



London International
Development Centre

Tackling complex challenges in international development - an interdisciplinary initiative

www.lidc.org.uk



Addressing the challenges

One in five of the world's population lives in extreme poverty on less than 65p per day. On the other hand we live in a world with growing wealth - so why is there such an imbalance? What can be done to resolve the human suffering and wasted potential?

International development refers to the efforts being made by developed and developing countries to bring people out of poverty. It looks at the different poverty challenges that need to be addressed to: settle conflicts, decrease debt and corruption, increase trade, improve health, tackle climate change, improve education, provide clean water and identify who needs aid and how aid is spent. Universities make a particular contribution to international development through generating new ideas, critically analysing development practices and training tomorrow's development professionals.

LIDC - embracing the issues

In 2007, start-up funding was awarded by the [Higher Education Funding Council for England \(HEFCE\)](#) to bring together the scientists and educators from the six Bloomsbury Colleges of [London University](#). They form the [London International Development Centre \(LIDC\)](#) - one of the largest multi-disciplinary centres in the UK, who tackle international development issues and help towards achieving the [Millennium Development Goals \(MDGs\)](#).

LIDC embraces research groups and teaching programmes from [Birkbeck](#), [Institute of Education \(IoE\)](#), [London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine \(LSHTM\)](#), [Royal Veterinary College \(RVC\)](#), [School of Oriental and African Studies](#) and [The School of Pharmacy](#). Working with like-minded organisations and existing partners in low and middle income countries, LIDC aims to extract synergies from the range of development expertise in these institutions, which spans from health, education, social sciences, agriculture and the environment, to develop from these valuable new research and training initiatives.

At the Centre

LIDC operations are overseen by a Management Group, chaired by [LSHTM](#) principal Sir Andy Haines and comprising the principals or representatives from each of the six Colleges.

The day-to-day leadership and strategy direction for LIDC is provided by Professor Jeff Waage and the LIDC team, assisted by a Strategy Group of representatives from the Colleges. An external Advisory Board is being assembled to guide the Centre's development.

Based at its London headquarters on Gordon Square, LIDC is a unique and expanding multi-disciplinary community of over 200 participating staff from the Colleges including specialist development researchers focussed on some of the major challenges in international development. The Centre also hosts [the George Institute](#), [the Royal African Society](#), the Asia-Africa Centre and the Development Education Research Centre.



"Substantial challenges remain to achieving the UN's Millennium Development Goals and addressing longer-term development issues. Action is needed by governments and international agencies to establish a robust research base and to develop strong links with partners in low-income countries. The range of expertise housed within LIDC will be unmatched in the UK and will provide an invaluable source of independent expert advice on international development."

Sir Andy Haines
Chairman of the LIDC Management Group

The aims

The creation of LIDC means the development of a unique inter-disciplinary Centre which aims to:

- Develop high quality teaching and inter-disciplinary research between the Colleges and other partners;
- Develop new and innovative teaching programmes to support development goals;
- Inform national and international policies on development through linking research, policy and practice;
- Build capacity in low and middle income countries to address the needs of higher education and research institutions, non-governmental organisations and Governments.

LIDC Member Colleges



Finding the solutions

Research

Academic research has a strong disciplinary structure, while key problems in development tend to be interdisciplinary. Addressing development challenges involves working across the different natural and social science disciplines. For instance, reducing the threat of existing and emerging infectious diseases, the major cause of death in poor countries, will require integrating research on human and animal health, social issues, economics and education.



Other development challenges such as; prevention and recovery from conflicts, climate change and sustainable resource management also require an interdisciplinary research approach. LIDC's strategy will be to bring disciplinary experts together on specific issues and extract synergy into new programmes of research.

Training and capacity building

Academic institutions provide extensive teaching in international development and development-related areas. Among the six LIDC Colleges, there are over 100 post-graduate modules in these subjects. LIDC will explore how this teaching can be better directed at development goals through new training programmes and capacity building projects, which address complex development issues. To do this LIDC will draw on innovation across the Colleges in taught, distance and blended learning and in information technology for development.

As LIDC grows, networks will be built with other educational institutions particularly in low and middle income countries which will help to develop capacity-building partnerships in research and training at the university level.

LIDC combining forces

Through its events, research, training and funding opportunities, LIDC will tackle the complex problems of international development and help to meet some of the major poverty challenges through this unique academic collaboration.

More information about the individual college members can be found on their websites:

Birkbeck

www.birkbeck.ac.uk

Institute of Education (IOE)

www.ioe.ac.uk

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM)

www.lshtm.ac.uk

Royal Veterinary College (RVC)

www.rvc.ac.uk

School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS)

www.soas.ac.uk

The School of Pharmacy

www.pharmacy.ac.uk



For further information on LIDC and its activities log onto www.lidc.org.uk or contact:

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