRAG).
 - iv. DFID providing funding of research by consortia involving universities.
- b) Appointment of these officials has led to DFID being externally viewed as an organisation serious about embedding scientific evidence in decision-making.

2.2. Departmental science strategy

Stakeholders **would like to see DFID address** the following:

- a) Although stakeholders strongly support the DFID Research Strategy 2008-2013¹, they would like to see a more clearly articulated Science Strategy. Stakeholders are unclear about who sets DFID strategies and priorities. Stakeholders have highlighted the following:
 - i. DFID needs to make clear how research priorities are set initially to the wider public.
 - ii. Active engagement of relevant groups in problem definition is needed. It is not sufficient to engage the intended users or beneficiaries of science in the delivery or implementation of research stages only.

¹ www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/research-strategy-08.pdf

2.3. Improved use of evidence in decision-making in DFID

Stakeholders **strongly support** the following:

- a) DFID's use of impact evaluation, systematic reviewing and evidence-based policy more generally, in the core of its programme/project decision-making. Examples of best practice include:
 - i. Funding impact evaluation studies over the last decade.
 - ii. Funding and use of systematic reviews (SRs). 50 SRs were undertaken in the first 2 years of the scheme.
 - iii. Funding SRs coordinating groups (mainly under Cochrane Collaboration).
 - iv. Inclusion of evidence in programme/project proposals and business cases.
 - v. Use of evidence papers accompanying policy documents.

Stakeholders **would like to see DFID address** the following:

- b) Strategic management of the evidence-to-policy process to ensure research evidence plays a strong role in decision-making by end users.
- c) Need for greater visibility of the use of science within operational programmes.
- d) Greater use of independent expert panels of internationally respected scientists to inform DFID staff of the optimal decisions for investment in research.
- e) Better procurement and commissioning arrangements to ensure better service for all parties, better value for money and better management arrangements to help attract the best consultants.

2.4. Systematic reviews (SRs)

Stakeholders **strongly support** the following:

- a) The use of SRs in evidence-based decision-making in DFID.

Stakeholders **would like to see DFID address** the following:

- b) Setting appropriate timelines and funding for good quality SRs in the social sciences. Concern that the current approach to SRs may be too heavily weighted towards policy teams at the expense of the quality of the product. This includes both on timing as well as types of evidence eligible.
- c) Setting clear minimum quality standards, in line with the approach taken by major organisations conducting SRs such as the Cochrane and Campbell Collaborations. There is concern that:

- i. The current approach to SRs is to include ‘all of the available evidence, regardless of the quality of that evidence’. Concern that some SRs assessing effectiveness are drawing on evidence of questionable value in determining attribution of outcomes to an intervention.
 - ii. The current approach to SRs does not always ensure that the review scope and questions posed are suitable or defined at the outset. Concern that there is a potential of the programme being used inappropriately by policy leads (e.g. ensuring a SR is there to provide support for their areas of interest).
- d) Directly addressing the question of how to evaluate the impact of ‘small n’ interventions. ‘Small n’ interventions are those which are not amenable to (quasi) experimental approaches, but nevertheless remain some of the most important and wide-ranging interventions in international development (e.g. trade reforms, fiscal policy changes, organisational development). Stakeholders would like DFID to:
- i. Build more support and understanding among different policy groups for an evidence-based approach and for the impacts of ‘small n’ interventions.
 - ii. Avoid a situation in which DFID’s funding is wrongly skewed towards those interventions amenable to randomized controlled trial design.
- e) Take a more demand-led approach to SRs, so consumers of the knowledge generated by the reviews both within DFID and amongst policy makers in developing countries are engaged in the framing of the questions and the shaping of the project.
- f) Build a technical cadre of professional staff with strong independent evaluation or systematic review backgrounds. It is noted that 3ie are helping DFID to establish this.

2.5. Communication with stakeholders

Stakeholders **strongly support** the following:

- a) DFID is keen to engage with the wider engineering and science community.

Stakeholders **would like to see DFID address** the following:

- b) Further strengthen and widen engagement with learned institutions.
 - i. Communication and working relationships with some stakeholders is very strong. With others communication can sometimes breakdown and be variable or poor. Since communication is often based on individual relationships, DFID needs to ensure constant care is taken to maintain all stakeholder partnerships.

- ii. More consistent communication with a wide range of stakeholders would enhance DFID's stated aims to decentralise, improve donor research capacity, improve access to high quality and independent expert advice and improve access to rigorous peer-review and evaluation processes.
- c) To develop new partnerships with the private sector, operational specialists and consultants.
- d) Continued strengthening of relationships between DFID and other Government Departments to ensure Government is maximising their contribution to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
- e) Lesson learning exercises would allow DFID to better consider and identify good practise based on DFID's past experience of partnerships and the experience of other funders.
- f) Better communication with stakeholders about DFID projects/programmes. This should include:
 - i. Setting realistic timeframes for requests of tenders/bids/comments so DFID can benefit fully from insights and expertise of the wider research community.
 - ii. Better communication with stakeholders in times of internal change, for example during implementation of new procedures/practices in response to initiatives at ministerial level.
 - iii. Early consultation with relevant partners (i.e. operational specialists, consultants) during programme/project formulation to ensure better interaction between policy and practise.
- g) Stakeholders suggest that sometimes a more direct, targeted consultation (focussed on the development community rather than the science community) could also be used.

SEA Criterion 3: All science and engineering used is robust, relevant and high quality.

3.1. Research Programme Consortia (RPC)

Stakeholders are **encouraged** by the following:

- a) The process of commissioning RPC took into account the importance of the MDGs.
- b) Research conducted by RPC feeds into the MDG processes and DFID has strongly emphasised the importance of engaging the public in this process.
- c) Demand-led advice is being sought in some RPC, which is regarded as best practice. For example, the Joint Monitoring Programme of WHO and UNICEF has approached the SHARE RPC with requests for advice on the health effects of sanitation.

- d) DFID is recognised as having good commissioning processes for joint RCUK-DFID schemes. Stakeholders have noted:
- i. Good public consultation and engagement with science and engineering stakeholders has been noted during the drafting of certain DFID research strategies (i.e. Malaria).
 - ii. This process is in line with RCUK practices.

Stakeholders **would like to see DFID address** the following:

- e) A more user-friendly application document for RPC bids to be produced. Stakeholders have indicated a formal evaluation of the grant preparation format would benefit and enhance the quality and transparency of the RPC application process.
- f) More transparency and detailed information from DFID about the tendering process for RPC. Stakeholders would like to see:
- i. An independent review of tenders and the interview process.
 - ii. Feedback provided to applicants.
 - iii. Transparency on conflict of interests.
 - iv. Feedback on expected criteria and outcomes.
 - v. Transparency in the administration of the process.
- g) Better, more consistent communication between DFID and RPC is needed to help ensure that appropriate research is being conducted for DFID purposes. It is evident that some RPC are better performing than others.
- h) Clear guidance to researchers in RPCs on how to improve the policy uptake and leverage of their work; particularly around how to manage the complexity of varying levels of take-up of research, and the wide variety of policy beneficiaries and users in the field of international development.

3.2. Resource Centres (RCs)

Stakeholders are **encouraged** by the following:

- a) RCs have made a positive difference to a number of DFID projects. This has been particularly evident when RCs have been engaged early or fully enough to influence project design. An example of good practice is WELLS impact on DFID projects in Bangladesh and Kyrgyz Republic in the past.
- b) Demand-led advice is being sought in some RCs, which is regarded as best practice. An example of this is WHO, UNICEF, DANIDA and the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council have approached WELLS core staff for strategic advice.

Stakeholders **would like to see DFID address** the following:

- c) A more consistent and collaborative approach across DFID staff in accessing and using RCs to ensure this resource is exploited more fully.

- d) A user-friendly, clear guidance document from DFID to RCs on the use of local consultants which addresses the important questions of trade-off between cost and quality assurance.
- e) Staff should also be encouraged to contact the relevant RCs as early as possible, and not wait until the terms of reference have been finalised.
- f) Better communication and understanding between DFID staff and RCs. This could be improved by:
 - i. Familiarisation visits (where appropriate) by newly-recruited or newly-transferred DFID staff to the relevant RCs could be made a routine part of their briefing.
 - ii. Sharing of seminar or training programmes for both DFID and RCs staff to help promote mutual understanding.

3.3. Funding arrangements for commissioned work

Stakeholders **would like to see DFID address** the following:

- a) Consider a more flexible funding approach so it could:
 - i. Commit to smaller initiatives.
 - ii. Commit to funding decisions more quickly.
 - iii. Recognise the benefits of UK interactions in a joined up approach to development.
- b) Be more aware of the impact of very small amounts of funding on development processes outside DFID's immediate control.
- c) Address the gap between investment in primary research and availability of funds for development of in-country advisory and extension services (public, private and non-governmental), particularly in sectors like agriculture.

3.4. Assessing the impact of research

Stakeholders **would like to see DFID address** the following:

- a) Develop a systematic approach to assessing short, medium and long term impacts of research and development initiatives. Stakeholders have commented that the evidence base is more highly developed in assessing impacts of short term interventions in comparison to more complex longer term transformations and sustainability issues.
- b) Develop guidance and partnership with researchers to ensure more rapid and more effective translation of primary research funding into policy, implementation at scale and robust evaluation.
- c) Wider consideration and assessment of impact of research. DFID (like other research funders) is under increasing pressure to demonstrate how the

research it funds has an impact on poverty alleviation. Stakeholders recognise that:

- i. Particular 'attribution' of impact to a particular funder in a complex global research funding environment is difficult.
- ii. Too much focus on impact could result in focusing on quick wins rather than addressing more complex, longer term issues, and in over promising the impact of research.

SEA Criterion 4: Science and engineering evidence and advice is made publicly available unless there is clear justification for not doing so.

4.1. Transparency and publication of research

Stakeholders **strongly support** the following:

- a) DFID's part in the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), an agreement between 18 major donors to publish their aid information in a standard XML format so that DFID's data can be compared with that of other donors. DFID has become the first donor to publish their data in a standard XML format.
- b) DFID's significant cultural shift to publishing raw, semantic, open data on its aid activities on open-access site that allows others to use this data. It is hoped that this will lead to other donors doing the same.
- c) DFID is praised for the open publication of the final Malaria Framework² document and the background evidence paper and the consultation summary. This has helped stakeholders to understand how DFID has been able to derive the framework and how DFID will continue to update where new developments occur that change current evidence used.

Stakeholders **would like to see DFID address** the following:

- d) Research produced by the DFID funded consortia should be independently peer-reviewed and published in the best internationally ranked journals and freely available to the wider scientific community. The review's expert panel strongly support this view. The panel would like DFID to ensure that all DFID awarded contracts clearly articulate the types of outputs expected and the timing and delivery of outputs. The requirement of mandatory peer-review and quality assurance of all evidence should be explicitly included in all DFID awarded contracts.
- e) Continued open publication of policy/strategy documents with background evidence papers and stakeholder consultation summaries.
- f) A more user-friendly, comprehensive source of DFID's research online, which can be easily interrogated and accessed.

² <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/malaria>

- g) DFID should ensure it has a process of storing, archiving and publishing grey literature. Particular areas that DFID should address include:
- i. DFID does not fund on-the-ground collation and management of evidence and data in important areas such as plant pests and diseases. The Centre for Agricultural Bioscience International (CABI) Plantwise initiative, for example, makes use of bottom-up plant surveillance to develop global data, which can inform climate modelling.
 - ii. Many developing countries have significant bodies of scientific information hidden in archives in print media only. This scientific evidence is in many cases of high quality and contains information on indigenous crops and practices that may be highly relevant for improving food and nutrition security. DFID should look at releasing and publishing the evidence
 - iii. It is noted that DFID has done this to some extent by the funding of the Global Agricultural Research Archive, a pilot project, and Kainet, in addition to funding activities like the African Journal Online programme.
- h) The review's expert panel strongly support the views of stakeholders that DFID should ensure it has a process of storing, archiving and publishing grey literature. The panel would like DFID to:
- i. Build an online DFID repository for grey literature enabling open-access to all literature. Research materials produced as a result of DFID funding need to be appropriately quality assured. The gold standard for such quality assurance is considered to be material that can be independently peer-reviewed and published in the best internationally ranked journals.
 - ii. Ensure a requirement for mandatory quality assurance for all evidence to be explicitly included in all DFID awarded contracts; with DFID ensuring that all research contracts awarded clearly stipulate the types of quality assurance that will be acceptable and requiring all material to have an explicit statement of how such quality assurance was achieved.
 - iii. Ensure a requirement for staff to upload quality assured grey literature on to the DFID repository.

SEA Criterion 5: Implications of science and engineering evidence and advice for society are fully considered, engaging the public whenever appropriate, using good practice.

5.1. Communication of research and engagement with the public

Stakeholders **strongly support** the following:

- a) DFID is recognised as a leader amongst international donors in its work on communicating research and getting research into use.

- b) DFID is recognised for actively encouraging RPC to consider engaging with the public.
- c) DFID is recognised for assigning 10% of research programme funding to the communication and dissemination of the research outputs. This is considered within the development community as leadership in establishing best practice for making evidence publicly available.
- d) DFID has been praised for undertaking extensive and open consultations for:
 - i. DFID Research Strategy 2008 – 2013.
 - ii. Recent Nutrition, Malaria and Maternal Health Policies. DFID is praised for using the best available evidence from the scientific and health communities to develop its Malaria Framework and direct its investments in Malaria research.

Stakeholders **would like to see DFID address** the following:

- e) Engagement with and informing the public in fragile/conflict states is difficult to achieve. DFID should have a strategy to handle public engagement in such states.
- f) Funders such as the Wellcome Trust have established public engagement units which support researchers in developing their public engagement skills. Similar support by DFID headquarters may be very beneficial to researchers working with DFID.

SEA Criterion 6: Effective knowledge transferred, with innovation and pull through of the department's research to the economic development of new technologies and services.

6.1. Research for Development (R4D)

Stakeholders **strongly support** the following:

- a) The R4D portal is praised for bringing together information on all the research DFID funds and ensuring information is accessible, particularly once funding for the research has ended.
- b) R4D is recognised by other donors as an open database of research outputs. R4D is a useful resource that other actors in the development community should emulate.

Stakeholders **would like to see DFID address** the following:

- c) DFID's promotion of the R4D portal more widely (internally and externally) to ensure that evidence from DFID-funded research is more widely used.
- d) R4D being more widely used by country offices. An understanding of the value of the work DFID has itself funded is instrumental in looking at how, in the

future, DFID can continue to contribute to the growing evidence base of science for development.

- e) Development of strategies/methods for consistent and effective communication and dissemination of research activities across DFID (UK headquarters and country offices).

6.2. Strengthening research and innovation capacity in developing countries

Stakeholders **would like to see DFID address** the following:

- a) Build and strengthen scientific capacity at individual, organisational and institutional level in the global south. DFID should be a key driver in supporting research institutions, particularly universities in developing countries, to manage and deliver robust, relevant and high quality evidence. This could be done by:
 - i. Developing local learned societies that can contribute to international research networks. This could provide important continuity and career support to researchers/scientists in developing countries.
 - ii. Facilitating valuable twinning opportunities between UK and country based learned societies.
 - iii. Fostering involvement of high quality UK research and technology bases.
 - iv. Complementing the large research centres with a greater number of smaller research teams that include researchers from the global south.
- b) DFID RPC should be expected to have partners with a strong track record of research generation and capacity building in research methods and training.

6.3. Knowledge transfer between RED, country offices and academia

Stakeholders have **expressed concern** about the following:

- a) Some disconnect between the DFID staff who commission research, DFID's technical advisers in the UK and in country offices, and the scientists working on the research DFID is funding. Knowledge would be more effectively transferred and exchanged if there were more regular engagement between these key groups.
- b) Investment in research for use in the developing world has not always been preceded by an appropriate period of consultation with end-user groups. This will compromise uptake of off-the-shelf technologies. More focus of end-user needs is essential component of technology generation, dissemination and uptake.

6.4. Cross-sectoral working in DFID

Stakeholders have **expressed concern** about the following:

- a) Cross-sectoral working at the DFID UK headquarters, regional and country office level is extremely difficult to achieve because key staff are working under heavy pressure of time.
- b) Stronger cross-sectoral working relationships need to be built and incentivised.
- c) RCs could be better used to interpret cross-sectoral work and its impact.

6.5. Untying of Aid and UK development science research capacity

- a) Most stakeholders support the fact that DFID provides untied aid. The UK is seen as a leader in this area and is often cited as an example of best practice.
- b) Some stakeholders have concerns that because DFID has no obligations to fund UK research and support UK plc, that DFID:
 - i. Does not champion the UK Development Science Research capacity.
 - ii. May overlook the UK in areas where the UK is internationally recognised as a leader, for example in climate change.
 - iii. This can be a source of tension between the research councils and DFID and between DFID and some in the UK research community.

SEA Criterion 7: Science and engineering capacity and capability are sufficient to manage and deliver the preceding criteria sustainably effectively.

7.1. Specialist staff

Stakeholders have **expressed strong concern** about the following:

- a) Retention of technical staff with appropriate qualifications and experience (especially in RED). This is essential to ensure proper decision-making and management related to research spend. Stakeholders are concerned that the loss of technical expertise in DFID makes it harder for external organisations who wish to conduct research to find appropriate DFID staff to consult.
- b) Skills developed in inter-disciplinary, field-based, adaptive research are being under-employed and risk being lost.
- c) Staff rotation (especially in country offices) every 3 to 5 years weakens the institutional memory, regional expertise, continuity of the work and delivery capability.
- d) Specialist skills of technical staff not valued. Under-representation of technical staff at senior levels across DFID.

7.2. Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Stakeholders **would like to see DFID address** the following:

- a) Staff must be keeping their knowledge base updated through effective CPD programmes. There should be incentivisation in place for this.
- b) Establishment of work-shadowing or exchange schemes with universities. This would further ensure science and engineering is effectively used to inform strategy, policy-making and delivery.

7.3. Capability and capacity in agriculture, livestock and environment

Stakeholders have **expressed strong concern** about the following:

- a) Insufficient internal expertise particularly in agriculture, livestock, and environment disciplines.
- b) Links between key areas, for example environmental factors and poverty alleviation, are overlooked.
- c) DFID's response to future global issues, for example global food security and the burgeoning world population, may be compromised by a weakened sector capacity.

7.4. Capability and capacity in engineering and infrastructure

Stakeholders have **expressed strong concern** about the following:

- a) Insufficient internal expertise in engineering and infrastructure disciplines.
- b) Links between engineering, infrastructure and the achievement of the MDGs are not recognised.
- c) DFID does not have an up-to-date policy position on infrastructure. The last one was in 2002, Making Connections: Infrastructure for Poverty Reduction³.
- d) DFID is not well placed to harness the strengths of the UK engineering industry.
- e) Maximum value and the best development outcomes from the UK's expenditure on international development may be missed without proper consideration of the role of engineering and infrastructure.
- f) Very poor engagement by county offices on programmes relating to infrastructure, transparency and engineering capacity building with relevant stakeholders (exception was Tanzania office).

³ www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/makingconnections.pdf

- g) Inconsistent (and poor) engagement and communication by DFID officials on engineering related questions.

7.5. Capability and capacity in DFID country offices

Stakeholders **have expressed strong concern** about the following:

- a) Country offices do not adequately engage with research. Stakeholders suggest this may be due to staff being overstretched or not having adequate skills, experience or knowledge.
- b) Decline in the numbers of advisers who should supposedly be able to straddle the science/technology/societal issues that arise in the developing world. Stakeholders are concerned about technological choices made by DFID staff.
- c) In some cases DFID has become a 'disengaged donor' as some research programmes may not have been a priority.
- d) DFID does not have the technical capacity at country level to capitalise on many of the outputs of research to ensure impact on MDGs.
- e) DFID does not always capitalise on the expertise of other donor partners at a country level.
- f) Concern that DFID staff lack in-depth regional expertise.

Stakeholders would **strongly support** the following:

- g) The GOT (within RED) working to ensure DFID offices are better informed about DFID research, and are able to engage more with institutions and teams from the UK research community.

Annex 1 - List of consultation respondents

UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
USAID	United States Agency for International development
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
UKCDS	UK Collaborative for Development Sciences Secretariat
CABI	Centre for Agricultural Bioscience International
NERC	Natural Environment Research Council
MRC	Medical Research Council
BBSRC	Biotechnology & Biological Sciences Research Council
EPSRC	Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
RAEng	The Royal Academy of Engineering
ICE	Institution of Civil Engineers
EAP	Engineers Against Poverty
ENGAGE	ENGAGE Framework contact for Engineering Services
BA	British Academy
SoB	Society of Biology
BSAS	British Society of Animal Science
RSC	Royal Society of Chemistry
3ie	International Initiative for Impact Evaluation
UCL	University College London
LSHTM	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
	Malaria No More
	Find Your Feet
	Publish What You Fund
	Food Ethics Council
	Save the Children
	Oxfam
	The Wellcome Trust
	University of Stirling, School of Natural Sciences
	University of Greenwich, Natural Resources Institute

Glossary

CE	Chief Economist
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CSA	Chief Scientific Adviser
DCSA	Deputy Chief Scientific Adviser
DFID	Department for International Development
GOT	Global Outreach Team
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
iRAG	Informal Research Advisory Group
MDG(s)	Millennium Development Goal(s)
NGO(s)	Non Governmental Organisation(s)
RC(s)	Resource Centre(s)
RCUK	Research Councils UK
RED	Research and Evidence Division
RPC	Research Programme Consortia
R4D	Research for Development
SR(s)	Systematic Review(s)
SRF(s)	Senior Research Fellow(s)
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WELL(s)	Water and Environmental Health at London and Loughborough
WHO	World Health Organisation