

# Strengthening Capacity to Address Urban, Health and Education Challenges in Fast-Growing Cities and Neighbourhoods\*

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**Abstract:**

This chapter considers the work of a large-scale project, the Centre for Sustainable Healthy Learning Cities and Neighbourhoods (SHLC), funded within the UK's government's Global Challenges Research Fund, part of its Official Development Assistance Programme. In particular, the focus of the chapter is the ways in which the capacities of researchers in the global south can be strengthened through collaboration with universities in the global north. There is an emphasis in this work on the juxtaposition of capacity development and capacity strengthening, the latter invoking the notion that there are foundations to build upon. All of the work of SHLC focused on the links between SDG 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages), SDG 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all) and SDG 11 (Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable). The chapter reports on a range of activities with a focus on a number of projects that it funded in the global south.

**Keywords:** Capacity Strengthening; Cities; Global South; Neighbourhoods; SDG 3, 4 and 11

## Introduction

As we know from preceding chapters, Lalage Bown was a committed internationalist, and an early advocate of inter-disciplinary working. Moreover, much of her life's work demonstrated a profound concern with development, especially in what we now refer to as Low to Medium Income Countries (LMICs). She lived long enough to know something of the University of Glasgow's burgeoning portfolio of research within the field of international development, though not quite long enough to know that its School of Education, within which she was a Professor Emerita, had become a UK leader in the field. This is illustrated in its submission to the UK's Research Excellence Framework (REF) (the mechanism

\* Material within this chapter has *inter alia* been informed by the work of the Centre for Sustainable Healthy Learning Cities funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) grant ES/PO11020/1.

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Referee List (DOI 10.36253/fup\_referee\_list)

FUP Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing (DOI 10.36253/fup\_best\_practice)

Michael Osborne, *Strengthening Capacity to Address Urban, Health and Education Challenges in Fast-Growing Cities and Neighbourhoods*, © Author(s), CC BY 4.0, DOI 10.36253/979-12-215-0253-4.20, in Maria Slowey, Heribert Hinzen, Michael Omolewa, Michael Osborne (edited by), *Adult Education and Social Justice: International Perspectives*, pp. 175-189, 2023, published by Firenze University Press, ISBN 979-12-215-0253-4, DOI 10.36253/979-12-215-0253-4

by which research quality is measured) in 2021. The School reported that its success in winning UKRI/BA (UK Research and Innovation/British Academy) awards under the aegis of the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF). Indeed, it was, with 21 awards, the UK's largest beneficiary of the GCRF in the field of Education, which it reported in its REF Environment statement as being «suited to our research aim to make a difference for society's most vulnerable and educationally disadvantaged» ("Environment Submissions Database" 2021)<sup>1</sup>.

The Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF), to which it refers, has been an unprecedented £1.5bn funding stream allied to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. When initiated in 2016, it was an innovative contribution to the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) Programme which at that time was committed to meeting the United Nations (UN) recommended target of spending at least 0.7% of GNI (Gross National Income) on aid to the poorest countries in the world. It first reached that target in 2013, and was one of only seven OECD countries to do so. The GCRF programme was novel in as much as it was 'challenge-led', inter-disciplinary, collaborative and agile. It sought to:

- promote challenge-led disciplinary and interdisciplinary research, including the participation of researchers who may not previously have considered the applicability of their work to development issues
- strengthen capacity for research, innovation and knowledge exchange in the UK and developing countries through partnership with excellent UK research and researchers
- provide an agile response to emergencies where there is an urgent research need (UKRI 2023).<sup>2</sup>

The commitment to creating the GCRF was made in 2015 following the UK's comprehensive spending review, and was also part of the promises made in the manifesto of the ruling Conservative party to uphold the allocation 0.7% GNI to aid (HM Treasury et al. 2015). We will reflect on these promises later in the chapter.

For the research community, this was a rare opportunity to work collaboratively with researchers in the global south with a view to tackling some of the world's most intractable problems with a notable emphasis on 'capacity strengthening'. It is notable that this phrasing was used to describe the work of GCRF projects. The term sits in juxtaposition with 'capacity development', and implies that there are foundations to build on in partner countries. In the chapter we describe one of the projects, and indeed the largest in terms of funding and duration (some £7m over 5 years) amongst the 21 in which the School of Education was involved, the Centre for Sustainable, Healthy and Learning Cities and Neighbourhoods (SHLC). In an introduction to the centre on its website, it is noted that:

<sup>1</sup> See <<https://results2021.ref.ac.uk/environment/submissions/d5ced964-924e-4ed8-b09d-e91c0dc2c182/environment>> (2023-07-01).

<sup>2</sup> See <<https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/browse-our-areas-of-investment-and-support/global-challenges-research-fund>> (2023-07-01).

Films such as ‘Slumdog Millionaire’ and ‘Favela Rising’ give us a raw glimpse of what daily life is like in fast-growing cities in the developing world. But the sprawling slums of Mumbai and the fierce favelas of Rio de Janeiro are not the only neighbourhoods to be found, and life in the slums is not the only story to be told (Centre for Sustainable, Healthy and Learning Cities and Neighbourhoods 2018).<sup>3</sup>

With over half of the population living in urban areas and the numbers increasing daily (Wang and Kintrea 2021), cities are facing unprecedented demographic, environmental, economic, social and spatial challenges. At SHLC, we have been studying cities from the inside out, and our international team of researchers are particularly interested in investigating how cities are responding to urban, health and education challenges at the neighbourhood level. Our focus thus pertains to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UN 2015), with a particular focus on SDG 11 (*Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable*) through the lens of SDG 3 (*Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages*) and SDG 4 (*Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*). Furthermore, our work within the aegis of SDG4 has adopted a lifelong perspective, reflective of the fact that quality and comprehensive adult and lifelong education (ALE) has been promoted as a key component of education and lifelong learning is critical for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (UN 2015) and especially so within a lifelong learning philosophy (Hinzen and Duke 2019).

A key logic to our work is that cities are not homogeneous, and that we need an understanding of the intersecting issues affecting liveability in cities will vary from neighbourhood to neighbourhood. The work of SHLC thus focused on the important link between education, health and sustainability, which is well documented in both developed (Fitzpatrick and LaGory 2011) and developing countries (Smit et al. 2014), and we did so in Glasgow through collaboration between Urban Studies (who led the centre), Education and our Institute of Health and Well-being. Our work did not simply analyse cities as a whole, but through detailed investigation of their neighbourhoods, exploring how cities are changing bit by bit. Furthermore, our team of researchers in eight countries, studying 14 cities in the global south in Bangladesh, China, India, the Philippines, Rwanda, South Africa and Tanzania, were not only looking at poorer communities, but all types of neighbourhoods across the whole city – from slums to gated communities and everything in between. Our focus on intersectionality took us to another layer of complexity in these cities where any one individual may be experiencing both opportunity and exclusion depending on a range of characteristics, linked to, amongst other factors, race, ethnicity, gender, class, caste and disability (Tefera et al. 2018). This complexity was explored in depth and is evident in numerous Briefing Papers and Research Reports of the cities found at the SHLC website.

<sup>3</sup> See <<https://www.centreforsustainablecities.ac.uk>> (2023-07-01).

Since 2016, SHLC's work has been looking specifically at fast-growing cities across Africa and Asia as it is here that urban populations have undergone the fastest change – and through the current century, it is here that we will see the greatest urban growth (Kii 2021). The speed and scale of rapid urban growth has created many opportunities – but also many problems. Rapid urban sprawl, migration and population growth have led to a shortage of housing, inadequate water supply and pollution: migrants moving into cities often find themselves living in poor neighbourhoods and the inequality in living standards and access to good job and learning opportunities we see in these neighbourhoods is a major challenge.

### 1. The Aims of SHLC

The centre has been an international consortium of nine partners: University of Glasgow, Human Sciences Research Council (South Africa), Ifakara Health Institute (Tanzania), Khulna University (Bangladesh), Nankai University (China), National Institute of Urban Affairs (India), University of Rwanda (Rwanda), University of the Philippines Diliman (the Philippines), University of the Witwatersrand (South Africa). Its programme of work has two overall aims:

1. to strengthen research capacity among urban studies researchers, government officials and policy makers in the public and private sectors both in the UK and in developing countries;
2. to conduct systematic and comparative studies of urbanisation and the formation and differentiation of neighbourhoods in urban areas in order to address the challenges associated with urbanisation and large-scale rural-to-urban migration in Africa and Asia.

Research and capacity-strengthening activities in SHLC have been designed to help support and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, particularly Goal 3, Goal 4 and Goal 11, across fast-growing cities in Africa and Asia. Its activities are very much grounded in principles of equitable partnership and south-south learning where collaboration and interdisciplinarity is key. In an early blog, SHLC's Principal Investigator explained why this approach matters:

In the past, international collaboration tended to mean that experts from the developed world telling developing countries how to build cities using the 'Global North' experience. This approach is not suitable. Cities in developing countries have grown under very different economic, political and social conditions. Many cities, like Delhi, Cape Town and Manila, have very distinctive and unique features which older industrial cities in the West do not share. By bringing developing country researchers together we are not just sharing knowledge between the 'Global North' and 'Global South', we are focussing on knowledge transfer and sharing learning experiences between developing countries. For example, our case study cities in China, India and South Africa – the so-called 'BRICS' countries and emerging economies – have

developed quite differently and at different rates. But their neighbourhoods show some similar features. Relatively poorer developing countries, like the Philippines, Bangladesh, Tanzania and Rwanda, have a different level of economic development, so their cities are facing slightly different challenges. By comparing similarities and differences between all of our case study cities we will gain greater understanding and insight into how cities work and how we can make the city work better for all (Wang 2018).

## 2. The Nature and Rationale of SHLC's Capacity Strengthening Activities

The Centre's activities specifically supported UKRI's "Growing Research Capability to Meet the Challenges Faced by Developing Countries" funding stream within its GCRF portfolio, and was one of 37 similar major investments totaling £225m in funding, and themed under the programme of Growing Research Capacity (UKRI 2017). As in the case with each of these projects, a core and indeed the principal purpose of SHLC was to strengthen capacity through identifying, understanding and responding to urban, health and education challenges in neighbourhoods in cities in the global south. This is the focus of the rest of this chapter.

Capacity strengthening activities included a series of training workshops, knowledge exchange events and a small grants fund, through which SHLC sought to create a strong and durable network of urban researchers specialised in neighbourhood analysis of rapidly urbanising cities. These activities were intended to support and complement the Centre's core research, which involves a comparative study of urbanisation and differentiation of neighbourhoods in 14 different cities in both emerging economies and relatively poor countries in Africa and Asia (Ahmad et al. 2021).

This work in capacity strengthening was directed towards all members of the team of some 50+ researchers, including the investigators, research assistants and PhD students, and was conceived along four strands of activity:

1. **UK Based Workshops and Training**, largely focused on social science methods, including those using big data, social media data, GIS (Geographic Information System) and spatial analysis;
2. **Knowledge Exchange and Capacity Strengthening in/between Countries** based on principles of co-construction of knowledge and responsible research and innovation with face-to-face and virtual sessions. This included workshops to disseminate and exchange initial findings with city/region representatives, NGOs and individual researchers;
3. A **Visiting Research Fellow Programme** for early career researchers within and beyond the collaborating organisations;
4. **Research Seminars, International Conference and Wider Network Building** organised by in part by in-country teams.

Over and above these elements of our work, a key element of the strategy was to extend reach beyond the core team through the small grants programme, the *Capacity Development Acceleration Fund* (CDAF), which funded 19 projects across Latin America, Africa and Asia with grants of up to £25k per project. Most of these projects were led by early career researchers, with the aim that the skills, knowledge and experience they are developing will help strengthen and sustain research capacity within their local context. CDAF aimed to grow capacity in the following key areas:

- *Research methodology* – improved understanding and application of tools and techniques required to support neighbourhood level analysis of fast-growing cities in developing countries and emerging economies;
- *Global challenges* – improved knowledge of urban, health and education issues caused by rapid urbanisation, migration and population growth in Africa and Asian cities including recommendations for addressing these issues;
- *Knowledge exchange* – enhanced south-south partnerships and improved ability to use research findings to engage relevant stakeholders to influence urban policy, practice and planning.

The pilot projects funded through SHLC's CDAF had three key objectives. The first of these was to support and drive a strong interdisciplinary and international network of highly skilled researchers with expert knowledge of sustainability, health and learning in developing-country cities, thereby arming them with improved capacity to influence urban policy, practice and planning. Secondly CDAF aimed to develop a new understanding of urbanisation at the neighbourhood level that would help change how urban planners and policymakers conceptualise urban development. Thirdly the fund encouraged the development of new methodologies, theories, and capacity that would be utilised by government officials, policymakers and supra-national bodies to change perceptions, behaviours and the way issues are defined and framed so that cities better address challenges of urbanisation and large scale rural to urban migration at the neighbourhood level.

CDAF was designed to support capacity strengthening at three levels, based on three levels of impact that have been highlighted by UKRI as areas where they expect to see change, based on a practice paper produced by the UK's former Department for International Development (DFID) (2010):

1. *Individual*: upskilled researchers, policymakers and planners more effectively undertake and utilise research to change urban planning, policy and practice;
2. *Organisational*: improved capacity of project teams and organisations to better design, manage and sustain urban research projects;

3. *Institutional*: changed ‘rules of the game’ which address incentive structures, political context and resource base in which urban research is undertaken and utilised by policymakers.

### 3. An Overview of Projects

Projects funded by CDAF were wide-ranging and included a mixture of disciplines, methodologies and tools from participatory mapping and community-led workshops to using virtual reality as a research tool to support urban planning. For example, one team in Bangladesh used GIS-based analysis of remote sensing data to understand the rate of land and water body change caused by rapid urbanisation. Another team in Colombia facilitated political and economic inclusion for informal workers through participatory policy engagement activities. Whilst there was diversity in what was supported, there are several threads woven across the programme of work. Capacity strengthening directed to a range of constituencies has been core, and many projects spoke to participatory engagement with community members, equipping them with the tools and knowledge to interrogate their own communities. But engagement is more than simply a top-down process, and many projects sought to work with community members using participatory, citizen-science and action research methods, and provided opportunities for individuals and groups to give voice to the issues with which they were most concerned. In this sense, there was an attempt in many of these projects to turn the rhetoric of citizen engagement and knowledge co-construction into a reality in many projects (Borkowska and Osborne 2018). Tab. 1 shows a full list of projects including country of focus, the nature of the research and the SDGs being targeted.

Table 1 – CDAF-funded projects.

<b>Project title</b>	<b>Project description</b>
Planning for Post-Conflict Cities: Virtual Reality for Urban Planning and Research towards Building Back a Sustainable, Healthy, and Learning Marawi City (Philippines, Goals 4 and 11).	This project entailed developing and prototyping post-conflict planning, research, and a training tool for neighbourhoods using virtual reality (VR) technology. It was predicated on the notion at VR technology democratises planning by providing a means for visualisation and methodology for participation and engagement. At the same time, the project has promoted lifelong learning by providing accessible experiential learning not just to academics, but also to the community and stakeholders involved in planning and decision-making at the grassroots level.

Capacity Building Workshop for Early Career Researchers on issues and challenges of Urban Sector (India Goal 11).	This one-week capacity building workshop in New Delhi for early career researchers sought to strengthen the participant's knowledge and skills in theory and practice, including research methodologies, data analysis, participatory planning, project management, and other soft skills to address the challenges of urban sector.
Liveable Regional Cities in Bangladesh (Bangladesh Goal 11).	This research explored what makes the cities of Noapara and Mongla liveable from the perspectives of residents, officials and stakeholders in an interdisciplinary manner through the use of storytelling workshops, production of videos and interviews.
Connecting the Urban and Peri-urban (CoUP): A transformative policy framework for inclusive and resilient urban development in India (India Goal 11).	The lack of planning and policy attention to peri-urban areas in India has led to marginalisation and increasing health inequalities causing severe social, economic and environmental problems. This interdisciplinary project aimed to develop a new planning and policy framework for integrating the urban-peri-urban to promote resilience in Indian cities.
Power of partnership: Voices of residents and city planners as sources of innovation for sustainable urban governance (Bangladesh Goal 11).	This knowledge mobilisation project employed a deliberative method to integrate the lived experiences and views of urban populations as sources of innovation into planning processes for sustainability. It builds on an innovative approach that includes co-designed visual participatory and perspective-taking activities in Chattogram, a rapidly growing city in Bangladesh.
Age Friendly Cities in the Andean Region– Implementing and Monitoring the Protocol of Vancouver (Colombia, Peru and Bolivia, Goal 11).	This project in three countries in Latin America aimed to raise awareness about the importance of generating supportive urban environments for older residents through south-south knowledge exchange. The project included the delivery of a training course, piloting community assessments and change strategies, preparation of technical documents and the development of visibility activities to create age-friendly cities.
Strengthening Neighbourhood Level Research Capacities for Sustainable Communities in Fast Growing Nigerian Cities (Nigeria Goal 11).	This project aimed to strengthen early career researchers' capacity to undertake neighbourhood level research in Nigeria. Seminars, fieldwork and presentations were led by facilitators from research, local communities, government and civil society.

Between rural and urban: research to action in the peripheries of the Municipality of El Alto de La Paz (Bolivia Goal 11).	Within the framework of the ‘Right to the City’, this project carried out action research, with residents and leaders in multiple neighbourhood districts in El Alto, Bolivia.
Green Infrastructure for Health Promotion Within Informal Neighbourhoods in Lagos and Akure (Nigeria Goals 3 and 11).	This project dealt with health-related impacts of green infrastructure and how it can be collaboratively improved to reduce disease burdens within informal neighbourhoods in Lagos and Akure, Nigeria.
Towards more inclusive urban planning in Udon Thani and Nakuru (Thailand and Kenya, Goals 3 and 11).	Understanding the health and wellbeing penalties paid by poorer or vulnerable urban residents demands a deeper community-level study of their lived experiences of urban development and the impact of ordinary urban spaces on their health and well-being. This project undertook pilot research at the neighbourhood scale to identify these relationships using citizen science approaches to gather non-traditional data that could inform urban planning processes.
Transformation of agricultural land and waterbodies in rapidly urbanising Bangladesh: recognising the extent of sustainability concerns. (Bangladesh Goal 11).	This project used GIS-based analysis of remote sensing data to understand the extent, rate and pattern of changes in agricultural land and water bodies in the process of urbanisation in Bangladesh, and further informed how urbanisation is affecting food security and environmental sustainability in a rapidly-urbanising country.
How to improve understanding of sustainable and healthy neighbourhoods through youth participation in Kisenyi Slum, Kampala (Uganda Goal 4 and 11).	This study informed a community-based process on how to improve understanding of sustainable and healthy neighbourhoods through youth participation.
City occupied: A neighbourhood based comparison of informal land occupations in Bogota, Cape Town and Sao Paulo (Colombia, South Africa and Brazil, Goal 11).	This project employed a comparative neighbourhood framework to examine informal land occupations across different neighbourhoods in Bogota, Cape Town and Sao Paulo.

<p>Healthy cities for adolescents: a participatory research in Gurugram, Haryana (India, Goal 3 and 11).</p>	<p>This participatory research aimed to improve adolescent health and to enhance their influence of adolescents themselves on health services in Gurugram, Haryana, India. The project incorporated the voices and perspectives of marginalised adolescents into the planning and designing of adolescent specific health policies and programmes.</p>
<p>Capacity-strengthening workshop for future research leaders in urban water governance in Dar es Salaam (Tanzania Goal 11).</p>	<p>This capacity-strengthening workshop provided training to urban water governance researchers in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.</p>
<p>Raising Voices through Design Charrette: Contextualization of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Terminals and Intermediate Bus Stops Stations by Neighbourhood Context and Needs (Tanzania Goals 3 and 11).</p>	<p>This project explored Tanzania's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) terminals and intermediate bus stops stations by neighbourhood context and needs.</p>
<p>Promoting Inclusive Governance for Informal Workers in Cali (Colombia Goal, 11).</p>	<p>This project aimed to set up a participatory policy engagement process to facilitate political and economic inclusion for informal workers in Cali, Colombia, that could be replicated in other cities in the Global South to promote more inclusive urban governance.</p>
<p>The studio 'iv' module – Kigali (Rwanda, Goal 11).</p>	<p>The studio iv module introduces students to the importance of participatory urban design. The studio used a 'slum upgrading project' to introduce students to strategies for 'embracing informality', which characterises a significant proportion of Kigali's housing and the housing culture of Kigali city.</p>
<p>Local challenges, global imperatives: cities at the forefront to achieve Education 2030 (Bangladesh, Rwanda, Philippines, Goals 4 and 11).</p>	<p>Working with UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) and their programme, <i>Local Challenges, Global Imperatives: Cities at the Forefront to Achieve the Education 2030 Agenda</i>, this project examines the ways cities conduct educational planning and management in three contexts: Bangladesh, the Philippines, and Rwanda to identify challenges and strategies to strengthen their effectiveness.</p>

#### 4. Capacity Strengthening and Knowledge Exchange Coming to Fruition

All projects were completed by 2022, though of course, the COVID-19 pandemic had a considerable impact on both the timelines of projects and on the methodologies being used. Earlier we referred to the UK's lofty position in committing to meeting UN recommended targets in overseas aid, and manifesto commitment of the ruling Conservative government. Despite these promises and their enshrinement in law, in 2020, citing the challenges of the epidemic and dealing with refugees coming to the UK, the government cut overseas aid to 0.5% of GNI as a 'temporary' measure<sup>4</sup>. This has had a knock-on effect in that the UKRI was compelled in an unprecedented manner to reduce the funding allocation that it was making to some GCRF projects by 70% for 2021-22. SH-LC was not immune in that respect, though the centre managed to re-profile its activities without cutting any of the CDAF projects.

Projects that were funded in earlier rounds of CDAF have shared and disseminated their results, and others will follow. This has already provided evidence to post-project longer-term impact, which is key to the success of this work. For example, research findings from a participatory urban research project exploring the concept of 'liveability' in the cities of Mongla and Noapara (Bangladesh) (Centre for Sustainable, Healthy and Learning Cities and Neighbourhoods 2020)<sup>5</sup> have been shared via local engagement events with local city officials and through less conventional street theatre performances with the community. The research has resulted in an enduring network of Bangladeshi early career researchers who have continued their research beyond this small project and have, in fact, secured more funding to apply their research approach to the COVID-19 context (Ruszczyk et al. 2021).

Another aspect of our work has been to build capacity by providing connectivity and access to programmes of research for academics in the global south with key international organisations. The clearest example of this is manifest is that the Centre used an element of the funding to support a new strand of re-

<sup>4</sup> The crisis in Ukraine has exacerbated this issue with, according to the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI 2023), around one-third of the already reduced overseas aid budget having been spent on housing refugees in 2022 by the UK's Home Office. Under international aid rules, it is permissible to allocate some of the first-year costs of supporting refugees and asylum seekers as an ODA contribution (so called 'in-donor refugee costs'), though somewhat controversial. It of course has had a further knock-on effect on responses to humanitarian crises elsewhere in the world. The 0.5% allocation of GNI was increased to 0.55% in November 2022 by the UK to limit the impact on overseas aid, but even so the ICAI points out that 'in-donor refugee support' is an expensive way to spend ODA, compared to supporting crisis-affected people in their own country or region. The UK is, therefore, able to use its ODA budget to help far fewer people. «It also runs counter to a key humanitarian principle that humanitarian action should give priority to the most urgent needs» (ICAI 2023, v).

<sup>5</sup> See <<http://www.centreforsustainablecities.ac.uk/news/project-cdaf-liveable-regional-cities-bangladesh>> (2023-07-01).

search with our existing partners in Bangladesh, the Philippines and Rwanda in collaboration with UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP). The project has investigated the role of education in urban planning, and builds on two pieces of research undertaken in 2018-20 in a developed nation, France: a quantitative survey carried out by UNESCO's Institute for Lifelong Learning's Global Network of Learning Cities<sup>6</sup>, and its cluster on educational planning and management; and qualitative research conducted by IIEP in four cities in France with its programme, Cities and Education 2030: Local challenges, global imperatives (UNESCO IIEP 2021)<sup>7</sup>. The central question of this work has been: how can cities ensure successful planning to achieve SDG 4 by 2030? This work in Manila and Kigali has already been reported to the city authorities during 2022 and 2023, and offers up a number of observations based on desk research, interviews and focus group discussions with key actors responsible for educational planning at city level, and visits to public schools to meet with other key players including headteachers, teachers, other school-level staff, and pupils. Despite many positive findings, there remain challenges in Manila related to socio-economic inequalities, an increasing school population, unequal representation of and insufficient communication among stakeholders, and no shared vision of education amongst those responsible for its delivery given the many varied interests and agendas. Further challenges include: a lack of continuity in planning and policymaking, unsynchronised budgeting and implementation, vulnerability to disasters and climate risks, and weak monitoring and evaluation. In Kigali the main challenge is that education is not recognised as a priority by the city and there is a lack of alignment between sectors responsible for education; furthermore, consultations do not include parents, teachers and non-teaching staff. A series of recommendations for development of the system has been made to local and national actors.

Overall, it is premature to present a comprehensive analysis of the impact of our various capacity strengthening work. However, this is being systematically analysed, and will be informed by the evaluation of GCRF programme as a whole (Barr et al. 2018) in the context of its *Theory of Change* model as shown in Fig. 1.

<sup>6</sup> See <<https://uil.unesco.org/lifelong-learning/learning-cities>> (2023-07-01).

<sup>7</sup> See <<http://www.iiep.unesco.org/en/our-expertise/cities-and-education-2030-local-challenges-global-imperatives>> (2023-07-01).

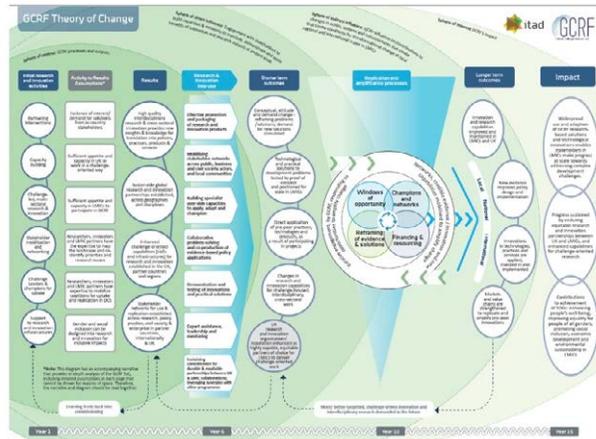


Figure 1 – GCRF *Theory of Change* (Barr et al. 2018, 2).

There are certainly pointers to the effectiveness of offering relatively small awards to early-career researchers to undertake work that widens the coverage of a larger core project, and thus creating an extensive network of researchers internationally working towards addressing a common challenge. Keeping these researchers connected to SHLC once its core funding and the funding of specific projects has been exhausted in a common problem. One way that this is happening is through the creation of new permanent structures within partner countries, such as the Centre for Neighbourhood Studies (CeNS) in the Philippines. This is an independent, non-government, non-profit organisation aimed at understanding, developing and promoting smarter and more sustainable neighbourhoods that has been developed by SHLC partners. The establishment of distinct brands with host organisations such as SHLC Bangladesh, SHLC Philippines, SHLC Rwanda and SHLC Tanzania, working under one SHLC umbrella with the University of Glasgow, and in the case of the Philippines and Bangladesh, the creation of PASCAL<sup>8</sup> Asia to complement PASCAL Europe hosted at Glasgow is a further pointer to sustainability. Another is the likely absorption of SHLC at the University of Glasgow into the International Development theme of its Advanced Research Centre (ARC), which has been at the heart of future inter-disciplinary working since its opening in 2022.

<sup>8</sup> The PASCAL (Place and Social Capital and Learning) Observatory is a global alliance of researchers, policy analysts, decision makers and locally engaged practitioners from government, higher education, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the private sector. It has its origins in a major conference organised by the OECD in Melbourne in 2002 on the importance of learning cities and regions for regional development. PASCAL's focus is on the development and renewal of place. It gives special emphasis to the role of social capital and lifelong learning in these processes, considering how sustainable economic, social and cultural development can be achieved to the benefit of the communities concerned.

In conclusion, we wonder how Lalage Bown would have responded to this dimension of the work of her university, which she continued to serve until her final days. She certainly would have been one of the first to challenge the cuts to ODA funding and the obfuscation of the UK government in its justifications for doing. We like to also think that the announcement in February 2022 that GCRF, alongside other development assistance programmes, the Newton Fund and the Fund for International Collaboration, would not be continuing in their current form would also have troubled her. So would the merger of the Department for International Development with the much smaller Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) to create the Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO), which has been seen by some as akin to a 'hostile takeover' putting the needs of trade over aid. However, we hope that what we have achieved in SHLC and more widely in international development at the University of Glasgow in the past few years would have encouraged her to raise one more glass of whisky.

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