



UNIVERSITY  
*of York*

# HIGHLIGHTS 2020

**IGDC**  
interdisciplinary global  
development centre







## OUR VISION

IGDC is a learning and research community at the University of York for equitable global development. Our approach recognises that development challenges are most effectively addressed by working across academic disciplines and through inclusive partnerships. We want our research to improve the lives of future generations everywhere and transform development policy. We equip our students and researchers to become responsible and engaged global citizens. We collaborate with our global partners and work with local communities to create a just and sustainable world.

## OUR PURPOSE

We offer interdisciplinary undergraduate and postgraduate academic programmes in global development and undertake interdisciplinary research to promote global justice and development. We encourage students from across the world to study and work with us. We facilitate collaboration among academics from the humanities and social and natural sciences, within the University of York and globally.

**TRANSFORMATIVE  
LEARNING,  
RESEARCH AND  
PARTNERSHIP  
FOR  
A JUST AND  
SUSTAINABLE  
WORLD**

## OUR VALUES



**INCLUSIVITY**



**RESPONSIBILITY**



**INTEGRITY**



**SUSTAINABILITY**





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## CREDITS

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# WELCOME

In an academic year that was characterised by uncertainty, unprecedented in its effect on global development and academia, and which has required totally new ways of working, the IGDC has managed to consolidate its positive attributes, be clearer in its research focus, facilitate, cultivate and concertise research partnerships, and prepare a new, truly interdisciplinary BA programme.

The Advisory Board has been impressed by the way the Centre has been able to respond in a meaningful way to the effects of the Covid pandemic: exploring its effect on countries where members are researching and new ways in which that research can be executed. The centre has also responded positively and creatively in the design and delivery of the new BA and even in the way the various staff and membership of the Centre interact.

This year's annual report shows highlights of all of these different aspects of the IGDC's work and gives a flavour of the type of interdisciplinary learning that the centre is facilitating, the fascinating array of research areas, and some of the partnerships that have been consolidated throughout the year.



**CHRISTINE WALLACE**

CHAIR

IGDC EXTERNAL ADVISORY BOARD

## EXTERNAL ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

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# INTRODUCTION

IGDC was set up in 2017 through a generous grant from the University of York to support interdisciplinary, socially relevant research, create an exciting new degree in Global Development, and promote partnerships with actors who share our values. In Highlights 2020, we share some of our recent successes. We are particularly pleased to welcome our first cohort of undergraduate students in September 2020. Our students will learn practical skills as well as reaching high academic standards through a unique problem-based learning approach and benefit from masterclasses delivered by practitioner partners. In line with our founding mission, IGDC also plays a growing role in development debates. We are particularly proud of the success of our Covid-19 webinars.

Progress towards the reduction of global inequalities and the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 face greater obstacles than ever. Covid-19 has dented global capacity to deliver equitable and sustainable development. Now, more than ever, there is a need for communities of scholars, researchers, practitioners and young people to come together to promote dialogue, research and learning that will enable us to resolve the serious challenges ahead.

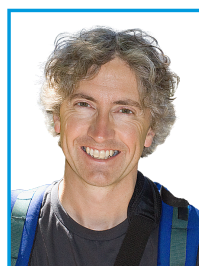
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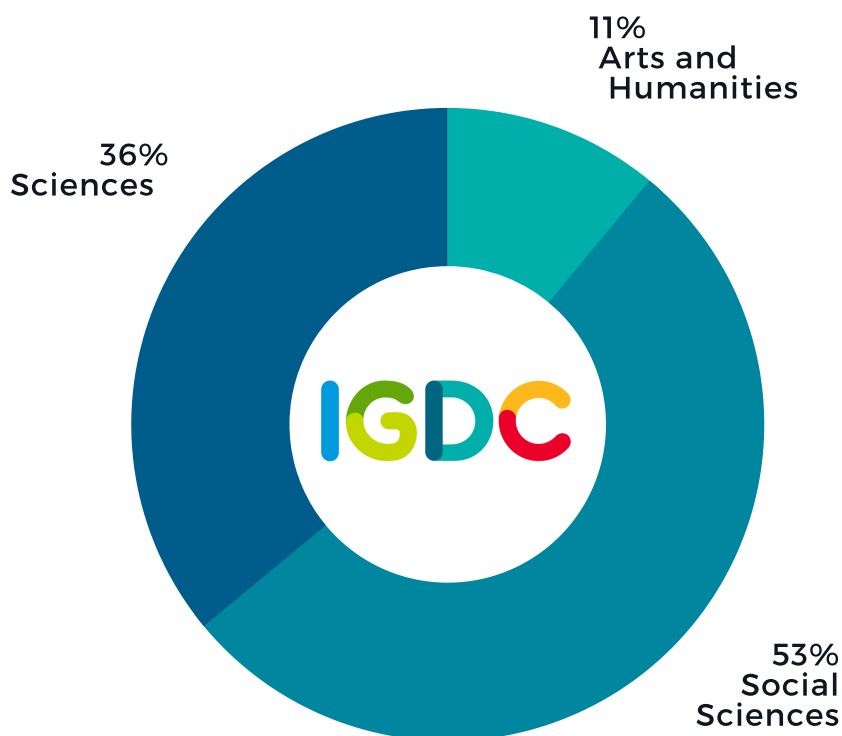
# PEOPLE

IGDC continues to grow, with our membership more than doubling in the last two years. The Centre is the intellectual home for all University of York researchers who want to contribute to equitable and sustainable global development, and now supports 105 researchers in 19 departments and centres, drawn from all three Faculties of the University of York. Just over half of our members are in the Social Sciences, with recent growth in the Faculties of Arts and Humanities, and Sciences.

In addition to being part of our vibrant interdisciplinary community, IGDC members benefit from dedicated support from IGDC staff and the Directors in finding and applying for funding, developing equitable partnerships, and drafting impact plans to help their research contribute to sustainable development. Members participate in a range of events from seminars to workshops to public lectures as organisers, presenters and participants, and some also act as supervisors or thesis advisor panelists on our PhD programme.

IGDC staff are housed in Derwent College and professors from the founding departments (Politics, History, and Environment and Geography) serve as Directors. Our start-up funding has allowed us to bring in three lecturers (introduced opposite), who contribute to IGDC's research programme and the new interdisciplinary BA course in Global Development.

105 members





## DR INGRID HARVOLD KVANGRAVEN

Ingrid is a Lecturer in International Development. She holds a PhD in Economics from the New School and BA and MSc degrees in Development Studies from the University of Oslo and London School of Economics and Political Science. Her research focuses on development finance, the history of economic thought and the political economy of development. Ingrid is founder and editor of the blog Developing Economics, co-founder and steering group member of Diversifying and Decolonising Economics (D-Econ) and Academic Officer for the Association for Heterodox Economics.



## DR ELEANOR JEW

Eleanor is a Lecturer in Environment and Development. She gained her PhD and undergraduate degree from the University of Leeds, and her Masters degree from the University of Oxford. Eleanor's research focuses on the interface between people and biodiversity, and how land can be sustainably utilised for multiple outcomes such as poverty reduction and wildlife conservation. This includes sustainable agriculture in Malawi and Tanzania, and how to rebuild sustainably following tropical cyclones in Mozambique and Vietnam.



## DR PHILIP ROBERTS

Phil is an Associate Lecturer in Development Politics. He holds a PhD in Political Economy from the University of Sydney, and BA and MA degrees in Politics and International Relations from the University of Nottingham. His research is concerned with labour struggles, state formation, and agrarian change. Phil is currently writing a monograph on the Landless Workers Movement of Brazil, under contract for Manchester University Press. He is also an editor of Alternautas, an open-access journal which brings Latin American reflections on development to an Anglophone audience.







# BA IN GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT



We are delighted to welcome our first intake of 22 undergraduate students in Autumn 2020 to our new interdisciplinary BA in Global Development, led by the Departments of Politics, History, and Environment and Geography. The degree provides innovative and interdisciplinary approaches to development, enabling students to develop a holistic understanding of the challenges confronting communities across the world. It offers students language learning, fieldwork opportunities overseas, placements and internships, and masterclasses with development professionals.

Students take a core set of modules that focus on theories and practices of global development specially designed for this programme, along with a wide range of module options. Core modules adopt a student-centred, problem-based learning (PBL) approach which encourages the development of a wide range of skills that complement traditional learning, such as group projects, simulations and policy-focused assignments.

Students on the BA in Global Development can opt for a three-year degree or a four-year degree with a year abroad or a year in industry. To facilitate international opportunities, IGDC has set up two student exchange programmes in Brazil and Thailand. The Universidade Federal Minas Gerais (UFMG) is located in Belo Horizonte and is one of the oldest federal universities in Brazil. Chiang Mai University (CMU) is a leading public university in northern Thailand. Students on the exchange programmes to UFMG and CMU will take English-language modules that will enhance their understanding of themes and issues addressed in the core modules of the BA in Global Development. At Chiang Mai, for instance, they can take 'Development Field Research' and 'Gender and Development', while at UFMG they can study such topics as 'Global Health Diplomacy' and 'Law and Development'. At both institutions, students can also take language classes. The two exchange programmes build on and extend IGDC's research relations with these institutions.



# PHD IN GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

The PhD programme in Global Development took in its first cohort in September 2019. The programme welcomes researchers who want to contribute to a more just and sustainable world, where they will be supported by at least two supervisors from different disciplinary perspectives. PhD students are encouraged to approach their work via interdisciplinary concepts and approaches in order to generate new insights for work towards equitable solutions.

IGDC also supports students from across the University who work on global development through the Global Development PhD network and welcomes visiting PhD researchers.

## LAUREN AVERY

Lauren started her PhD in Global Development in September 2019. She holds an MA in East Asian Regional Development and a MAR in Thai Studies. Her PhD looks at parental advocacy which emerged during the Zika epidemic of 2015/2016 in Brazil, and the impact this has had on the recognition of rights of the children affected by Zika Congenital Syndrome and their families. Lauren works part-time as the coordinator of a project on intersectional disability/minority discrimination at Minority Rights Group International, an international NGO.



## LILIAN SAKA

Lilian also began her PhD in Global Development in 2019. She hails from Malawi and her research interests are governance, human rights, gender. The focus of her PhD is regionalism and reproductive health policy in Sub-Saharan Africa. Before coming to York, Lilian worked as Executive Director for Panos Institute Southern Africa (PSAf) in Lusaka, Zambia, where she focused on developing and facilitating the implementation of regional strategies to drive social policy in Southern Africa.







# RESEARCH

IGDC's research is organised around three core themes: social justice, global health, and sustainable environments. Our research is guided by our belief that we can contribute most effectively to development challenges through working closely with in-country partners and by taking an interdisciplinary approach, bringing together conceptual approaches and knowledge from different academic disciplines in innovative ways. As highlighted in this section, our research activities span the rural and urban, from mountains to coast, across the world, including Africa, South America and Asia. Through our research, we aim to provide new insights, inform and contribute to critical policy debates, and work towards securing transformative change across the world.

## COVID-19 RESEARCH WEBINARS

Covid-19 has encouraged IGDC to think afresh about global inequalities and global solidarity, and to adopt new forms of research dissemination and cooperation. In response, IGDC set up a Covid-19 webinar series in June 2020, convening policy and academic experts from the Global South, including from among IGDC's established partners, to explore different facets of the pandemic in the Global South. Sessions in June and July 2020 focused on Covid-19 and the Rising Powers, the impact of the pandemic on the global development industry, climate justice, and global finance and gender. Panelists have come from South Asia, Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa and Europe. Our webinar series continues into 2020-21, with sessions on migration, health, gender and trade.



# WOMEN'S HEALTH IN LOW AND MIDDLE INCOME COUNTRIES AFTER COVID-19

IGDC was awarded GCRF-University of York funding shortly after the onset of the Covid-19 to examine its impact on development strategies in the Global South, in particular in relation to the health and wellbeing of women. The project explores the recommendations of international and regional organisations to governments, asks how far they are fit for purpose in countries that are already suffering major economic dislocation as a consequence, and examines whether and to what extent adequate planning is in place to support the health and wellbeing of women during and after the pandemic. Early findings suggest that services for women, from care provision to reproductive health, are likely to come under even greater strain through the redirection of resources to fight the pandemic, raising deep concerns about future progress towards meeting Sustainable Development Goals in much of the Global South.

## COSTS OF SMALL-SCALE GOLD MINING IN GHANA

Small-scale gold mining poses a serious risk to health and to the environment in Ghana. This project, led by Professor Paul Kerswill and involving an interdisciplinary team of linguists, theatre specialists, environmental scientists and historians, uses participatory theatre to enable community members of the Atiwa West district in Ghana to raise awareness about these risks and to propose possible solutions. It is delivered in conjunction with the University of Ghana.







## THE POLITICS OF REIMAGINING CITIZENSHIP IN INDIA

India amended its citizenship laws in 2019, undermining the secular principles of the constitution and leaving the country's 200 million+ Muslims vulnerable to being stripped of their citizenship and rendered stateless. In protest, hundreds of thousands of Indians took to the streets to protest against the discriminatory nature of the laws and reclaim inclusive ideals of citizenship. In a project funded by AHRC, Dr Indrajit Roy will work with co-investigators from India and a team of postdoctoral researchers, using digital ethnographies, emotional testimonies, and transformative storytelling to explore the ways in which citizenship is being reimagined in response to the controversial new law.

## INEQUITABLE ELECTRICITY ACCESS IN MOZAMBIQUE

Led by Dr Joshua Kirshner, research with the Energy Research Centre at Eduardo Mondlane University is demonstrating how energy access in Mozambique is shaped by the country's colonial and post-colonial histories. Focusing on four major towns of Maputo, Matola, Beira and Nampula, the research has shown how past decisions, institutional frameworks and norms have generated a pattern of exclusion and inequality. Now, newly-discovered energy resources (gas and coal) are attracting a rush of investments, but many local people are still seeing few benefits, with inequities in energy access reducing economic opportunities for the poor.



# REDRESSING GENDERED INEQUALITIES IN SOUTH AMERICA

Latin American countries are experiencing an unprecedented flow of refugees and migrants with close to 4 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants and half a million from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras fleeing to neighbouring countries since 2015. This large GCRF-funded project brings IGDC and the Centre for Health Economics in York together with researchers at the University of Southampton and a team of leading researchers from Central and South America to explore the impact of displacement and migration on the health of women and adolescent girls. The countries where women and girls take refuge frequently have vulnerable health systems which are being placed under even greater strain now by Covid-19. The three-year project will focus on identifying ways that receiving and transit states can better ensure that the human right to health is respected and protected.

# CULTURES AND CONFLICTS IN THE COLOMBIAN PÁRAMO

Together with anthropologists from the Humboldt Institute in Colombia, IGDC researchers are investigating landscape transformations in the páramos around Bogotá. The páramos, high-altitude wetlands that characterise the northern Andes, are celebrated now as “fábricas de agua” or water factories, and for their biodiversity, but in the past were viewed as a lucrative agricultural frontier. These different pressures have led to several overlapping conservation conflicts, between native páramo vegetation and invasive plant species, between conserving habitats suitable for the Andean bear and expanding cattle raising, and between restrictions imposed by environmental authorities and local peasant agrarian practices. In one of our study sites, Sumapaz, we are collaborating with local researchers and musicians to record a selection of songs to highlight how historically-marginalised peasant communities have developed ways to understand and interact with the páramo and its other non-human inhabitants, including trees, animals and water springs. Our work demonstrates the importance of understanding past practices and relationships to improve our management of conservation conflicts.







## PARTNERSHIPS

IGDC is committed to working with organisations everywhere that share our values of inclusivity, responsibility, integrity and sustainability and our commitment to research and learning that improves the lives of future generations everywhere. We actively seek to collaborate with global partners and to work with local communities in order to contribute to a more just and sustainable world. As a young interdisciplinary Centre, we are still in the process of building our core partnerships, guided by our vision and our strategies priorities. This section sets out some examples of recent achievements.

### EDUCATION FOR ALL IN MALAWI

Dr Eleanor Brown has been leading a collaboration with colleagues in Malawi to develop a research group to carry out education-focused research, build local researcher capacity and help inform educational policy and practice in Malawi and the surrounding region. The project has been inspired by the success of the Thanzi La Onze research project, which has created a network of strong partnerships in Malawi to provide research-based interventions to policy and practice in the field of health. The interdisciplinary team will scope necessary conditions and potential participants both at York and at partner organisations and government agencies in Malawi, before setting a research agenda and developing further projects based on locally identified priorities



# PARLIAMENTS AND PEACEBUILDING IN CIVIL WAR-AFFECTED COUNTRIES

IGDC worked with London-based NGO Westminster Foundation for Democracy to develop research exploring the role of parliaments in peacebuilding after conflict. Led by Professor Nina Caspersen and Dr Gyda Sindre, the research examines the circumstances under which parliaments are likely to assist, or conversely obstruct, the implementation of peace agreements. Drawing on comparative and case-based analysis of civil war affected countries where parliaments are expected to play a central role, the project will provide important insights into the role that institutions such as parliaments play in peacebuilding and democracy.

# CLIMATE AND HEALTH RESILIENCE IN THE SUNDARBANS

Dr Papiya Mazumdar is leading a new IGDC project on climate risk and health systems in the Indian Sundarbans. In conjunction with Jadavpur University and the Southern Health Improvement Samity, the team is exploring how risks from infectious and non-infectious diseases, including Covid-19, in the region are affected by climate and the environment. Initial questionnaires and workshops with NGOs, health workers and barefoot doctors have highlighted the inability of the local health system to deal with the dual impact of Cyclone Amphan and Covid-19, and the high burdens on the physical and mental health of women especially.







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