THE DEVELOPER

Collective Insights into
Development and Emerging Markets

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

HOW THIS ISSUE CAME TO BE

Dear Readers,

Welcome to The Developer, a student collaboration between the Warwick International Development Society (WIDS) and the Warwick Emerging Markets Society (WEMS). We have brought together stimulating insights into the challenges and opportunities which face nations of the developing world through articles, interviews and biographies, as well as resources to help you learn about careers in the sector.

Our magazine studies the political, economic and social features of developing nations, and their crucial interaction with the developed world.
Our interview with Surabhi Nagar on the 1984 Bhopal disaster in India, for example, reminds us that corporations from richer nations taking advantage of lenient environmental guidelines and labour regulation in poorer nations can result in immense local costs. It also emphasises the importance of strong and representative political institutions to enabling economic growth, which Yemi Adeola underlines in his report on the Nigerian economy. Yemi also shows how advances in the developed world, for instance in mobile phone technology, has enabled rapid socio-economic progress in Nigeria. In contrast, our interview with Suwei Jiang, Head of the China Business Group at PwC UK, reveals how the tables are turning with developing nations arriving in developed nations and influencing industry. Citing enormous Chinese investment into London property, Suwei predicts this power will continue to transfer.

For developing nations, economic advancements in attracting investment and political progress in trade structures is not simply the end we need, as Bisman Deu reflects in her interview. Economic growth is desirable, but it needs to be combined with good governance in order to permeate into wage growth and improvements in infrastructure. It is imperative for communities and local people to see enhancements in education and healthcare in order to sustain growth, as Shelly Batra highlights in her case study of the worrying Tuberculosis crisis.

Finally, we look to the future with the experiences of our own Warwick students Kiiru Muhoya and Namir Chowdhury, and learn from Warwick PPE alumnus Jamie Pett on how one can build an expansive and intrepid career in development.

Nations are being tugged ever closer by global issues such as the refugee crisis and climate change: the developing world is at the heart of our future. This collection of insights is designed to both inform and inspire, so we hope you enjoy reading it

The Developer Team

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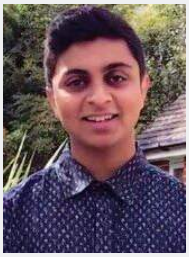

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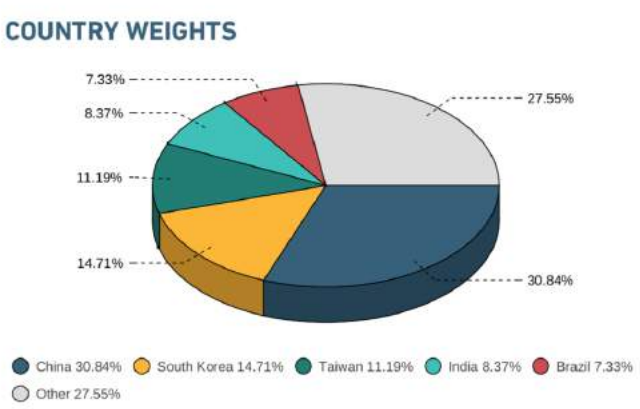
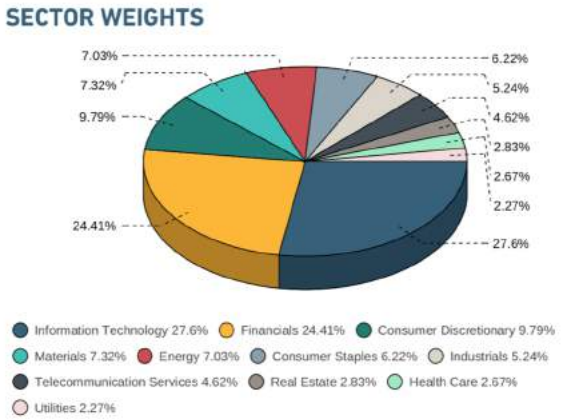
EMERGING PROGRESS

Josh Crine

Emerging markets face new and varied challenges, with new and varied rewards when they are met. Progress is often slow; change is never instant. But, emerging economies offer opportunity for the greatest rate of growth of any countries in the world. In the first half of 2017 the economies of the main BRIC nations of Brazil, Russia, India and China grew simultaneously for the first time in 3 years; more widely, the MSCI Emerging Markets Index of 24 countries (below) showed a 33% gain in the last year. Finally after the crash, emerging markets are re-emerging.

Graphs are from MSCI research





The outlook for emerging economies today:

There is reward for risk in emerging markets: hedge funds which bought Argentine debt for roughly 20 cents on the dollar after its default in 2001 extracted a considerable settlement last year, worth 10 times as much. Whilst volatility is diminishing, stability is on the rise. This has been in part due to countries tying their domestic currency to the dollar. However, there are approaching problems with a proximity to America. The protectionist rhetoric of the Trump administration has caused anxiety abroad and left them vulnerable to shifts in foreign trading, particularly where American corporations had previously been indicating at further integration. Reliance on America has been apparent for some time, as evident with the "taper tantrum" of 2013 where talk of a slowdown in asset purchases by America's Federal Reserve 'threw emerging markets into turmoil' according to one news outlet at the time. If the Federal Reserve simply tightens monetary policy, it has negative consequences for the emerging world. When the Fed raise interest rates; when global investors lose their appetite for risk; or when multinational banks shrink their lending, the economic landscape for developing nations glooms.

The Future:

The outlook for emerging markets in 2018 is bright if uncertain. There are ongoing political risks – for example the Russian invasion of Ukraine; the Philippines war with drugs; a successful coup in Thailand 2014; a failed coup in Turkey 2016; and embattled rule in South Africa and Malaysia.

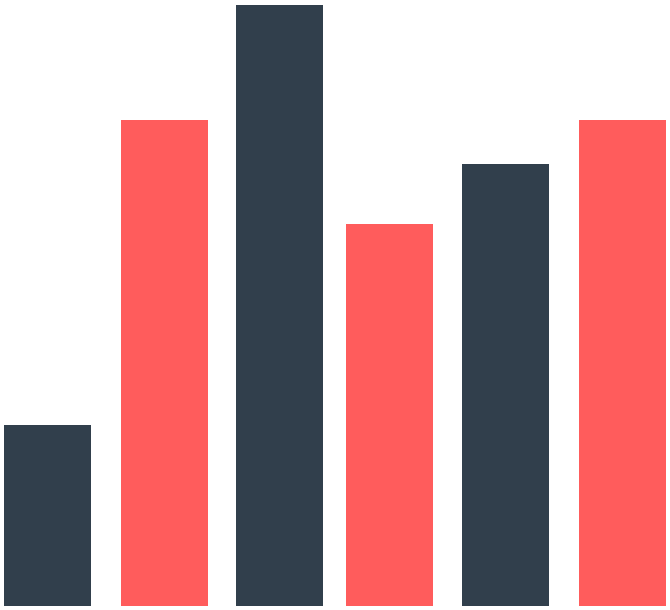
What matters to emerging markets?

First, an important and explosive source of wealth for Russia and OPEC nations is the price of oil. Although this has wavered over the last few years, it is still on a long term upward trend. However, with the advent of newer, cleaner, renewable sources of energy, this isn't enough to sustain growth for these nations forever, and they will need to diversify.

The developing world is often reliant simply on its weather, and this is an impending issue due to climate change. In Brazil, the export of soybeans and corn is paramount to the economy; in South Africa, little rainfall for the last 3 years is causing undesirable rationing for firms and individuals. An unremitting, unrelenting change in climate will be felt most acutely in the most vulnerable nations of the world.

However, the main natural resource in many emerging markets is actually manpower. There is threat to this from the rise in automation, which could undermine the advantages of cheap labour. Indeed, as Ha-Joon Chang told us at Warwick on the 19th February, it is the manufacturing sector which is capable of boosting productivity and promoting consistent growth more than any other.

Nations become emerging markets because they grow quickly; they remain emerging because they have not made this growth steady. The task for these nations is to avoid the so-called 'middle-income trap'. Elusive long-term growth will ultimately derive from 4 aspects: moving workers to more productive sectors; increasing capital per worker; adopting technology differently; and innovating new technology. The most successful emerging markets will be those to progress these the fastest, alongside political stability and a global outlook. Who wants to embrace the future first?



THE BHOPAL TRAGEDY

IN CONVERSATION WITH: SURABHI NAGAR

Interview by Brihadeesh Murali

Surabhi Nagar is a Second Year Student at the University of Warwick, studying Economics, Politics and International Studies. She founded an awareness campaign in Singapore (where she resides) called Project Chingari, after learning of the extent to which the 1984 disaster in Bhopal, India (where she grew up), has negatively impacted the lives of citizens in the local community to the present day.

Could you kindly briefly describe the Bhopal Disaster?

40 tons of lethal MIC gas descended from the Union Carbide pesticide factory, covering the town in fear. Those present at the scene complained of irritated eyes, burning chests, vomit, diarrhoea and breathlessness. The lives of the residents completely changed over the course of what came to be known as the World's Worst Industrial Disaster. The night of '84 was a horrible one. But what followed the disaster is even more terrifying. While the death toll was disputed and played down by the government, organisations working with the victims claim that over 10,000 lives were lost on the night of the leak and more than a million have been affected since. The gas has diffused into the DNA, crippling 3 generations and counting. Bhopal has one of the highest stillbirth rates in the world. The cancer and disability ratios are much higher than the norm. Many children are born with deformed bodies, dysfunctional hearts, respiratory conditions, failing livers and so on.

What was the initial spark that led to the birth of Project Chingari, and what have you done so far?

I'm from Bhopal and I always knew about the disaster, but I did not know the extent of it – especially the effects today. The initial spark would be a documentary I watched that made me aware of the detrimental implications and the worsening situation. As a result, I travelled to Bhopal and volunteered to donate meals. I then raised awareness and money in Singapore in my school, with which I have sponsored more meals and bought them a van to transport children.

Is there a trade-off between receiving investment from foreign companies and maintaining regulatory safety standards?

Specifically, for the case of Bhopal, yes. The reason they built the factory in the first place – where they built it – was to get some investment into the city and reduce unemployment. The safety standards were not met at all. The location of the factory was completely wrong, and the safety valves were turned off. All of these negligences could have been avoided. In more general terms, I would also agree. Investors do take advantage of developing countries, because they get cheap land, weak regulations, and cheap labour. And, they do not necessarily meet all the ethical requirements.

Did the government do enough to limit the impact of the disaster?

The government did build hospitals. It has economic and social rehabilitation schemes running. But, there is definitely so much more that the government could have done. All of these schemes and the hospitals are not nearly as efficient as they should be. The government is not doing any quality research. The full impact of the disaster is yet to be estimated. A lot of the organisations working for this do not have enough money. The disaster is also a very controversial topic, so the government really does not talk about it. Also, the water from nearby areas still comes from the underground factory polluted water supply. Most obviously, the government needs to clean up the site, which has been untouched for almost 34 years now – this should have been the first thing local politicians should have done, as it continues to poison the community.

Do you feel that India is still an emerging market, or that it has already emerged?

I think India is an emerging market, but that does not mean I do not think that India has the potential. India has some very smart, well-educated people, and a lot of resources that have not been correctly utilised. I feel like India has been focusing on economic growth rather than economic development. Indians are rich, but India is poor.

Could you expand on the point about the focus on economic growth - is this not a way to secure development?

I personally do not think so. Right now India is focusing a lot on lower tariffs, more imports, more exports and ease of business. While all of those things are great, I feel like they only help the small upper class that are already quite rich. These policies disproportionately benefit their businesses. You have to remember that India is mostly daily-wage workers and subsistence farmers, and they do not gain much out of this. India spends very, very little of its GDP on health and education, and the real focus right now should really be on these, especially education. India has such a young population – where China was a few years ago when it went through the boom – and the labour force needs to be ready.

TB: TIME TO GET REAL

HOW WOULD YOU FIGHT DRUG-RESISTANCE?

Dr Shelly Batra

Though a fully curable infectious disease, Tuberculosis (TB) is the biggest health crisis in the world. 10.4 million people fall sick ill with TB annually, and 1.8 million die. Each year 1 million children worldwide contract TB and 170,000 children lose their lives. Over 95% of TB deaths occur in Low and Middle-Income countries. In the past 2 centuries, a billion people have died of TB. Less than half have died of all other pandemics combined, including small pox. Cholera, HIV, and the plague.

But TB is not just a disease, it's a socio-economic problem. Entire families sink into poverty because of loss of jobs and productivity due to TB. It is estimated that the world will lose over US$3.4 trillion because of TB in the next decade. According to the STOP-TB partnership, ending TB globally could yield $1.2T in overall economic return on investment.

The stigma associated with the disease leads to terrible deprivation and violation of human rights. In India alone, 100,000 women are thrown out their homes each year to die of disease and starvation if they have TB. 300,000 children are forced to leave school for the same reason (Government of India, 2008). In 2015, globally an estimated 480,000 people developed MDR-TB (Multi-Drug Resistant TB), a horrifying disease where conventional drugs become ineffective, and mortality is almost 80%. MDR-TB, which occurs due to incomplete treatment, is the emerging man-made epidemic that could wipe out millions if there isn't a response today.

In 2008, 11,000 business leaders from 130 countries met at the World Economic Forum's annual summit at Davos and released a report called, "Tackling TB - the Business Response", which stated that 32% of the companies surveyed expected TB to adversely impact their businesses in the next 5 years, with 10% expecting serious impact. TB was declared as a global emergency in 2009 by WHO. Despite this, the enormity of the problem is yet to be understood and accepted by global leaders.

The realities of treatment

A central problem with TB is that the last mile of delivery is seriously lacking. Whilst government programs worldwide provide free medicines, diagnostics and services of physicians to the poor which are technically available to all, accessibility is a key challenge. In the WHO-sponsored DOTs program, patients are not given medicines to consume at home, but rather they have to go daily for 6 months to a designated centre and swallow the medication in the presence of a trained provider. Existing centres are few and far between and open the usual business hours. Patients have to choose between work and wages on one hand and TB medication on the other. Such an unfair dilemma naturally forces them to prefer to earn their daily bread, so they continue to suffer and die and infect others.

Even if patients start treatment, they drop off because of many reasons, such as inconvenience, stigma, out of pocket expenses for travel, fear and myths and so on. This leads to treatment default, which gives rise to a much bigger problem - that of drug-resistant forms of TB which is much more difficult and costlier to treat. Yet the problem of maintaining treatment is further undermined as patients often opt for treatment from quacks or informal providers in the private health system - who are either not qualified or not trained enough to tackle TB cases. Incomplete and irregular treatment further aggravates the problem of MDR-TB – but that is assuming one reaches this stage at all. Socially, stigma is rife and there is little way of measuring the extent to which it stops treatment from beginning in the first place, though the effect is large. There are patients who have been coughing up blood for years, but they live in denial. TB is a disease of darkness. Patients live in constant fear and there is no one to help. No one to track missing patients, to take care of day to day problems, to find solutions for side effects of medication, or to persuade them to take their treatment. Nor is there anyone to facilitate the testing and treatment in public hospitals. Marginalized patients are often intimidated by government infrastructure.

There are many organizations offering solutions for TB control, though many follow traditional methods of delivery of TB treatment, which do not give adequate results. As a result, I created Operation ASHA, a Non-Governmental Organization that is better, faster and cheaper than other market treatment providers.

OpASHA's focus is the last mile delivery system that has taken services out of the realm of specialists and hospitals to the absolute last mile, where the poorest of the poor live. It is focused on results and outcomes, believing in having a measurable impact. Operation ASHA has a local, deep, low-cost, high-impact scalable and replicable model.

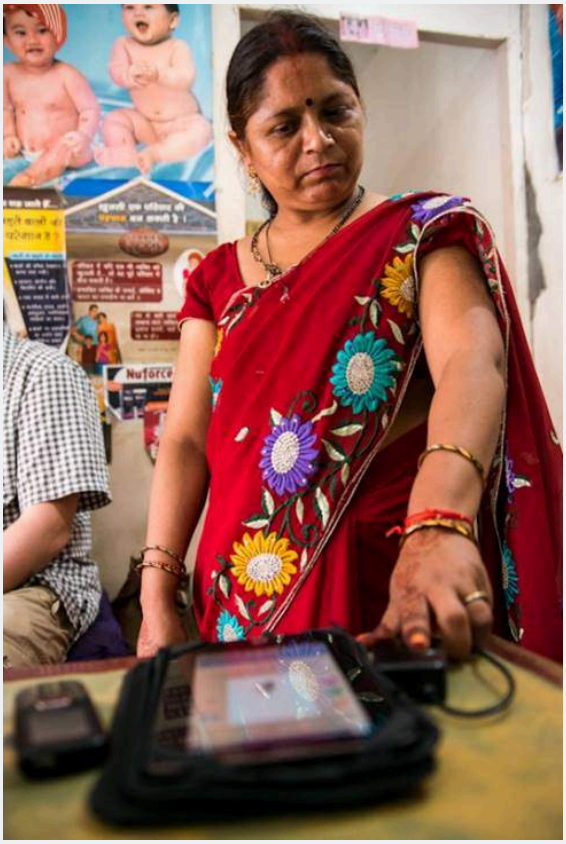
So how does OpASHA do it?

OpASHA has devised a new methodology with patient convenience as the focus, bringing TB treatment right to the doorsteps of the disadvantaged. OpASHA works like an extension of the government's National TB Control Programme in the any one of the target geographies - urban, semi-urban, rural or even tribal areas. What helps is the free procurement of drugs, diagnostics and physician services.

Patients are diagnosed in the public hospital. Then, Operation ASHA is given the box of medicines for the entire 6 months. For TB treatment, patients must go daily to a designated centre and take medicine in the presence of a trained worker. In order to 'reach the unreached', OpASHA utilizes space in the premises of local doctors, chemist stores, temples, tea shops, grocery stores etc. to set up treatment centres. These are manned by locally hired and trained youth, who work as Community Health Workers (CHWs). Centers are situated in convenient places and open early morning and late night too, so no one has to miss work and wages in order to get the medicine. CHWs also carry out the education of families, de-stigmatization, case detection, and full treatment to prevent drug-resistant TB. Hiring external doctors or nurses would be contrary to the needs of the local environments in which we work. Instead, by employing local people to be CHWs we contribute to the local economy and ensure fair wages.

CHWs are all local people, so they are well aware of the informal topography, neighbourhood groups, prevailing myths about the disease etc. These CHWs are empowered with portable technology: a biometric fingerprinting system designed by Microsoft Research that is attached to a tablet loaded with an application - eCompliance - to track medication adherence. Each dose is monitored by the fingerprint, and in real time we know if patients have missed their dose, so missing patients can be tracked by CHWs. The help from Microsoft means that we have absolute accuracy regarding the work done and the data collected, which was previously one of the largest challenges facing those administering medicines – a fingerprint cannot be fudged.

In remote areas, where patients are scattered in far-off villages, our health workers go on bikes, motorcycles and even on boats to visit patients in their homes and give the medicine under supervision. So far, OpASHA has been able to treat over 75,719 patients since it started operations in 2006. This model has been able to achieve a treatment success rate of 89% and an extremely low default (drop-out rate) of 3%, thus preventing progression and spread of the disease, and preventing the menace of Drug-Resistant TB.



Does it work?

OpASHA is serving 18 million people in India & Cambodia. India has more than 27% of the global burden of TB. The economic costs incurred equate to $300 million USD in lost wages per year, and a $23 billion USD indirect cost to the Indian economy due to staff absenteeism and lost productivity. In Cambodia, it treats 18% of all patients. 3rd party replication has been done in Uganda, Kenya, Peru, The Dominican Republic. In Afghanistan, we've opened 20 centres in the vicinity of Kabul. In Tanzania, 3000 TB patients are being put on eCompliance in collaboration with the government and local NGO's.

So far, there have been over 7 million individuals screened for TB and 75,719 patients treated for TB. The treatment success rate is 89%, ahead of the 73% reported by the government of India and opASHA raises detection rates to 100% wherever it works (by cross-referencing government and WHO databases). Furthermore, the default rate (drop-out rate) is less than 3%, as compared to 36% as reported by CSIS, the Centre for Strategic and International Studies. Yet the effect is more than medical. In India, work has been created for 195 disadvantaged persons and enhanced the income of 124 micro-entrepreneurs that we work within disadvantaged localities.

On treatment, patients earn an additional $13,935 through reinstated productivity in their lifetime, on an average. Thus, treated patients have benefited by a $959 million. With treatment of each patient, the economy saves $12,235 in indirect loss. So, the Indian and Cambodian economies have saved $842 million. Operation ASHA, then, has generated a financial benefit of $1.8 billion providing Return on Investment of over 100 times to donors.

But how could OpASHA possibly afford all of this? It's simple really: the cost of detection and treatment per patient is only $80 ($27 for detection and $53 for treatment) and according to Joan Yao, an investment manager of a large European venture philanthropy fund, Operation ASHA is 19 times more cost-effective than its nearest competitor. According to CSIS, the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, which is the world's top bi-partisan international security think-tank, the cost of TB detection alone by other NGO's is $852. Treatment costs have been reported as $3575 in South Africa and $1900 in Cambodia per patient. Operation ASHA's cost is by far the lowest in the world and its' results far exceed the country averages and competitors' performance.

The picture at the start of the start of this article was honest: it is that bad. Though there is hope. OpASHA has shown that huge improvements to current practices can be made and that if these are allowed to spread, the world might stand a chance fighting TB. Currently, policymakers aren't placing the priority on TB as they need to be; it's an epidemic waiting to be a pandemic if MDR-TB continues to spread. There needs to be continued support for those fighting TB but beyond this, the lobbying of governments to invest in the struggle against it; only then, united, does there exist that hope.

Dr Shelly Batra co-founded Operation ASHA and has led the organization as President since 2005. She is 2014's Social Entrepreneur of the year, awarded by Schwab Foundation, renowned Senior Obstetrician and Gynecologist, Advanced Laparoscopy Surgeon, an Ashoka Changemaker, and a bestselling Penguin author. Shelly's dedication to reaching the unreached started in 1991 when Shelly went into the heart of the slums in Delhi and provided pro-bono life-saving treatments, operations, free consultations, medicines, and counselling.

BUILDING HOPE IN INDIA

IN CONVERSATION WITH: BISMAN DEU

Interview by Brihadeesh Murali

Bisman Deu is a Second Year Student at the University of Warwick, studying Economics, Politics and International Studies. Aged 15, she invented a low-cost building material made from rice waste, known as 'Green Wood', which aims to provide affordable housing to the underprivileged. Her support for women empowerment has also led her to start her own campaign, 'Colour the World Pink'. Recently, Bisman was recognized for her social entrepreneurship efforts on the Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia list.

What was the initial spark that led to the birth of Green Wood?

Green Wood actually emerged from real life experiences. I have a farmhouse in Northern India, in Amritsar, and I was a very, very inquisitive kid – the kind of kid that you really do not want to be around, because I ask too many questions! I saw that the burning of rice waste was happening, because we visit the farm during the harvesting season. What happens is, when rice is harvested, there is rice husk and straw which is left behind, that farmers have nothing to do with. They end up burning it. I saw this and I thought about it. I did not see it as a problem, but as a possibility of inventing something. I went back, and almost blew up my mum's kitchen a couple of times, and Eureka! – I came up with the idea of Green Wood.

Do you think that there are cultural barriers to entrepreneurship in India, and what is your view on the current prospects for women?

Yes, I definitely think that there are many cultural barriers – not just cultural, but I would say a lot is to do with the stigma attached with the word 'entrepreneurship'. Going through an undefined path, I have to explain to people why I aspire to be an entrepreneur rather than have a 9-to-5 job. People do not understand that, because a 9-to-5 job guarantees you a salary, and guarantees the fact that you are actually doing something. So when you tell people that you want to be an entrepreneur, they say 'Yes that is fine! But, what do you want to do?', because entrepreneurship entails with it a certain risk. I think that is the key barrier – people not understanding that it is a potential career option which students want to pursue. So far as women in entrepreneurship go, it is absolutely appalling, because it is thought that girls are meant to go down certain paths, and since entrepreneurship is so unrepresentative, women cannot even penetrate that space. Because it is so male-dominated, how are you, as a female, going to voice your opinion and deal with people that are in this sector? I think that is what I faced, so far as not being heard because I am a female.

How does your campaign 'Colour the World Pink' help to improve women's prospects and bridge the ambition gap?

'Colour the World Pink' is an initiative which I started with five students back in my high school. It is an initiative which bridges the ambition gap and pushes girls into entrepreneurship and leadership. Right now, it is a team of fifty students who go into different schools and talk to young girls and organise leadership activities with them. The reason that I do this, and the reason that I think it is going to bridge the ambition gap, is because if you nurture people – especially girls – and tell them that entrepreneurship is a viable career option. You instil in them confidence wherein they can voice their opinions very confidently when it comes to entrepreneurship and leadership. Going into schools, I have seen that young girls do not speak up, because the room is so heavily dominated by males, and they feel intimidated. When I run these activities – simple team-building – they speak up, once they know that they are heard from the very get-go, and it is very easy for them to try and break the glass ceiling.

How did it feel to receive an invitation to be on the Advisory Executive Council for the Women Economic Forum?

It was great! I was very surprised that they thought that I was worthy to not only sit on their Advisory Executive Council, but also give a talk. The day was basically packed with amazing women from all over the world coming and talking about their perspectives. Through this position, I really get to work with young females around the world, and I think more than just a title, it is really important what I do on the Board. It has been an overwhelming experience.

Do you feel that India is still an emerging market, or that it has already emerged?

That is a very interesting question. Personally, I think India is still an emerging market. There is so much potential that is yet to be discovered, but I think that the country is on that brink of the next big transformation. The youth is realising the problems which India is facing now, and therefore they are not just looking at problems as problems, but also for potential innovative solutions. I generally do not feel that any market can be emerged to its full potential – it is always emerging.

AGRARIAN AFRICA

A NIGERIAN CASE STUDY

Yemi Adeola

More than 60% of Africa's population lives in rural areas making the region's economy intrinsically dependent on agriculture. Around 20% of the continent's GDP is generated by the sector. However, agricultural productivity remains far below that of other emerging market regions. Over 90% of Africa's agriculture depends on rainfall, with no irrigation. This reality is particularly acute in Nigeria, in which agriculture forms the economic base, underpinning the main source of livelihood for most. The sector mirrors the challenges faced across Africa. Most notably, a deficiency in farming technique cultivation and very low irrigation development (at ~1% of cropped land in Nigeria).

However, challenges go beyond techniques, extending to high cost inputs with demand for fertilizers, pesticides and high-yield seed, far outstripping supply. Agriculture in Africa also experiences problems such as access to markets and financing. Indeed, research conducted by the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the UN noted that Nigeria's outdated land tenure system constrained land access. Decades of production underperformance have resulted in estimated losses of $10 billion in annual groundnut, cocoa, palm oil and cotton export opportunities.

Despite its tremendous agricultural potential, Africa remains a net importer of food due to policy distortions, weak institutions, and poor infrastructure. In Nigeria, these factors have been accentuated as the Continent's most populous nation. The country is Africa's largest consumer of rice, whilst simultaneously producing one of the highest amounts of the staple food. However, crop increases have not kept pace with population growth with Nigeria being one of the largest rice importers in the world. As such, these barriers have resulted in declining levels of national food self-sufficiency and have endemically inhibited Africa's ability to achieve food security.

Solutions for raising agricultural productivity in Africa are influenced by the growing accessibility of low-cost technology adoption and sustainable farming as well as the influence of interest groups. Technological hurdles involve the viable application of biological, chemical, and mechanical methods. Sustainable cultivation will help Nigeria to generate sufficient food in an economically efficient, environmentally-friendly way in the present day and for posterity.

The Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) has made decisive efforts to end the era of food imports. Indeed, under the 2015 Agricultural Transformation Agenda Support Programme (ATA), Nigeria has sought to develop cassava and rice value chains to produce new foodstuffs and add value, creating domestic and export markets for farmers. The rationale behind the initiative is the bolstering of rural employment, wealth creation and economic diversification from oil commodity dependence. This 20-year policy is promising, given 2017 World Bank Group regression analysis of 25 developing countries, highlighting strong links between agricultural (sector + individual income) growth and poverty reduction.

However, African Governments continue to face challenges in aligning the private interests of agricultural businesses with the public interests of small shareholdings/farms and concerned citizens. For example, the inability to gain private (profit-driven) Nigerian business endorsement of ATA's adoption could inhibit the investment in infrastructure development. Thereby, hindering efforts to expand agricultural value chains and/or improve access to crop inputs in remote regions. This remains a pertinent issue, given the country's size (as the 32nd largest country globally), and diversity regionally. A collective effort must be made to ensure implementation on a local government level, whilst designing complimentary federal industrial policies. This, however, seems unlikely given the FGN's preoccupation with restructuring, before the 2019 federal elections.

Potential remains in utilising alternative strategies to enhance the rural economy on the continent. For example, the strengthening of links between informal commodity value chains in rural areas and agribusiness could generate jobs and opportunities for smallholder farmers. Rural tourism could also be key to diversifying the production-based rural economy, given the growing impact of climate change on weather patterns affecting the sector. These factors would help to build much-needed resilience in the rural economy, contributing to greater investor confidence and subsequent investment. Lastly, high-value, non-traditional crops cultivated on fertile soil would supplement crop yields beyond subsistence levels, enabling greater exports. All these possibilities would help to harness Nigeria's youthful exponential labour supply growth, with the country producing more babies per year than Europe between 2011-2015.

The positive impact of digital technologies such as mobile phone applications, sensors, satellites, big-data and drones on agriculture and rural livelihoods should not be under-estimated. Unlike direct inputs (pesticides, fertilisers etc.), digital technologies improve agricultural efficiency through their effects on crop/weather monitoring and farmer education. Widespread growth in supply of digital products to African markets have lowered the cost of adoption, making data-driven methods increasingly feasible for farming. Furthermore, digital technology holds potential as a key enabler for entrepreneurs involved in agriculture. Crucially, this translates to lower transaction costs, encouraging the collectivisation of smallholders and unlocks scalability of innovative solutions to surmount agricultural barriers (vis-à-vis improving access to finance/information).

The main factor beyond digitalisation and rural investment (in electricity, transportation, and irrigation), which could precipitate mass agricultural production growth in Africa, is public and private R&D. Chronic underinvestment, characterised by limited mechanisation, non-optimum inputs and uneven application of new technologies has prevented the continent from realising its farming potential. National R&D is essential for developing and adapting new technologies in a way to deliver high-yield returns. This would help to harness the benefits from economies of scale, particularly in large countries like Nigeria. For example, whereas investment in agricultural R&D tripled in China and India since the turn of the century; R&D investment by the FGN accounted for 0.01% of global expenditure in 2014. Only through R&D investment will Nigeria alleviate the shortages of skilled researchers and scientists required to utilise new technologies.

THE GERMAN DIPLOMAT

IN CONVERSATION WITH: CHRISTOPH RETZLAFF

Interview by Yemi Adeola

Retzlaff studied Law and Modern and Recent History in Freiburg. He began his diplomatic career in 1994 at the Embassy of Moscow. From 1997 to 2001 he was initially employed at the headquarters in the United Nations department and later in the personnel department. From 2001 to 2004 he was Deputy Ambassador at the Yangon/Myanmar Embassy. In 2004, he returned to the Political Department of the German Foreign Office as Deputy Head of Unit for Central Asia and the South Caucasus. In 2008, he was transferred to the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations in New York as an international legal adviser and deputy head of the political department. In 2011 he was a member of the German team in the UN Security Council. In 2011, Retzlaff returned to the European Department of the Foreign Office in Berlin as head of unit, responsible for fundamental issues of EU external relations and EU enlargement policy. In 2014, he was appointed Permanent Representative of the Ambassador to the Embassy of Cairo. Since July 2016, Christoph Retzlaff is Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Ghana.

What were your motivations for joining the German Foreign Service?

I have always been interested in History, Politics and International Relations. I chose Law and History for my studies at Freiburg University. When I was 24 I read a fascinating book: "Memoirs of a Diplomat" by George Kennan, one of the most distinguished American diplomats of the 20th century. This probably was the tipping point - the power of books. Some years later I joined the German Permanent Representation at the EU in Brussels for an internship - and I was convinced how fascinating diplomacy can be. I never came to regret it - for me, being a diplomat still is the most interesting profession I can imagine.

What advice would you give aspiring Warwick Students considering a career in diplomacy that you wish you had known prior to your ambassadorial roles?

Diplomacy in the 21st century is broader and more multifaceted than ever. What you need is a comprehensive understanding of other cultures. So try to be international, live and work in other countries, acquire an understanding of how people from other cultures think and live. This is key for your success.

What have been the highlights of your career as a diplomat?

Each assignment has been special and I have a lot of memories. This is part of the fascination of being a diplomat. My first posting in Moscow in the early 1990s gave me a first-hand impression of how the former Soviet Union was transformed and what it meant for the people. In Myanmar, I had the chance to meet Aung San Suu Kyi, the Nobel Prize Laureate, who was still under house arrest in 2003. In New York, I was part of the German team for the Security Council 2011 and remember many dramatic sessions when the Arab spring started in February 2011. Later I served in Egypt as Deputy Ambassador.

What do you see as the main challenges/opportunities facing Ghana in terms of governance and as an emerging market within Africa?

Ghana is an anchor of stability in West Africa, sound democratic credentials and a strong economy. It has enormous potential and could become a success story for Africa. Ghana has recently joined the G20 "Africa Partnership", an initiative launched by the German G20 presidency at the G20 Africa Conference in Berlin in June 2017. The basic idea behind this is bringing more private investment to African countries by creating conditions conducive for investment. From aid to trade- this could be the formula for economic and governmental success.

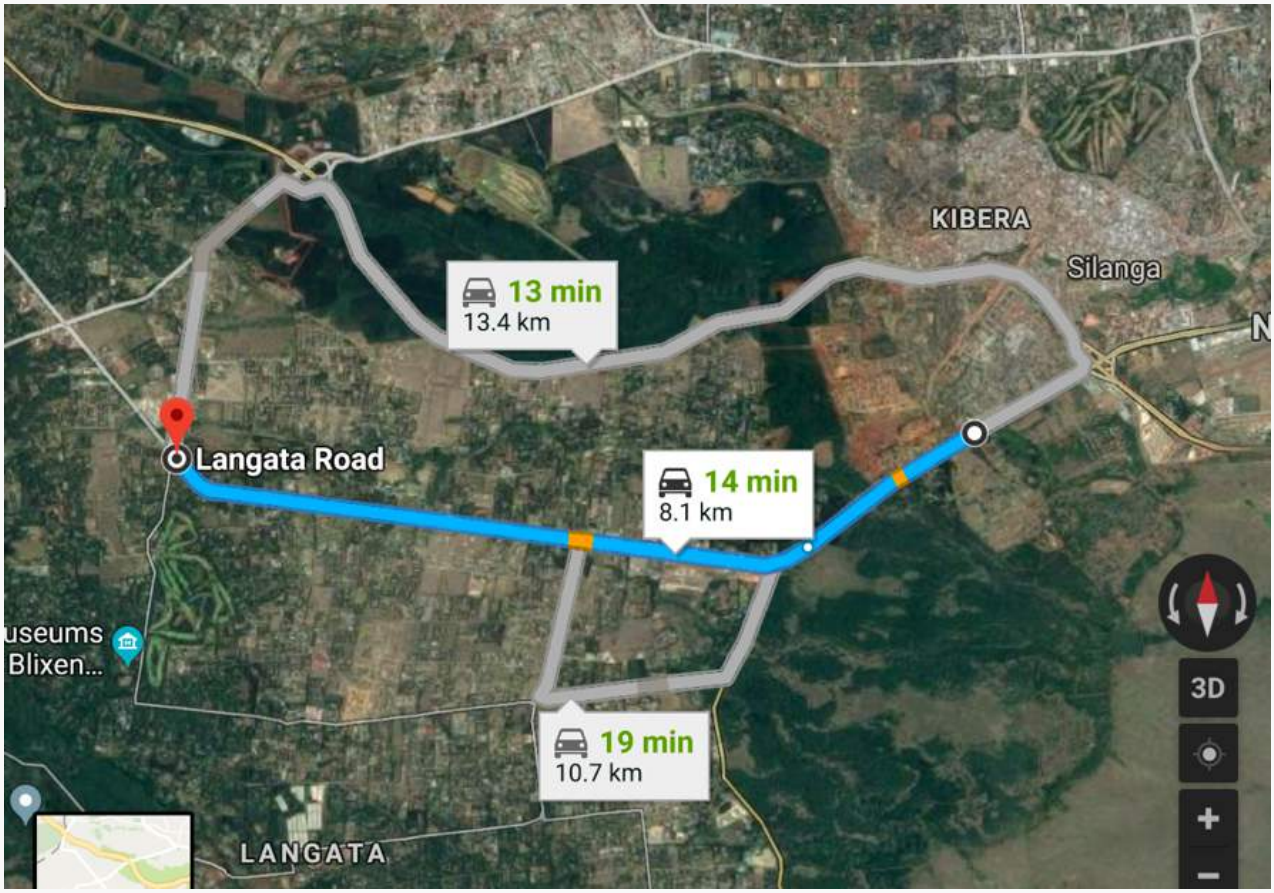
Following the 60th anniversary of Ghana-Germany relations in 2017, what are your current objectives in maintaining amity between both nations?

Ghana has become a focus of German Foreign Policy in Africa. We have initiated the G20 "Africa Partnership" for 10 African countries, including Ghana. In addition, we have concluded a bilateral Reform and Investment Partnership with Ghana in December 2017, when German President Steinmeier visited Ghana. We want to support the Government of Ghana in making its vision of Ghana beyond aid a reality.

How do you think the new SPD-CDU grand coalition will change/potentially impact Germany's international development aims- working with developing nations in Asia/Africa?

You will probably see an even stronger German focus of German Foreign Policy on Africa and Asia. Africa is becoming more and more important for us. Africa is Europe´s closest neighbour- a continent with huge potential, but also huge challenges. The drama of illegal migration reminds us daily. It is in our best interest to cooperate with our African partners to realize the potentials. Europe´s future will also depend on how successful this cooperation will be.

BUILDING BLOCKS



CAN SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP CLEAR KENYA'S DEFICIT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

Kiiru Muhoya

Langata road in Nairobi is among the world's most unique roads. Often said to 'connect heaven and hell'. At one end is Kibera, the world's largest slum where 2 million people squeeze into an uninhabitable wasteland 2 square kilometres in size. 5 minutes up the road in Langata, lies Karen. One of the continent's wealthiest estates, it is home to the top 1% of Kenyan society. Karen is one of the most exclusive estates in the world, and it certainly has some of Africa's most luxurious spots. Pep Guardiola previously spent a summer or two playing golf at the opulent Karen country club, while spending time at the best Kenyan Hotel, The Hemmingway Nairobi on the same street. Unsurprisingly, the Vice president of Kenya's £3m estate is nestled in this lush neighborhood alongside the country's elite. Remember, all a mere 10 to 15 minutes away.

If that wasn't startling enough, consider this. The average rent for a 3-bed family home in Karen is £2,500. The average in Kibera is £10. That's 250 times less, yet this fee remains largely unaffordable for most in the slum - talk about juxtaposition!

Like many Kenyans this contrast was puzzling to me. Especially being young and seeing such disproportionate measures of wealth minutes apart. I could scarcely piece it together. What follows now is how I tried.

I first volunteered around age 13. Atypical was the experience. A group of similar aged kids going out into a rural village to build a home. Nothing particularly struck me. Thanks to the infamous Langata road I knew that poverty existed and that not everyone had access to decent housing, that there are members in society whose fates were far worse than others. It was only when I arrived home that I realized what might now seem obvious to you: my home now seemed completely different. I began to notice how large our living rooms was, a shoe rack, a door, a bathroom? Such luxury I lived in. I dragged my tired body into my room and opened my wardrobe to grab a change of clothes, but just then I stopped. At that point, I realized that my entire bedroom was bigger than the house we just built. Realizing all of this at 13, how unfair it felt, it was like a confrontation with inequality.

My next volunteering experience couldn't have been further apart.

Five years later, having obsessed with the provision of affordable housing, I understood what I now see as one of the world's most pressing problems: the lack of it. Slums, shanty towns, ghetto, "inner city" or even the "run-down neighborhood" as they called them. This was a worldwide endemic. Nairobi and East Africa are not the only places suffering from a lack of affordable housing. Neighborhoods in New York, Boroughs in England, Mumbai, Shanghai and Johannesburg all suffer similarly. The quality and affordability of housing in many regions in the world remains scarce.

Searching through a myriad of solutions I came across this curious term: social enterprise. A business that both generates healthy revenues and solves a crucial societal problem. Mostly targeting low income earners. Take the revolutionary Bridge academies, a low-cost educational model for the most marginalized in the world, which allows parents to pay a mere $5 a month for their children to receive a quality education. Bridge has grown to be the largest chain of private schools in the world. Another example is M-Kopa, a solar power social enterprise that provides small scale lighting solutions for countless homes off the grid. It is becoming one of the fastest growing companies in the East African region, with thousands already purchasing simple solar packs that light their homes. Furthermore, micro-finance is viewed by many as another prominent social enterprise success story.

The most successful organizations at serving these communities have been social enterprises and for good reason. What these companies do and how they operate rests solely on an innovative model tailored for the prospective market. Innovation has to be at the core of operations - otherwise the services delivered would remain either unattainable, or subpar.

Where was the innovation around social housing I asked myself? Could I potentially search and find a model that would serve the rapidly increasing deficit of affordable housing in my country and maybe the continent?

The Swahili speakers are famed for their proverbs. Spoken by over 100 million people across Africa, it is the continent's most popular language. Growing up learning Swahili, I was taught its proverbs at a young age but then one of them began to surface after years from its teaching. Faced with what is definitely one of the continents biggest challenges I remembered:

"Ukitaka kujenga usione taabu kubomoa "

Translating to "If you want to build you must be willing to destroy". Poetic I thought, that destruction bears the fruit of beautiful reconstruction. This reminded me of the first ever home we built. We tore down the house and I thought we would build it back in a day, how very wrong I was (a story for another day), but we essentially built up a new house in its place in a way that truly changed who I was and the way in which I wanted to address the problem of housing. It's really quite simple, the solution was to build housing. This was increasingly difficult because in the absence of affordable housing urban dwellers and rural families alike had built and erected unsafe and degraded housing especially in peri-urban areas and in slums. So we had to tear down what they had previously been living on and free up land for use.

It's difficult to convince someone to part with their home, even more difficult to do it as a teenager. But we managed to accomplish the construction of a few beautiful homes for needy families after they parted with their old ones. How we did this was ultimately uncomplicated but largely innovative. By partnering and learning from some of the leading social housing stake holders in the region we were able identify key instruments and tools that we could use to provide housing in different regions, across various ethnicities and by engaging various workforces and building materials.

To this day I have never been prouder and more inspired than in the moments when I have been blessed enough to witness a quite literally broken cabin transformed into a marvelous home. Oh how much our human dignity is tied to what we live in, to see dignity restored within a person is beyond any triumph I had previously achieved. That's how I started Build for Kenya, in the future I hope to leverage the expanding financial markets of Africa to build housing in its thousands if not millions. Or rather demolish a few thousand or million homes and replace them with something that their residents can live comfortably in: "Ukitaka kujenga usione taabu kubomoa"

NIGERIA AND ENERGY

IN CONVERSATION WITH: ADE ADEOLA

Interview by Yemi Adeola

Ade Adeola is Managing Director Energy & Natural Resources at SCB London. He is a Fellow of the Energy Institute and has served on public-private partnership committees including the Presidential Specialised Committee on Port Reforms-Nigeria.

What are some possible solutions to the challenges facing the upstream energy sector in Nigeria today?

The biggest challenge facing upstream energy access is sustainable funding for exploration and development of existing fields. Most of the production in Nigeria is funded from Joint Venture equity cash calls (capital inflows) from the federal government and international oil companies (FDI). However, this has yielded limited success, relative to other African markets. A key solution is utilising alternative funding mechanisms through project, structured and contractor finance solutions (offered by private banks in syndicated loans) to supplement traditional sources of funding from the National Oil Company and international company partners equity. This will help to unlock potential revenue streams in the Nigerian energy sector.

What are key areas of opportunity to capitalise on for Africa's development?

While most countries in Africa have been able to leapfrog other regions in Information, communications, and technology (with the rapid growth of mobile phones/banking); critical infrastructure - like Power and transport networks continue to lag behind. With a growing middle class and expanding youth population, the demand profile for critical investment in infrastructure is sustainable in most countries. However, public-private partnerships to deliver this has been hampered by a mixture of policy failures, poor execution and limited access to equity capital and long-term financing. On the other hand, there is still a lot of opportunity for growth. A youthful population means a growing labour supply for infrastructure projects. Secondly, this translates to growing consumer demand- particularly in the retail sector which has seen a rapid increase in activity and investors in Nigeria and South Africa.

What have been your career highlights?

Working with Kosmos Energy, Tullow Ltd. and Ghana Nigerian Petroleum Company (GNPC) to unlock a new oil province in Ghana- enabling Ghana's first oil production in 2010. I had the privilege of co-partnering with stakeholders to develop the 2007 Jubilee Oil Field region. Personally, the highlight was the scale of oil production converted into assets, which currently produces an average of 100,000 barrels of oil per day. Secondly, a key highlight was the hybrid solutions I developed in collaboration with NNPC and their IOC partners to unlock project finance and alternative funding for the onshore fields in Niger Delta. The region had been underinvested for many years due to a combination of risk-perception and structuring limitations. Through utilising and asset portfolio diversification model I was able to work with partners to de-risk development.

How have you been able to deliver client results in a corporate organisation working across multiple geographies?
One needs to understand the industry and to develop strong relationships with key stakeholders in the sector. When entering a market, you need to have a mapping of the key funding partners, investors and understand what is important them. You then align your focus to the clients KPI and work with them closely to achieve success across multiple teams in co-creation engagements. This business model is based on cultivating trust, developing market reputation, and building a track record of success. You need to get to a situation where the client sees you as a trusted advisor and an extension of their own teams. A key part of that is to ensure that the technical capabilities of Standard Chartered complements the gaps in the client's analytic capabilities and market knowledge. A nuanced understanding of client needs is required to build resilient partnerships, enabling clients to achieve their goals.

How important has leadership/people management been during your 25+ years in the financial services industry?
Building strong teams derives from building internal partnerships because the skillsets required to be successful come from different backgrounds. Diversity is key in unlocking different perspectives which helps to create a conducive environment to create leaders. My focus has always been to develop teams that are complimentary to client's skillsets and my own strengths, which means that collaboration is a key success factor. Over the years, identifying and developing talent has been one of our critical objectives.

THE CHINESE OPPORTUNITY

IN CONVERSATION WITH: SUWEI JIANG

Interview by Brihadeesh Murali

Suwei Jiang is currently the Head of the China Business Group at PwC UK.

What industry or industries do you see Chinese firms dominating in?

I think it really depends on the market they are targeting. If I take the UK as an example, because we have a very strong services industry here – financial services in particular – the Chinese are really taking advantage of that. There are a lot of financial services companies here. Because of the innovation we have in the country as a tradition, a lot of technology companies are wanting to come here as a gateway to Europe and the wider EMEA region. Then, the Chinese being Chinese, real estate has always been a very hot topic and industry sector for them. Right now, if you look at the city of London, I would say half of the landmark buildings are owned by the Chinese now. That is one area I think they are very much focused in. The other sectors we are seeing a lot of activity in are healthcare and education.

Are there any challenges that Chinese firms specifically face?

I think the biggest challenge that Chinese firms face is still the lack of knowledge of the overseas market – even for those that have been here for quite a long time, because they change their senior management quite frequently. Every few years, you get a new bunch of guys coming in, and they apply the Chinese mentality. Whatever they know about the China market, they think it cannot be that different here. But, they are very different. As we all know sitting here, the UK is even very different to France and Germany, and then you go into Eastern Europe and it is a very different landscape altogether. Getting out of that habit of applying Chinese thinking – that is the biggest challenge. It is a very long drawn-out education process. As China goes into more territories, especially with the Belt and Road Initiative that got launched in 2013, we then look at the 65 territories within the Belt and Road region, with every single country it is different. There are some countries in there that carry a lot more risk than the others, so how can the Chinese companies go into those places, really address issues and be successful? Something that the UK government is keen to promote is to help the Chinese. It is a model of investing or cooperating together in a third country.

Given the Belt and Road Initiative, how do you see the Asian economy shifting over the coming years?

I have flown around quite a lot of the Belt and Road countries, and they see this as a great opportunity to upscale their own economy and work with someone with economic clout from an emerging market. It would help to balance the economic power between the West and the East, and if it is done in the right way, in a sustainable way and an ethical way, I think it is going to change the landscape of the world economy altogether.

Do you feel that China is still an emerging market, or that it has already emerged?

That is a very interesting debate! I am sure you ask different economists and they give you different answers. In my mind, I think it has emerged, depending on how you define emerging markets. If you go to China these days, although there is still disparity between some of the poorer areas and the cities, there is innovation that is happening there, especially around digital. I do not think any other country around the world can match up to that – not here, not in Germany, and certainly not in the US. When I land in China, I do not need my purse – all I need is my phone. Everything happens on WeChat and Alipay. If you have got these accounts, it is a cashless society. I think there is a lot to be learnt from a Western perspective.

BREAKING INTO DEVELOPMENT

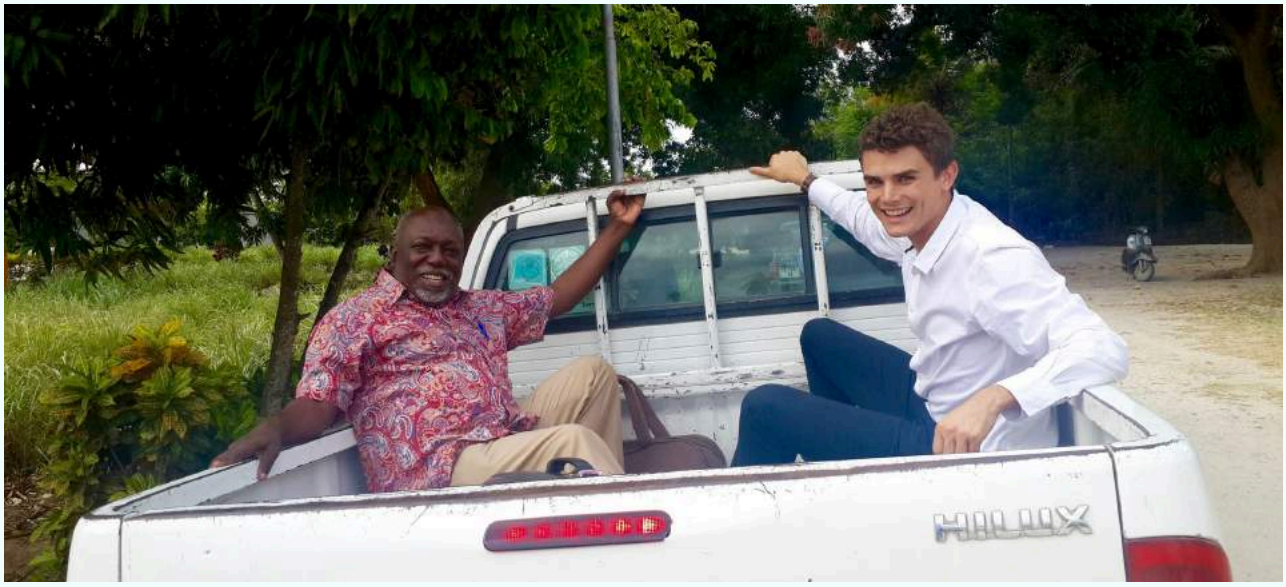
Jamie Pett is University of Warwick Alumni, a former ODI Fellow and founder of the London International Development Network which has over 10,000 members. He currently works as a development consultant in London, specialising in adaptive development and impact measurement. This is his story of breaking into development.

By Jamie Pett

I studied Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Warwick from 2008, including a module on the politics of developing areas. I was President of Bandsoc and also ran in the Sabbatical Elections to become Societies Officer. I lost. I was a Student Caller, phoning graduates asking them for donations. I also volunteered in India over a summer through a small NGO called Development in Action. I then completed a masters course in Development Administration and Planning at University College London, including a field trip to Ethiopia, leading a team researching the role of cooperatives in poverty reduction.

My first proper job was as an economist in the economics unit in the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office. This was an eleven-month paid internship where I wrote papers for ministers and senior officials on global energy trends and how they may impact foreign policy. Following that I was an ODI Fellow in Zanzibar. This meant I was recruited by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) but contracted to the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar as an economist in the Zanzibar Planning Commission for two years. The role involved everything from reviewing proposals for large infrastructure projects, to organising a week-long workshop on tourism policy and finally reviewing the old five-year economic growth and poverty reduction strategy and working out the process to put together the new one. After that I took a bit of a break, to go travelling and do some independent learning and reflection.

Now a fully-fledged consultant based in London, I split my time between the ODI and The Transformational Index (TI). With ODI, I work on a programme to make the Department for International Development's programme more adaptive and flexible. This is part of a movement called Doing Development Differently, which calls for development to be more locally-led and for a focus on learning and adaptation, rather than implementation of blueprints from outside. The TI help social enterprises and NGOs in the UK and US figure out how they want to make a difference, and then how to measure and manage that. I facilitate workshops to help organisations break down complex problems and figure out how best to make change happen.



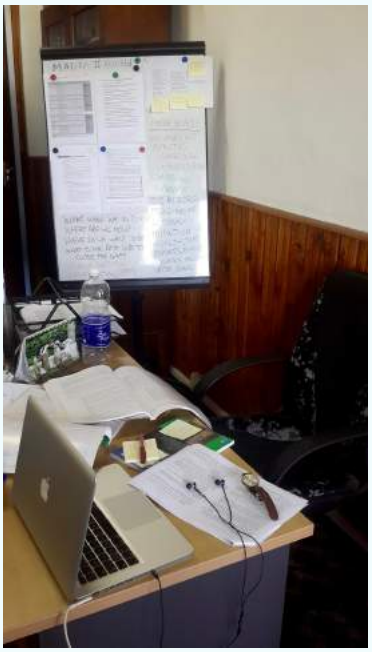
I founded the London International Development Network in 2012 as an online platform to connect development professionals across the sector. We now have over 10,000 members and host regular meet-ups and events. More recently I've become an observer to the board of RESULTS UK, a campaign group which works to create the public and political will to end global poverty, particularly working in health and education.

As for the future, I don't know where I'll be in five or ten years' time; I don't have a masterplan. However, I've developed some principles for thinking about my career, which guide how I make decisions and which I believe may be of some help to you too. The activities these recommend usually fall into the category of being important but not urgent: they might not pay off straight away but will do so over time. As Bill Gates says, "Most people overestimate what they can do in one year, and underestimate what they can do in ten years."

Firstly, I invest in myself with continual, deliberate learning. I'm geeky enough to have a 'to learn' list, which currently includes coaching, appreciative inquiry and asking beautiful questions, amongst much else. I try to read a book a week and, more importantly, put myself in positions where I'll be practising new skills and expertise, always pushing myself slightly out of my comfort zone. As a consultant, this is how I stay ahead of the game and increase my ability to have a positive impact in the world.

Secondly, I build relationships. You could call this networking, but I prefer to think of it in a more human way of building connections with people who are interested in the same things as you. This can take many forms. It's worth contacting people whose work you admire - ideally way before you would want them to give you a job. And by doing your background reading, you'll be able to offer something to them too. Even if it doesn't lead to getting work, you get to chat with some fascinating people and they can then link you with others. Like it or not, many positions are not publically advertised, so it becomes about who is willing to recommend you to their colleagues.

Thirdly, I experiment and try things out to figure out where I thrive and what I find rewarding. This helps me to learn about myself and also about the sector. International development is broader than aid - could include climate change, trade, tax, security and much more. There are thousands of organisations you could work for and thousands of different roles; you have to try things out to work out what suits you best and where you can have the greatest impact. Action creates opportunities. For example, only last week I hosted a webinar for the first time to see whether it suited me - I'll be seeking feedback to find out.



Finally, I take time to pause and reflect. This is an important complement to experimentation. By what criteria do you judge whether your experiment is successful? How do you prioritise how you spend your time and energy? The act of reflection helps you to gain clarity and understand why you're doing what you're doing. It can be hard to get a job working in the sector, but it's even harder to find the sweet spot where you're being paid to do something you find rewarding and can credibly say makes a difference to the world.

You could place these four principles in a cycle that you continually work through – learning, building relationships, experiment, pausing to reflect and then starting again. These principles work for me as a generalist, trying to figure out how I can have the greatest impact I can, though perhaps they might not work as well for a specialist on a ready-made career path.

STARTUPS:RISK WITH GREAT REWARD

Sebastian Manhart is the Chief Operating Officer of Simprints, a nonprofit biometric identification NGO from the University of Cambridge. Simprints have developed rugged fingerprint scanners which are 228% more accurate than existing mobile scanners in low-resource areas, using them to transform the running of projects in areas such as maternal health, immunisations, aid distribution and microfinance. Sebastian graduated from Queen's College, University of Cambridge with an MPhil in Development Studies, having worked under the personal supervision of Ha-Joon Chang to analyze the different types of industrial policies undertaken by governments to achieve economic growth.

By Sebastian Manhart

Academic studies on international development tend to focus on the big players: governments, multilateral institutions, maybe big NGOs. As such, young, motivated individuals are pointed in that very direction for their first career move. The same was true for me: my dream, after 6 years of studying development economics, was to join the United Nations or the World Bank. Never, in that entire time, was the term "social enterprise" used in my studies as an example of driving positive impact. But think about it: Living Goods, d.light, BRAC, Dimagi, and many others have proven that you can have a huge, scalable impact by creating products and services that are driven by a genuine market demand rather than government contributions, donations, or subsidies.

On an individual level, and particularly for graduates, this should be a no-brainer: if you join the UN, you will end up as a small cog in a huge, bureaucratic, hierarchical machine. In a social enterprise, on the other hand, you will learn more, take on responsibility quicker, and fail faster. Even if you decided to go down the institutional path in 10-15 years' time, you will be significantly more employable and skillful than if you had (slowly) risen the UN ranks.

The problem, however, is that social enterprises are less known and, often, smaller, with fewer jobs to be found. Here a few pieces of advice. To find them, look through the portfolio of leading impact investors (Omidyar, Global Innovation Fund, Mustard Seed - UK only), impact foundations (Skoll, Mulago, DRKF, etc.), or even social impact accelerators of business schools and beyond. Once you have identified an organisation - be bold! Do your research and reach out directly - show passion, show commitment, show drive, and show a relentless desire to learn and grow. The rest will fall into place, trust me.

THE POWER OF YOUTH

IN CONVERSATION WITH: NAMIR CHOWDHURY

Interview by Rob Wakerley

Biography

Namir was first a Youth Counsellor as part of the United Kingdom's Youth Parliament, before moving on to acting as Walsall's Youth Police and Crime Commissioner. In this role, he undertook a compassionate campaign to tackle knife crime in his area with the Police Commissioner, with over 2000 knives handed in as a result of local talks and workshops by ex-gang members.

In 2015, Namir was elected as the Walsall Youth Parliament representative, before being elected in 2016 for the West Midlands. During both years his focus was on mental health issues in the community, which he addressed by introducing a peer mentoring scheme in the local community.

In August 2017, he ran successfully in a democratic election against 3 other nominees for 2 roles representing the United Kingdom's under 25s in the Commonwealth. Now one of the current representatives, Namir is attending Commonwealth summits alongside meeting with UK ministers and Prime Minister Theresa May to discuss the relationship of the UK with the Commonwealth, with a particular focus on young people.

One of his primary focuses in this role is the impact of climate change, for which he gave a speech in the House of Lords discussing the importance of acting now and fighting against selective memory and inaction. Such as in the case of the current UK response to the Yemeni crisis, these are the key challenges Namir believes we face as a society in need of mitigating the collective disaster of climate change. In this mind, he has designed a curriculum that further addresses the issue of climate change as well as discussing LGBTQ+ rights. His hope is to get the UK government to install this through the means of PSHE, providing a more holistic education to children across the country.

The realism of getting into youth politics

First and foremost, the key message to understand is that organisations such as the UK Youth Parliament are not the only way of getting into youth politics. There is a perception of youth politics as being aimed at a particular demographic, namely those who are politically affiliated and popular. Whilst popularity aids your entry into youth politics as far as votes go, the myth that must be broken down furthest is that youth politicians have a political bent. Many do not and at this level, the debate usually operates on a non-party level. The hardest thing to do isn't finding an issue that local people care about and engaging with it personally, but doing this through the democratic institution. Often, the stigma around the youth politician being 'in the system' proves a barrier to collective action – even though this is far from the truth in the case of youth politics.

Can youth politics make a difference in International Development or Emerging Markets? How could you affect change in these areas practically?

The Youth Select Committee Report 2015 on mental health services in the UK, undertaken by a group of 14-18 year old Members of the Youth Parliament, has been widely reported and used in the media. It is one of the causes of mental health awareness exploding socially in the last few years, serving as an example of youth politics affecting domestic change. Yet internationally it is harder, due to differences across borders of regulatory and legal issues, meaning change requires longer to take effect. Youth politicians shouldn't let this deter them, however, they must seek to challenge these difficulties else they will never be resolved or improved - as with the Yemeni crisis.

What were the insights you gained during your shadowing of the permanent undersecretary?

Primarily, the multiplicity of the Department for International Development is staggering. As a member of the public, it is hard to appreciate the range of projects they work on and the plethora of ways in which they do this. A project may start with diplomacy but change often takes logistics to arrange, encompassing finance teams and so on. Still, one impression was of a potential lack of cooperation between DFID and other departments, which if changed would aid their projects by fostering the kinds of inter-departmental relations as between the education and business departments. This isn't to say that DFID isn't operating effectively now though; their achievements are hugely impactful and often go unheard of. Taking only 2 years to achieve a considerably higher literacy rate in Kerala for young women stands as just one example. DFID receives a lot of scrutiny from government, especially on its spending, but this is crucial. The importance of ensuring that aid doesn't redevelop into a kind of neo-colonialism but is based on sustainable development cannot be understated.

What does the future hold?

Originally, the goal was to be a neurologist but I decided to change course to Philosophy, Politics and Economics. Currently, I am considering consultancy in the third sector, combining my various passions to help NGOs overcome inefficiencies and be able to enact change without being right in the centre of the public eye!

Advice to those wanting to enter politics as a medium for change:

- The importance of having a "genuine passion and cause" for change: don't go in at a young age just because you want to be in politics, rather personal passion is the true facilitation of change for others.
- Try and establish a network with people, who will give you more insights through the formation of this community – you gain evidence and contextual knowledge to use in your drive for change, receiving a varied perspective.
- You will fail! I lost during my first time running for a democratic post. Yet, I believe it was beneficial that I didn't get it in the sense of what it taught me. You succeed if you aren't afraid to fail and you are open to learning from your experiences.

WiDS