

# **A YEAR IN DEV**

**RESEARCH, EDUCATION  
AND ADVOCACY**





WORLD TOP 20  
FOR DEVELOPMENT  
STUDIES

QS World University  
Rankings by subject 2024

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Cover image: Students and alumni  
at the DEV Employability Week  
networking event.

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UEA DEV

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Editor:  
David Girling

Designed by:  
DesignPod

# 2025 - 2026 WELCOME TO A YEAR IN DEV



Below: Images from the  
DEV Employability Events

## JOHN MCDONAGH HEAD OF SCHOOL

**Last year when I wrote a piece for the DEV newsletter it was as interim Head of School but just before Christmas I was confirmed in the role until 31 July 2027.**

Adrian Martin continues as deputy HoS until summer 2026 at which time he will hand over to our colleague Maren Duvendack. The current plan is for Maren to take over as Head of School from August 2027. From my perspective the year has felt a little calmer perhaps than some of those preceding it, though the School and UEA continue to be affected by the same forces affecting almost every other Higher Education Institution in the country.

Competition remains fierce and it is clear we need to ensure the courses we offer match up well against our competitors, responding to changes in demand from both students and prospective employers. To this end the School has, over the last year, developed three new courses that are open for their first intake this Autumn: a new BSc Sustainable Development an MSc Data Science for Global Development and an MA Policy, Behaviour and Data for Development. We are now keeping our portfolio of courses under continual review in addition to improving our teaching across the board. Streamlining our existing undergraduate course portfolio

and over-hauling the way we assess work and deliver important skills through our teaching etc. are two additional areas we have been focussing on in the current year.

As always, we have seen some within-year changes to academic, teaching and FPS staff: We were fortunate to be able to keep Anuprita Shukla and Thi Bogossian in DEV for the current year and Will Haynes has joined as an additional geography lecturer to cover the teaching of a colleague on maternity leave. We welcomed our first new ATR staff member for several years: Yafa El Masri! Yafa is a lecturer in Geography and Global Development, a human geographer with specific interests in refugees, humanitarianism and decolonisation. All in the School were sad to see our colleague Daniel Wroe, move on. Daniel had a long association with DEV and was valued by staff and students as a wonderful colleague and excellent teacher. In the DEV General Office we have had a couple of changes but are lucky currently to have a full team with Conor Franks and Jo Neal as the most recent welcome additions.

The School continues to carry out world-leading research across many different areas. One of the benefits of being in almost continual preparation for the 'next REF' (the periodic national research quality assessment exercise) is that we have to regularly review our work and report on key measures such as outputs, impact etc. I have been

part of a number of recent detailed review meetings and have felt proud and privileged to be part of a School doing such important work across so many many different areas. It is clear that the wider faculty and university recognise both the impactful nature of our research and our skill at developing the evidence-based impact case studies increasingly important for a strong REF performance.

The NISD (Norwich Institute for Sustainable Development) is now in its fifth year, the last covered by its first phase of funding from the John Innes Foundation (JIF). The team has recently won JIF-funding for a second phase that will be more focused around a series of specific projects. The NISD remains the best concrete example of cross-NRP collaboration at UEA and is regularly praised by the University leadership as such. Through its research work and high profile lectures the NISD helps to build DEV's external profile and the School continues to do this by convening symposia and conferences. These range from the relatively modest

but none the less interesting online 'Imagined Geographies' symposium organized by Maria Abranches in May to the major international conference Nitya Rao and colleagues are organising for June. The School tries to host a major international event of this type every two years or so and this June we are organising an international Gender and Development conference to mark the continued relevance of gender and broader social justice issues 50 years on from the first UN conference on Gender.

Finally, a word of thanks to the (still relatively new) DEV Advisory Board. They continue to impress us with their enthusiasm, engagement and creativity in suggesting ways to improve our teaching and strategy more broadly in the face of sector-wide challenges such as reduced research funding and increasing competition for students etc. We are fortunate at this time to have this group of informed, multi-talented individuals as our 'critical friends' and they are already helping us in several of the areas I mention above.

## HELLO'S AND GOODBYE'S

### HELLOS

Conor Franks  
School Administrator

Jo Neal  
School Coordinator/  
PA to the Head of School

Dr Yafa El Masri  
Lecturer in Geography and  
Global Development

Dr Will Haynes  
Lecturer in Geography and  
Global Development

Matthew Heaton  
Research Associate

Dr Caroline King  
Senior Research Associate

### GOODBYES

Dr Jonathan Pattenden  
Associate Professor

Dr Daniel Wroe  
Lecturer in Geography and  
Global Development

Emily Beck  
School Coordinator/  
PA to the Head of School

Daisy Wyatt  
School Administrator





# STAFF RESEARCH

/ Improving Food Security  
/ Intercultural Fire Management  
/ Developing Just Restoration Curriculum  
/ Romes Rivers  
/ Quantification Trends  
/ From Lab to Land  
/ Citizen Ethnograph

## DEV RESEARCH FOR MORE NUTRITIOUS AND RESILIENT WHEAT HARVESTS

**Through the Norwich Institute for Sustainable Development (NISD), DEV is involved in a UK-CGIAR Centre project supporting the adoption of high-iron and disease-resistant wheat for Egypt, Kenya and Pakistan.**

Fungal rusts are a significant disease threat for wheat farmers and are spreading geographically as a result of climate change. The best control method is to breed plants with innate resistance, removing the need to repeatedly spray fungicides, reducing both production costs and environmental impact. Iron deficiency is prevalent in these three countries, especially amongst women and children. While wheat is comparatively low in iron, the quantity of wheat products consumed make it a major iron source. In Kenya for instance, wheat flour is estimated as the second biggest source of iron. Improving iron nutrition is pressing given that an

estimated 60% of children and 40% of women across sub-Saharan Africa are anaemic. Improving both rust resistance and iron content could therefore increase food security and improve iron nutrition, without dietary change.

But many promising varieties are not widely adopted or fail to reach their intended users. DEV's role in this project is to increase the likelihood of improved wheat uptake and therefore impact. We seek to better understand interest in rust resilience and iron nutrition as well as other locally valued traits to inform crop breeding targets. There is an assumption that high-iron traits will benefit farmers, especially women, but these actors might for example sell entire harvests into the value chain. In addition to harvest and post-harvest work, women are key to food preparation in the household, yet the role of gender is rarely considered in decisions on who grows wheat, trait preferences and harvest use.

The NISD is therefore using mixed and participatory methods to understand what women and men farmers, value

chain actors and consumers want for wheat improvement. Understanding these demands will influence the breeding process, output channels and promotional activities to raise the likelihood of these innovations reaching the communities who need them most.

Written by  
**Matt Heaton**



*NISD/DEV members Chris Darby (front left), Nitya Rao (front, second left) and Matt Heaton (front right) join representatives from the UK-CGIAR Science Centre wheat project team to meet with FCDO in London*

## INTERCULTURAL FIRE MANAGEMENT

**In Chiapas, Mexico, the cultural use of fire is an ancient practice that plays a fundamental role in the daily and spiritual life of communities. Yet, strict fire use regulations put in practice since the 1990s have been very controversial as they have disrupted local livelihood practices linked to the use of fire at the community level.**

### Opening up community dialogue

In November 2024, as part of a secondment organised through the FIRE\_ADAPT Project, I was invited to help facilitate the first workshop on cultural fire management in the Comiteca Tojolabal Plateau Region of Chiapas, Mexico (bordered to the north and east by the Lacandon Jungle, and to the south by Guatemala). This workshop was organized by Dr Laura Patricia Ponce Calderón, from the Department of Society and Culture at El Colegio de la Frontera Sur (ECOSUR), San Cristóbal

de Las Casas Unit, Chiapas, Mexico.

Since 2020, Laura Ponce has been directing the 'Cultural Knowledge of Fire Use and Management in the Comiteca Tojolabal Plateau', which aims to analyse the cultural knowledge of fire among peoples and cultures and based on this, develop a fire management proposal based on epistemic and cultural diversity, as well as the socioeconomic needs of the population. As part of this project, Laura decided to open a dialogue between local communities

*Tunam Puente Archeological Site, Chiapas, Mexico*

and environmental resource managers about cultural management of fire, to help understand the diverse meanings fire has in communities, in an atmosphere of respect, active listening, and understanding.

### Sharing knowledge and techniques

The 'Cultural Fire Management Workshop' was designed to share experiences and practices in the cultural use and management of fire, thus highlighting the importance of local knowledge and techniques, which have been fundamental to the daily lives of the communities. This was an unprecedented event. It was the first time that representatives from environmental institutions such as the National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (CONANP) and the National Forestry Commission (CONAFOR), had a dialogue with community members from the villages of Juncanã and la Esmeralda to discuss how to jointly develop an intercultural approach to fire management.

### A community approach

It was gratifying to see how interested and receptive the resource management institutions were to be working together with local communities in a joint approach to fire management. Hopefully, this will be one among many more workshops and activities that will come in the pathway for Intercultural fire management in the Comiteca Tojolabal Plateau Region of Chiapas, Mexico.

Written by  
**lokiñe Rodriguez**



*Members of the Cultural Management of Fire Workshop, Juncanã, November 2024*



# DEVELOPING A CURRICULUM FOR JUST RESTORATION

**LIBERIA,  
JANUARY 2025**



*Below:  
Local chief explaining the loss  
of upland farming.*

*Below:  
Woman preparing to boil palm  
fruits to produce palm oil.*



*Below:  
Breakout group, building  
relationships in workshop.*



*Below:  
Looking at a map of national  
and community forests.  
  
Liberian flag – showing influence  
of Americo-Liberians.*



## Workshop partnerships

Many of the SDG targets are now considered under threat from continued degradation of nature. Large-scale ecological restoration is therefore essential for a transition to sustainability. But how this is implemented is crucial. Adrian Martin, Iokiñe Rodriguez and Neil Dawson have been working to develop more socially informed approaches to restoration practice that centre on environmental

justice for Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Working with the Washington DC office of Conservation International, we developed a ‘Just Restoration’ training curriculum designed for large-scale restoration practitioners and funders. In January 2025 we joined forces with Poshendra Satyal at Birdlife International (previously a DEV researcher) to pilot this curriculum with restoration professionals in Liberia.

We did this in partnership with the Society for the Conservation of Nature in Liberia who helped to design and then facilitated the two-day training workshop in Monrovia. Prior to the workshop we visited communities near the Gola forest, along the Mano river border with Sierra Leone. Liberia’s economy has relied heavily on raw material exports – iron ore, diamonds, timber, rubber – trades that have enriched a few (mostly in

the global North) and fuelled wars. Communities have suffered two devastating civil wars, from 1989 to 1997 and from 1999 to 2003. We stayed in a small town which had been relatively prosperous in the 1980s when it had both piped water and electricity. But even after 20 years of peace, it still has neither. The need for restoration is not restricted to ecology.

## Encountering adversity

In such difficult contexts, field staff for conservation organisations face enormous challenges if they are to form genuine partnerships for nature recovery. At a village on the edge of the Gola forest local people explained that they think they have been asked to bear too much of the cost for restoration. In order to restore upland forests, they had been obliged to quit upland shifting cultivation. Whilst provided with some support for lowland initiatives, such as a nursery to support cocoa plantations, many did not consider this to be fair compensation for their losses.

## Addressing tensions

Restoration projects often make earnest attempts to resolve such local tensions, often through consultation meetings and small-scale initiatives to offset losses. But this is often ineffective and fails to avoid conflict. Our UEA-Birdlife-SCNL partnership began to explore better ways of addressing such tensions, through more fundamental approaches to justice. The curriculum we were piloting proposes a shift towards local leadership of restoration partnerships, through integration of ecological and social dimensions of restoration. Social restoration here includes revitalisation of local environmental knowledge and governance capacities.

## A promising start

The workshop brought together experts from the government, university, local and international NGOs. I think we can describe it as a very successful beginning – opening up a new conversation about shifting from ecological to social-ecological

restoration in Liberia. We would love to continue this conversation and get an opportunity to build these new relationships. We are currently capturing elements of this work in a range of outputs. In addition to the curriculum, we are just finishing (hopefully!), an IUCN ‘guideline’ paper for the World Commission on Protected Areas, a Future Learn MOOC on ‘just restoration’, and an academic article.

Written by  
**Adrian Martin**



# THE 'SOCIAL LIVES' OF ROME'S RIVERS

The Tiber embankment, 2022

Rome's rivers, the famous Tiber, and the lesser known Almone and Aniene, were the focus of an international conference exploring their contemporary significance to social, cultural and political life in the Italian capital.

Taking place on 5-6 June 2025, I co-organised the event – along with fellow river-enthusiast Professor Isabella Clough Marinaro (John Cabot University Rome) after the success of our city-focussed Contemporary Rome conference two years ago which had over 70 attendees.

We think that urban riverscapes have gone underexplored in contemporary social research. In an era marked

by climate change and the need for more sustainable urban environments, the conference aimed to connect river research with everyday city life including experiences of precarious housing, gendered experiences of the river, religious rituals, 'more-than-human geographies' and more.

The attendees were interested in physical and representational spaces, with a focus on contemporary Rome but also on how the past haunts the present. But we also asked, what can Rome's riverscapes tell us about other cities, and vice versa?

We invited contributions that compared the lives of Rome's rivers to other contexts – in Global North and South(s) – as well as those engaging with environmental challenges to urban social life.

Hoping to bridge diverse academic disciplines, and much like a river's course, the event has helped to uncover how past processes continue to shape the present and the future, following the forgotten social worlds along the river embankments.

Hosted by John Cabot University and also supported by DEV and UEA, the conference was free and aimed to foster dialogue between Italian and international scholars, with a particular emphasis on engaging early-career and postgraduate researchers. For more information, or if you think you'd like to get involved in social riverscapes research in the future, contact me at [w.haynes@uea.ac.uk](mailto:w.haynes@uea.ac.uk).

Written by  
Will Haynes

Sketch of an encampment  
under the Ponte Sisto, 2024



Conference Poster

# QUANTIFICATION TRENDS AND THE CIVIL WAR MALESTREAM

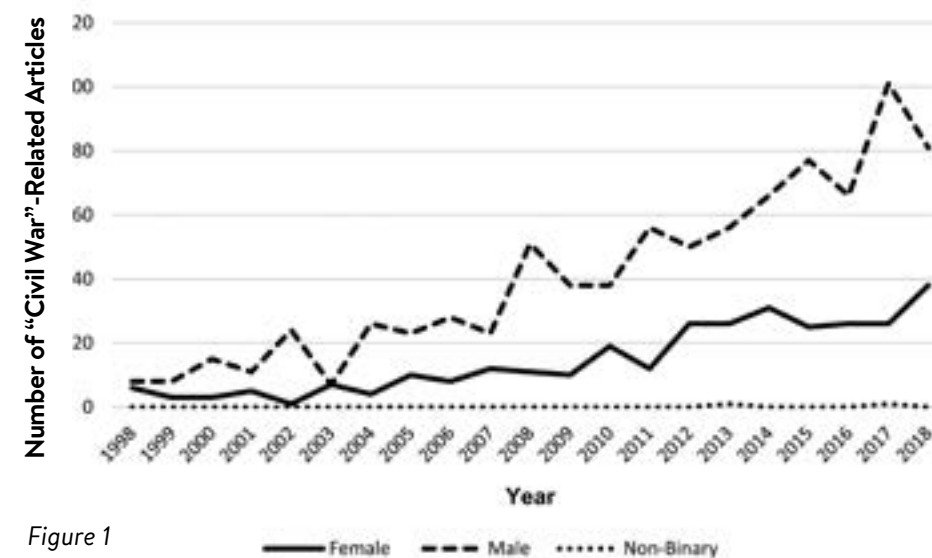


Figure 1

**The idea to write a co-authored article on gender dynamics in academic knowledge production first emerged eight years ago, when we shared observations from our two – increasingly quantitative-heavy – disciplines, Economics and Political Science.**

After several years of planning, various delays for various reasons, the compilation of a new dataset, writing and re-writing our ideas, and some rather polarised comments on the merits of our arguments, our article 'Why Gendered Quantification Trends Are a Problem: Post-Traumatic Growth Arguments and the Civil War Malestream' found a home in *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, one of the leading journals in peace and conflict studies.

In the article, we pose two questions: 1) Looking at high-ranking civil war publications, what is the proportion of female authors among quantitative as opposed to qualitative or mixed method writings? 2) How do gender dynamics in academic knowledge production affect the content of civil war research?

To answer the first question, we created a new dataset that contains more than 1,800 articles published in 113 high-ranking Social Science journals between 1998 and 2018. To answer the second question, we evaluated three articles that use statistical analysis to test arguments on post-traumatic growth in the aftermath of violence. Post-traumatic growth arguments are a growing subfield in civil war research which state that the incidence of violence can have positive effects on social and political development indicators.

Descriptive patterns from our dataset showed that the field of civil war writings is generally male-dominated, but that the author gender gap is particularly pronounced – and persistent – among quantitative publications. See figure 1.

The three publications on post-traumatic growth arguments that we discuss in our article all use statistical analysis which, unlike qualitative methods, tends to be associated with notions of 'masculine' 'hard data' research. The three articles, however, differ in the extent to which they acknowledge that experiences of war may vary depending on one's gender. In our selection of articles, we find that an emphasis on technical skills over data substance (i.e., on advanced numerical techniques over what the data do and do not show us) can mask theoretical and empirical blind spots regarding the relevance of gender dynamics. These blind spots are problematic, as they lead to questions about the reliability of statistical results while perpetuating a male-centric lens in civil war studies.

At a time when a growing number of political actors contest the relevance of gender studies, our article highlights the need to keep questioning how positionality and power dynamics affect the production of academic knowledge.

Written by  
Ulrike Theuerkauf and  
Maren Duvendack



# FROM LAB TO LAND

## TRANSDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

### FOR AGRICULTURAL RESILIENCE IN ETHIOPIA

**Grasspea (*Lathyrus sativus*) is a remarkable crop. Most widely cultivated in South Asia and Ethiopia, it survives both drought and flooding better than any other pulse crop. This makes it a crucial source of protein, especially during times of weather extremes, when other foods become scarce.**

Despite 8000 years of cultivation around the world, grasspea is now one of many neglected and underutilised species, which has fallen out of use in most countries where it was once widely used. This is due to its association with neurolathyrism, a paralytic disease caused by consuming large amounts of a natural toxin in grasspeas in conjunction with prolonged malnutrition. Crop breeding, regulation and improvements to nutrition have made this disease a thing of the past in India and Bangladesh, but in Ethiopia, this problem still persists. In turn, the threat of neurolathyrism, prevents more widespread use of grasspea for climate resilience in agriculture.

Peter Emmrich and Matt Heaton in the Norwich Institute for Sustainable

Development are working to unlock the potential of this crop for nutritional security by linking up bioscience research to develop tools for faster crop improvement with social science research to understand the cultural context of grasspea cultivation, farmer preferences and the seed systems by which farmers could access both diverse landraces and improved varieties.

This project builds on years of work at the John Innes Centre to understand the biochemistry and genetics of toxin biosynthesis, to sequence a reference genome (twice the size of the human genome!) as well as the genomes of hundreds of diverse landraces from around the globe, and to develop markers to improve nutritional traits.

But to achieve impact on the ground, NISD needed to integrate this project with a social science approach: key informant interviews and discrete choice experiments in Ethiopia revealed strong preferences for improvements to flooding tolerance and pest and disease resistances – critical information to inform breeding efforts. In contrast to a picture often repeated in the scientific literature, grasspea was consumed across the entire spectrum of socioeconomic status, and fear of

*Left: Grasspea being sold in a local market in central Ethiopia.*

*Below: Farmer survey in central Ethiopia.*

*Grasspea (right) growing next to lentils (left) following a period of drought stress on a research plot in Morocco in 2023.*



disease was low among the studied population despite knowledge of recent or historical cases in the community.

In collaboration with the Ethiopia Seed Partnership, recent DEV graduate Hileena Chole and Matt Heaton are now studying the existing grasspea seed system with the goal of devising sustainable business models for local seed businesses and farmer-seed-producers to enhance farmer access to well-performing landraces and to provide a route for improved varieties (e.g. coupling enhanced disease tolerance and reduced toxin content) to be integrated into local seed systems.

Written by  
**Peter Emmrich**



*Below: Ben Jones leads a discussion with researchers in Nairobi, Kenya.*



## DEV RESEARCHERS

# PROMOTING CITIZEN ETHNOGRAPHY IN EAST AFRICA

**In March 2025 DEV researchers Ben Jones and Ben Eyre helped organise a workshop in Nairobi. The workshop brought together mixed teams of academic and non-academic researchers, with NGOs and funders on evidence-based development. The workshop was hosted by Busara, a research organisation that UEA has been partnering with in Kenya.**

Ben and Ben were part of a team of citizen ethnographers from Uganda and Kenya. They have been working for a number of years using ethnographic approaches to study issues such as microfinance, young lives, and the role of education in rural areas. The workshop was also a chance to meet with other research teams.

Lisa Woensdregt a scholar based at the University of Amsterdam shared a presentation with two colleagues who are male sex workers in Nairobi. They have been involved in long term research looking at the lives of male sex workers. Pamela Wadende from Kisii University in western Kenya has been working with a team of community researchers looking at early childhood education.

What is different about this way of working? What the teams shared was a commitment for the academics and non-academics to be involved in all stages of the research cycle including getting credit in academic publications. In the case of the team led by Ben and Ben, we have already published articles in the peer-reviewed journals COMPARE, Africa and a chapter in a book on research methods published by Busara. We also have a new piece

of co-authored work coming out in the Review of African Political Economy.

One of the participants, Vicky Alum, who has work with Ben Jones and Ben Eyre for the past six years commented: “The best thing about the workshop was the interactive session that integrated researchers from different organisations with different research approaches”.

Sharon, another team member from Uganda, who runs a small shop when not doing research work, liked how the workshop was a space where she could “explain a lot about ethnography to the people who do not understand the method. I saw a lot of people want to understand and learn more about this method”. Alongside the research teams we had interested development professionals and advocacy groups working across East Africa who wanted to learn more about our way of working.

Our most recent research project, led by Ben Eyre, looks at what ethnographic work can tell us about the lives of enumerators – the many individuals who collect data for survey companies, private sector organisations, universities and NGOs. In particular how the treatment of enumerators by these organisations affects data quality.

Written by  
**Ben Jones**



# STUDENT VOICES



## ELEVATE AFRICA FELLOWSHIP

### A TRIP OF LEARNING TO NIGERIA

**The King of Warri Kingdom, His Royal Majesty Ogiame Atuwatse III CFR, rules with a unique blend of elegance and authority. I had the honour of entering his royal chamber in March this year.**

The atmosphere was electric. Young people, clad in Warri traditional attire, had their drums beat, resonating with rhythms that spoke of heritage and unity. The king, a forward-thinking leader, has really found a powerful balance between honouring tradition and promoting progressive leadership. As the traditional dances lit up the room, I could not resist the temptation of joining the crew.

This lively welcome was just another exciting episode of my first trip to Nigeria as part of the inaugural Elevate Africa Fellowship. This is a leadership programme founded by the king and his queen. Her Majesty



Olori Atuwatse III, to empower a new generation of African changemakers. Bringing together 17 fellows from across the continent, the programme aims to sharpen leadership skills, foster collaboration, and amplify homegrown solutions to Africa's most pressing challenges.

We began our one week engagement with an inspiring session with former Nigerian Vice President, Professor Yemi Osinbajo. Known for his wisdom and humility, he spoke not as a politician—but as a mentor who has lived through the layers of leadership. He stressed the importance of patience, integrity, and learning from every experience. "Every stage of your journey counts," he said—a message that has stuck with me ever since. Sharing a dinner with him later that evening was a moment that turned inspiration into connection.

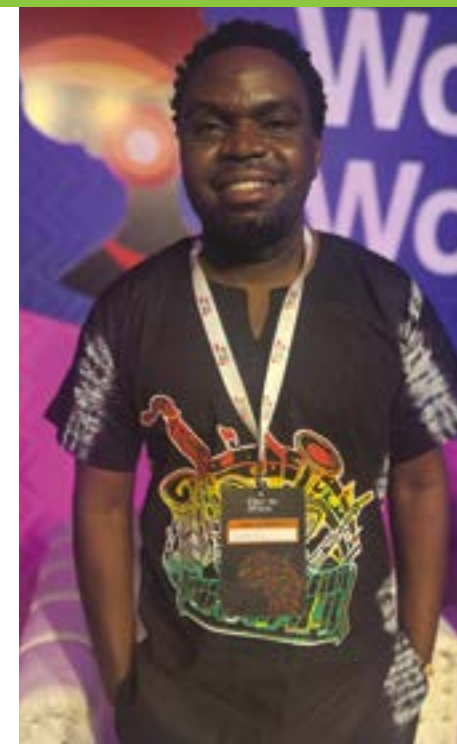
As young leaders, we ought to be inspired with the success of business ventures by Africans. Which is why we visited Sahara Group, a leading energy company, where we discussed Africa's



energy future and the need for inclusive development. At Providus Bank, the conversation turned to innovation, entrepreneurship, and the power of financial systems to lift communities. I was especially impressed by the efforts of both companies to empower women and young people; clear examples of how business can become a force for social good.

Beyond the boardrooms, Nigeria revealed its cultural and historical riches. The Olumo Rock in Abeokuta was unforgettable experience. This ancient landmark, found in the Ogun state, carries the ancient history as it served as a fortress for the Egba people during tribal conflicts in the 19th century. Climbing over 120 steps to reach its summit, I was struck by the stories carved into the stone. Each section of the rock holds a piece of history, while a 250-year-old Iroko tree still stands tall. A living proof of endurance.

We also explored the Olusegun Obasanjo Presidential Library, an



impressive space that blends history, leadership, and legacy. It's more than just a library—it's a national archive, a museum, and a reflection of the life and leadership of one of Africa's most influential statesmen. I left with a renewed appreciation for the role of history in shaping the future.

These and other engagements decorated my first visit to Nigeria which I will remember for long. Over a final dinner with his Majesty the King, we reflected on what the experience had taught us—about leadership, about Africa, and about ourselves. The conversation ranged from governance and youth development to preserving African traditions and redefining the continent's image. The king's message was clear: Africa's rise depends on a shift in mindset, one that embraces our heritage, encourages innovation, and builds systems rooted in our unique context.

Daniel Ikuenobe, CEO of Elevate Africa, summed it up best: building visionary African leaders isn't just a



good idea—it sets a new course in advancing sustainable development, regional integration, and reshaping Africa's global narrative.

Leaving Nigeria, I carried with me not just memories but a renewed hope for the continent's future. The connections forged, lessons learned, and stories shared have ignited a commitment to redefine the African story, to portray a narrative of resilience, innovation, and unity.

In the words of the Egba anthem atop Olumo Rock: "Maa yo o, maa yo, maa yoo l'ori Olumo" "I will rejoice on top of Olumo." Indeed, I rejoice in the journey and the promise it holds for Africa.

Written by  
**Daniel Chisoni**  
*MA Global Social Development*



# A NEW OPPORTUNITY

**HILEENA ESHETU CHOLE**



**With her customary courage, Hileena Eshetu Chole accepted our offer to pilot the first year of the Norfolk International Scholarship in 2024. Funded by the locally based J.C. Mann Charitable Trust, this £5000 scholarship supports a Master's student in DEV to understand Norfolk farming through an international lens, bringing international experiences to Norfolk farming communities.**

It is created and administered through the Norwich Institute for Sustainable Development and the Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association. With this, we aim to raise the profile of farming voices and links between our research community and farmers, and support capacity building for students' future careers in the industry.

#### Flexibility embracing new topics

Hileena's background in Ethiopia understanding farming and working professionally with a variety of agribusinesses proved excellent experience for the scholarship. In her study, she looked at water scarcity, one of the main issues facing Norfolk farmers due to climate change and existing water management in the UK. Many students may be unaware that the East of England's agriculture is critical to England's food production, producing cereals, fruit, vegetables, pigs, poultry and 60% of all land for home-grown sugar. Rain-fed capture, irrigation sources and potentially capture in reservoirs are essential water sources, and all water use is managed and measured in England.

As part of the scholarship during the summer dissertation period, Hileena visited farmers and water stakeholders in Norfolk and California in the US to understand the principles and applications of water collaboration. California has long been deeply affected by water insecurity. She put together some inspiring case studies and identified four areas as opportunities for local and national level improvement: information, infrastructure, institutions and regulations.

#### Managing a sudden spotlight

With little forewarning, the scholarship also thrust Hileena into the spotlight of the Norfolk farming calendar. Announced at the Royal Norfolk Show and reported in local news, she met with many leaders of the farming community and was presented to the Duke of Edinburgh, who was very keen to understand more about Ethiopian farming. In April 2025, Hileena completed the award with a well-received presentation to the AGM of the Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association. We appreciated the expert support kindly offered by Bruce

*Left: Holkham Reservoir*

*Below: Hileena Eshetu Chole with current RNAA President Poul Hovesen.*



Lankford, Emeritus Professor of Water and Irrigation Policy, in orientation around key issues and academic contacts.

#### Learnings for next time

We learned that getting visas, even for short EU visits for international students, can be highly time-consuming. The scholarship is flexible enough to accommodate change, thankfully.

#### Future steps

In addition to her current role as coordinator of the Global Agri-Entrepreneurship Academy at the International Finance Corporation, we are delighted that Hileena is continuing to partner with the NISD on our international grass pea research.

Written by  
**Natasha Grist**  
from the *Norwich Institute for Sustainable Development*

#### SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships are available for current Master's students in the School of Global Development, with applications advertised annually. For more information on the RNAA/NISD Norfolk International Scholarship contact [info@nisd.ac.uk](mailto:info@nisd.ac.uk) or look at the [NISD website](#).

## STUDENT OF COLOUR AMBASSADOR SCHEME 2024/25

*Left: Sip and Paint Event in November*

*Right: Employability event in January, left to right: Turaiya Lemard and Tsukine Teranishi*

**This is the fifth year that the School of Global Development has taken part in the Student of Colour Ambassador (SOCA) Scheme**

#### What is SOCA for?

In 2019-2020 there was a 9.9% gap in students of colour obtaining a first or 2:1, in comparison to our white counterparts. As Student of Colour Ambassadors, we aim to bridge this disparity by directly challenging and researching the barriers that factor into such a large degree awarding gap. We also aim to create a safe space for students of colour where they can connect and feel empowered.

#### DEV events this year

We have begun our role as SOCAs in March 2024. Followed by event organising experiences since last academic year, we have hosted six events in 2024/25 academic year so far. Our 'Meet and Greet' in October was our first event of the year, involving an introduction to the SOCA scheme, speed friending, a pizza social, and a DEV themed quiz. 20 master's and undergraduate students from all levels of study enjoyed the event. 'Sip and Paint' in November was our intimate small group event, where students

enjoyed expressing themselves in a cozy and friendly atmosphere. It was an honour to host an employability panel talk tailored for students of colour in DEV as a part of Development Employability Week in January. The session title was 'Navigating a Career as a Person of Colour within Development'. Alumni guest speakers have shared valuable insights, and the one-hour interactive session was filled with questions from students.

#### Collaboration events this year

For Black History Month, we teamed up with other SOCAs from the School of Healthcare Sciences to lead a 'Rep your Flag' student night out with the SU. It was a huge success, where over 200 people managed to collect tickets, making this one of the biggest Black History Month events at UEA so far! A couple of months later we then hosted a study skills workshop with the Learning Enhancement Team, led by Zoe Jones. This was then followed by a social quiz night at the Garden House Pub with DEVSOC. It was great

to see that DEV and SOCA managed to achieve 1st and 3rd place alongside being the £300 jackpot winners! Towards the end of last semester, we found a way to wind down and focus on wellbeing by leading a cross-collaboration yoga event with SOCAs within LDC, BIO PHA and LAW. This was taught by yoga instructor and fellow DEV student Robyn Chappell-Wood.

#### Concluding remarks

We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone we have met along the way as your DEV SOCAs. As we will be graduating this July, your new Student of Colour Ambassadors will be Anita Francis and Taiyo Suzuki who we warmly welcome! Although our chapter has come to an end as SOCAs, Turaiya was recently successful within the Student Union elections and will continue to amplify the voices of students as your 2025/2026 Undergraduate Education Officer!

Written by  
**Tsukine Teranishi and Turaiya Lemard**





# ALUMNI STORIES



AMANIE MATHURIN

BA Media and International Development

## THE MANIFESTATION OF MY ANCESTORS DREAMS

**When I left UEA in 2018 I could never have predicted the transformative journey that lay ahead. Sitting at Gatwick airport just days after graduation I anxiously typed up my application for a job as a television news reporter, moments before the deadline.**

I never expected that this would catapult me into becoming a household name in my home country Saint Lucia, and a face trusted for insightful reporting by viewers across my island and the wider region. I worked in journalism for three demanding yet fulfilling years, committed to not just informing, but educating. I offered comprehensive coverage of contentious local and regional

elections, shed light on political controversies, and dove headfirst into the murky waters of reporting on crime, justice, and policing. I became the first local reporter to provide nightly televised coverage of a murder trial – one that had gripped international headlines for years. What kept me sitting through hours of testimony, summarising technical details night after night, was the feedback from viewers who expressed genuine interest and intrigue in the judicial proceedings. Many had never before understood what really happened inside courtroom walls.

My journalism career transformed me from a shy, inexperienced reporter to one who asked the hard questions, demanding accountability from those in power. I soon lost the slight tremble in my voice, pointedly questioning political leaders about corruption

allegations. Eventually, my gaze and my resolve would remain unwavering when pressing the hierarchy of the police force about the ambiguities surrounding the fatal police shooting of a teenager. I had a duty to the public, and it required courage.

Often, that duty necessitated using my voice to help others. To appeal for assistance for vulnerable people. To amplify the plight of farmers, fishermen, and vendors impacted by policy decisions. To demand justice for grieving families. Their stories broke my heart but affirmed that there was purpose in my work. In 2020 I was awarded the National Youth In Media Award, recognising my contributions to Saint Lucia's media landscape.

Journalism deepened my interest in development issues, a focus which now resonates in my work as a writer and documentary producer/ director. Powered by a passion for creative advocacy and cultural preservation, I explore issues affecting the Caribbean including cultural erasure, climate change, extractive tourism, structural inequalities, and unsustainable development. My stories have been published in *Callaloo*, *The Shallow Tales Review*, *The Caribbean Writer*, and *PREE: Caribbean Writing*.

My current chapter finds me nearing completion of a masters at the London School of Economics as a Chevening Scholar, pursuing research on deconstructing political discourses in Saint Lucia's calypso music. I never saw myself here. A girl from a rural community, with parents who never had the privilege of completing primary education. My own education has empowered me in ways I couldn't have imagined, making me the manifestation of my ancestors' wildest dreams. It has allowed me to become a voice for marginalised people. To speak truth to power. And most importantly, to inspire others to dream.



## CHANGE IS POSSIBLE

### MY JOURNEY WITH THE WOMEN'S CENTRE FOR CHANGE IN MALAYSIA

#### A mission-driven NGO in Penang

As part of my Development Work Placement, I had the incredible opportunity to spend two months (June–July 2024) with the Women's Centre for Change (WCC), a dynamic NGO based on the beautiful island of Penang, Malaysia. Since 1985, WCC has worked to eliminate violence against women and children, empower survivors, and promote gender equality and social justice.

Despite its modest size, WCC makes a significant impact through its counselling services, court support, temporary shelter, and extensive outreach programmes in schools and communities. The organisation also actively advocates for legal and policy reforms to protect women and children in crisis. What struck me most was the unwavering dedication of the small, multicultural team that makes all of this possible.



#### Diving into diverse roles at WCC

During my placement, I was fortunate to wear many hats. I assisted in school outreach sessions on anti-bullying, contributed to drafting project proposals for WCC's Value Shop social enterprise and even created social media content to boost its online presence.

Coming from Kazakhstan, with my own background in NGO work, I was eager to observe how advocacy and social support are delivered in a different cultural and social context. I admired how WCC effectively partners with stakeholders and sustains vital services. The organisation's ability to remain active and relevant for four decades is a testament to its resilience and deep-rooted connection to the local community.

#### Sustainable living, lasting impact

One of the most inspiring aspects of my experience was getting involved with WCC's innovative social enterprise – the Value Shop (VS). Originally inspired by a jumble sale, VS has grown into a beloved community hub in Penang, where donated goods find new homes and volunteers and customers alike become part of a larger mission.

More than just a shop, VS champions the 3Rs: reduce, reuse, and recycle – giving pre-loved clothes, accessories, and household items a new lease on life. It's a powerful example of how environmental responsibility can align with social impact, with proceeds directly funding WCC's services for women and children in crisis. Beyond promoting sustainable living, VS offers skill-building opportunities and meaningful engagement for local residents –

*Above left to right: Highlights from the Value Shop, Outreach Sessions, and WCC Office Work.*

*Below: Aigul Zharas*

including retirees seeking purposeful post-career involvement.

What resonated with me most was the palpable sense of community at VS, where everyday purchases become a way to drive positive change. As someone passionate about sustainability, I found this initiative deeply inspiring and would love to see a similar concept introduced in my own community.

This experience reaffirmed my belief in the strength of grassroots organisations and community-led initiatives. The Value Shop stands out as a best practice model for NGOs seeking financial sustainability while staying mission-focused – a concept new to me and one I now find especially motivating.

#### Say yes to new experiences

For students considering a Development Work Placement, I wholeheartedly recommend stepping outside your comfort zone. Immersing yourself in a different social, cultural, and professional environment is not only rewarding – it's transformative. The connections you make, the lessons you learn, and the perspectives you gain will stay with you long after your placement ends.

Written by  
**Aigul Zharas**  
**MA in Globalisation, Business and Sustainable Development**



## AMPLIFYING KEY MESSAGES AROUND GLOBAL CHALLENGES

**After completing an amazing time at University of East Anglia (UEA) from 2013 to 2014, I worked at an NGO and several UN agencies, including FAO, as a communications lead.**

In every role, I deepened my understanding of how better to amplify key messaging around global challenges through website articles, SNS platforms, media relations, goodwill ambassador voices, public events and more. It has been truly a privilege to engage in development efforts from a communications front.

Currently, I am working at UN Women Japan Liaison Office leading communications and advocacy initiatives to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. One of the key initiatives is called Unstereotype Alliance that aims to eradicate harmful stereotypes from media and advertising content, in close collaboration with advertisers and ad agencies. In addition to global membership, the Alliance has 12 national chapters – one of which is Japan National Chapter, which I am leading. In everyday life, we have been affected by what we see – be it ads and media content. Therefore, representation matters. Texts matter. If ads containing negative stereotypes are presented to the public, they inadvertently lead to the promotion of discrimination and prejudice, which hinders the acceleration of gender equality. At UEA, media effects – how much/to what extent does media impact the way we think – was one of my interests among others, including

humanitarian communications. On top of that, previously I was a foreign news correspondent working at a Japanese TV station reporting on international affairs based in Tokyo. The combination of my study at UEA and previous experience in journalism has taken me to a perfect place to advocate the criticality of inclusive advertising and communications, together with key stakeholders.

Thinking back to wonderful days at UEA, I spent countless hours in the library and found myself on many occasions (over coffee and/or a pint of beer) where I intensively discussed what we can really do to contribute to building a better world with my dear DEV students. Those honest and robust discussions and our strong passion were my solid foundation in working at a humanitarian and development field to drive SDGs. The academic learning and friendships built at UEA keeps me moving forward. Especially close friendships haven't faded away – I have been in touch with friends after 10 years of our life at UEA, which I feel a treasure.

Looking at where we are now, we live in a turbulent world. Our efforts in creating a better society are being rolled back. But we can't step back. In the time of like this, we, like-minded folks, need to stand in solidarity, get united, and keep working together for our shared goals. I strongly believe that this is more important now than ever.

Written by  
**Keiko Ichikawa**  
*MA Media and International Development 2014*



**OLIVIA HICKMAN**  
MA Conflict, Governance and International Development

### THE ROLE OF THE SUPREME COURT AS EITHER A CHECK OR INSTRUMENT OF PRESIDENTIAL POWER

This past October, Channel Talent hosted an interactive webinar titled *US Politics: US Democracy & The 'Perils of Presidentialism'*, featuring Ulrike Theuerkauf from the University of East Anglia and Olivia S. Hickman, DEV Alum. The event explored Political Scientist Juan Linz's theory that presidential democracies are more prone to collapse than parliamentary ones, discussing key factors such as the personalization of power, the zero-sum nature of elections, and the challenges posed by the separation of powers.

A unique aspect of this discussion was the connection between the two speakers—Ulrike Theuerkauf served as Olivia S. Hickman's dissertation adviser during her Master's Program in Conflict, Governance, and International Development at the University of East Anglia. Their academic collaboration brought an insightful dynamic to the conversation, particularly in examining whether recent U.S. political developments, including the 2024 election, align with Linz's theory. The role of the Supreme Court as either a check or an instrument of presidential power was also a focal point of the discussion. Attendees had the opportunity to actively participate through discussions and a Q&A session, making this an engaging and thought-provoking event.

## FROM MALARIA NO MORE AND WAR CHILD TO UK FOR UNHCR...



**LOUISE BAILLACHE**  
BSc Environmental Geography and International Development

**I completed my BSC in Environmental Geography and International Development back in 2018. I had a very busy entry into the DEV sector but I am now working at Senior Partnerships Officer at UK for UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency.**

My introduction to the charity sector was a series of unpaid internships at various charities and balancing this alongside working in a local cafe at the weekend. I supported on research, admin, special events, corporate partnerships and so much more –

I basically said yes to everything to learn as much as possible. I finally landed my first paid role at Malaria No More UK a year later within their partnerships team! Then lockdown hit and my contract was sadly not renewed.

I was stuck thinking – is this worth it? shall I completely change sectors, but deep down I knew I was going to try again. While on my break, by night I worked shifts at Sainsburys and by day I balanced a voluntary role with Water Aid, was a lead researcher for a refugee project and wrote small grant applications for another charity.

Post-lockdown I landed a job at War Child, and got to work on so many exciting projects and yes I did finally

relax and had one job for the first time in years. I supported on some really cool campaigns including; The Right to Dance, Game Action and their Brits Week Shows – and did a bit of everything with many teams learning about strategy, event organisation, partnerships, campaign running and project management. This was also confirmation for me that the Charity Sector was where I wanted to be.

I then had a full circle moment where I went to manage one of the campaigns that I interned on and worked for nearly 3 years running a campaign raising over £1 million through partnerships with the hospitality sector at Action Against Hunger. Collaborating with restaurants, chefs and hotels was a 10/10 experience for me as a massive foodie and this experience led to me working at UK for UNHCR in account management for some really exciting partnerships!

During my rejection, job hunting and internship phase I rediscovered my love for reading (partly to have something to talk about in interviews), but I now have a successful book blog and get to have a side hustle working with publishers to review books. Your career post-grad may not be linear but networking and growing a skillset that can be used in multiple roles is a great way to go. I was also lucky enough to save and travel in between jobs too (a break was definitely needed).

To UEA thank you for the knowledge that has helped me communicate each charities programmatic work to partners with a bit more technical knowledge and confidence.

To everyone along the way who supported in my career development – Thank you! If you have any questions feel free to reach out on LinkedIn.



DOCUMENTARY

MADE FOR MORE

Left to right: Ayoola Jolayemi, Dave Shraga and Ebinipere Fegha

Below: Premiere screening of Made for More.



**Made for More is a documentary, featuring the inspiring story of Dave Shraga and highlights the barriers faced by people with disabilities in the workplace.**

During her MA in International Development, Ebinipere Fegha had the privilege of working with Adam Berry of Disability and Development Partners as part of her Development Work Placement. Inspired by their mission, she contacted fellow student and filmmaker Ayoola Jolayemi to create ‘Made for More’.

The film, in partnership with Disability and Development Partners, sheds light on the challenges faced by people with disabilities in the workplace, including discrimination, accessibility issues, and the need for inclusive environments.

Ebinipere said “When Ayoola, Adam, Dave and I started this journey, the goal was to amplify the conversation around disability and workplace barriers by sharing Dave’s story. The screening hosted by the DEV community in

celebration of our selection as finalists at the UEA Impact and Innovation Awards was particularly humbling, and the way people connected with the film has been incredibly moving.”

The film has helped to secure £70,000 in funding from Norwich City Council to support the activities of Inclusive Norwich, a charity where Dave serves as a trustee.

Ayoola said “Storytelling matters. These conversations aren’t easy but they are essential for progress. Let’s keep doing more.”

Written by  
**Ayoola Jolayemi and Ebinipere Fegha**



HAVING A CRITICAL LENS

MUSING OF A GENDER PROFESSIONAL

**When I first arrived at the University of East Anglia (UEA) as a master’s student in 2021, I was already a seasoned professional having worked in the grassroots with civil society organisations in India.**

My motivation to join the course was to better equip myself with theoretical background to make an impact. However, having worked for more than 13 years on various aspects of development pertaining to livelihoods, sustainability, inclusion and gender-based violence, I was a bit skeptical of what value will spending a year add to me? Whew! I am happy that my cynicism was rewarded with a learning of my lifetime. I must say, UEA changed my outlook; my journey has been transformative since then.

UEA isn’t just a place where I earned my degree—it is the place where I began to understand the development and the politics of it in a more nuanced way. I learned that ‘critical thinking’ is an asset one must have to make informed choices without losing the sight of the larger picture. My professors didn’t just teach—they challenged our notions and beliefs. They encouraged us to be critical, ask uncomfortable questions, listen deeply, and not take everything at face value. Another interesting aspect had been to engage with students from diverse backgrounds and nationalities, hanging out beyond classes and debating about the world order and inequality.

After graduating, I rejoined PRADAN in 2022, a grassroots NGO focused on women’s livelihoods in rural India and led several projects on gender-responsive livelihoods and climate action at regional and national level. The experience from my masters



**SUDARSHAN THAKUR**  
MA Gender Analysis in International Development, 2021-22

helped me see systemic inequalities affecting women’s and girls’ access to resources, rights, and opportunities—and I also witnessed their resilience, leadership, and agency. Along with leading programmes, I utilised my skills I picked from the UEA to engage in research and write opinions and research articles in national and international journals. My work took me to remote villages, bureaucracy corridors, UN conference halls, negotiation tables, and policy dialogues. Across different forums and organisations I worked with, my focus remained consistent: advancing gender equity and inclusion.

Since November 2024, I have been with UNICEF as a Gender Programme Specialist based out of East Asia and

Pacific Regional Office in Bangkok. I work closely with 14 UNICEF country teams on gender monitoring and evaluation, gender-responsive social protection and integrating gender in humanitarian and emergency setting

No matter the setting, I continue to draw on the values I developed at the UEA—curiosity and compassion. If there’s one message I would like to share with current students, it’s this: your degree is just a gateway to learn and evolve. I believe that being purpose-driven is transformative and we must go through a constant process of learning, unlearning and relearning. UEA has been an important part of my journey being a ‘Life Explorer’ and I will always be grateful for that.



# SCHOOL STORIES



## DEV INNOVATION SUMMIT 2025

**The student-led DEV Innovation Summit has taken place two years in a row – this year's theme was 'Local Wisdom, Global Impact: Integrating Indigenous Knowledge into Modern Development.'**

Whose voice is heard? Is the programme aligned with local knowledge and people? How do we build a career in Global Development? What do I want to do within Development? – These are the questions I am sure many of us asked ourselves as students at the School of Global Development. Together with Daniel Chisoni, Aminata Kanagie, Patience Munyenyembe, and Liv Cooper, I had the privilege to organise the DEV innovation summit, which might help to answer those questions.

The event started with a presentation by an amazing guest speaker, Maia Gedde, who is a Senior Technical Lead in entrepreneurship at Save the Children UK, where she guides how to grow businesses with an impact on children. She shared her career journey and insights into different career roles and international NGOs. My favourite

part is that opening a cafe, which was her childhood dream, led her to the next role because it gave her the lived experience of an entrepreneur. I found this very inspiring, and her talk made me realise the importance of holistic career-building, whereby we keep our joy, priority, and personal values in life.

The following student panel discussion was hosted by Blessing Agbeetan, who is a broadcast journalist and development advocate. The panel consisted of students with diverse knowledge and experiences: Yosep Tapun (Indonesia), Seun Olagunju-Lana (Nigeria), Jackie Hale (United States) from master's courses, and Ali Sabba (Bahrain) from an undergraduate course. The panel reflected on the role of grassroots knowledge in global development, followed by a thought-provoking discussion with the audience. It is a moment like this where the

knowledge, energy, and passion of fellow students inspire me, and I feel grateful and proud to be a student at UEA DEV.

Finally, Maia talked about employability in Development, focusing on skills, networks and opportunities, followed by a networking session with a few drinks and nibbles. I cannot stress enough the importance of these kinds of events, where learning, collaboration, and inspiration take place. We would like to extend a huge thank you to David Girling (DEV Employability Lead), Ayoola Jolayemi (Photographer), and the School of Global Development for their support in helping us organise this event.

Written by  
**Tsukine Teranishi**  
*BA Global Development  
with Overseas Placement*

## TWO NEW POSTGRADUATE COURSES

**DEV has launched the following two course for September 2025 start**

### MSC POLICY, BEHAVIOUR AND DATA FOR GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

Unlock your potential with our cutting-edge MSc Policy, Behaviour and Data for Global Development and gain the skills needed to influence evidence-based policymaking, leverage data analytics, and harness behavioural insights for real-world impact. Designed to address today's evolving landscape, this innovative course responds to the unprecedented growth in data availability and the increasing significance of behavioural sciences.

You'll be inspired by the growing global impact of behavioural insights across various policy areas, including health, education, the environment, finance, labour, agriculture, gender, and public services. This programme offers a comprehensive approach to data analytics and policymaking, tailored specifically for Global Development.

### MSC DATA SCIENCE FOR GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

Our cutting-edge MSc in Data Science for Global Development is designed to equip you with the skills and knowledge to thrive in this rapidly evolving field. This innovative, first-of-its-kind programme bridges a critical gap in the academic landscape, offering a comprehensive, industry-aligned curriculum tailored explicitly for global development.

Throughout the course, you'll build a strong foundation in Python programming, data mining, and advanced causal analysis, enabling you to assess the impact of policies, projects, and behavioural interventions. You'll also have the flexibility to tailor your studies to your interests by selecting from a range of modules offered by the School of Global Development and the School of Computing Sciences. Additionally, you'll hone your research skills through a dissertation in an area of your choice, allowing you to specialise in the topics that matter most to you.

## DEVELOPMENT WORK PLACEMENTS

**Calling for help from our alumni network!**

We run our undergraduate and postgraduate placement programmes here in DEV and we would love to hear from you if you think your organisation might be interested in hosting one of our placement students. We have short-term (8-10 week) placement programmes for most students, as well as a 9-12 month placement programme for undergraduates. We would be particularly be interested in hearing from you if you could offer a placement in the UK, Latin America or Asia.

**Please get in touch with our Placements Coordinator, Zoe Bone, on [dev.placements@uea.ac.uk](mailto:dev.placements@uea.ac.uk) if you think you could help.**

## DEV IN JAPAN

**David Girling (DEV) and Lewis Sillett (UEA Global) visited Tokyo in March 2025. The visit gave DEV the opportunity to meet with prospective students and agents to answer any questions they might have about studying at UEA.**

DEV has always had an excellent reputation in Japan, in fact several students when asked why they want to study here said "because DEV is very famous here!"

David and Lewis attended two recruitment fairs organised by SIUK

and BEO where over 80% of the students were interested in studying Global Development. We also met with Yumiko Someya, Manager for Student Placement Services at NIC International College in Shinjuku. We have had many students join our undergraduate programme from NIC, so it was a real pleasure to visit the school and meet Yumiko and some students. On the last day of the visit David delivered a short 'taster' course to some postgraduate offer holders. It was a wonderful event where we were able to answer questions and students could meet their potential peers.

Maybe the highlight of the trip was meeting with our fabulous alumni organised by the Japanese Alumni

President, Takanashi Hisashi. It was fantastic hearing about the success of our former students who have gone on to work with leading development institutions such as JICA, UN Women, Deloitte and Save the Children. David was absolutely delighted to meet up with three of his former media students.



UEA Global joined by DEV alumni in Tokyo



GEOGRAPHY FIELD TRIP

REFLECTIONS:  
EXPLORING HIDDEN  
HISTORIES IN BRISTOL

Clockwise from top-left: DEV students in Rubba’s drumming workshop; DEV students and their street art at the People’s Republic of Stoke’s Croft; Designing and decorating textiles with Refugee Women Bristol; DEV students in Kabbo’s group workshop.



During the first week of April, our Year 2 BA Geography with Global Development students embarked on a fieldtrip to Bristol.

The trip was hugely engaging and centred around critical reflection on the hidden histories of the city, particularly those related to (de) colonialism, and migration legacies. We were also fortunate to have the West Country sunshine with us all week...

The group stayed at the YHA in central Bristol, overlooking the harbour where the statue of Edward Colston was thrown during the Black Lives Matter protests of 2020. This location provided us with an ever-present reminder of the city’s contested history.

On the first day, we grounded ourselves in Bristol’s complex past. Students had self-guided tours and took part in a storytelling workshop with Jack Young and Eli Lowe at stately Ashton Court.



Followed by a debrief by the Clifton Suspension Bridge, students reflected on the relationships between power, space, and memory.

On day two, we had walking tours through the vibrant area of St Paul’s, where students encountered the ‘7 Saints’ with soundsystem musician, Rosina. These murals tell stories

of the local Afro-Caribbean community’s histories of struggle, resilience, and hope.

In the afternoon, the group took part in a memorable drumming workshop with local musician and dancer, Rubba, and continued with group activities around communication, healing and movement led by //Kabbo. We all learnt

so much about how rhythm, music and embodiment can help address personal and collective challenges.

The students then put their learning into action working with community partners. One group worked with **Refugee Women Bristol**, an organisation led by and for refugee women, exploring how asylum-seeking women access education, training, and welfare services. The second group explored **decolonisation through dance and movement**. Reflecting on the body as a site for healing and empowerment, students worked with Cleo Lake, former Lord Mayor of Bristol, to co-create a choreographed routine. The third group examined the role of graffiti and street art in telling the histories of the city. Led by the **People’s Republic of Stoke’s Croft**, the students even had the opportunity to create their own street art on a Bristol wall.

Finally, students presented their projects to each other, showcasing their findings through creative outlets

like textile design, dance and art. The presentations showed how each group had embraced the opportunity to explore hidden histories through creativity and expression. We were all impressed with the students’ critical perspectives but also openness and dedication to their projects.

We extend a heartfelt thanks to our Bristol partners and Morgan Tipping, a socially engaged artist and activist, whose collaging workshops and insights throughout the trip greatly inspired us and the students, and also to our colleague Kavita Ramakrishnan for all the hard work organising this trip. Big thanks also to Conor Franks and the team in the DEV Office for enabling it all to go so smoothly!

Written by  
**Will Haynes, Adrian Martin  
and Yafa El Masri**





NEW MODULE LAUNCH

DECOLONISING KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

Last autumn, DEV launched a brand-new module called Decolonising Knowledge Production. This is a hands-on module that uses recent research and practical experience of DEV’s researchers to help students develop critical thinking and practical skills for decolonial knowledge production in development practice.

It seeks to help students interrogate how knowledge about development is produced and the extent to which it may contribute to reproducing existing global hegemonic power relations and inequalities, depending on who controls the development research agenda, the research methodologies used and how marginalised voices and perspectives, such as those of women, Indigenous peoples, people of colour (from Global North and South) and rural communities among others, are part of or not part of knowledge production processes.

Students examine themes such as the colonial legacies of development, different decolonial theories from the Global South, how to decolonise the University and ourselves as researchers, and how to develop a collective research agenda in development.

The module runs with two, two-hour sessions a week, one dedicated to **thinking** (reflecting) about the



theoretical and conceptual aspects of decolonial theory and the other to **feeling** (experiencing) decolonial methods and practice. One of the innovative aspects of this module is that it is taught through a cross-school collaboration between DEV, the schools of a) Philosophy and Area Studies with Nicholas Grant, b) Education with Rebecca Thomas, and c) Media, Language and Communication Studies with Hazel Marsh and also has contributions from external lecturers. The different lecturers contribute content on decolonial theory from different parts of the world and different practical approaches for doing a decolonial praxis.

Below: Shots from the Decolonise Video, made by one of the groups as part of their final assessment. And Guest lecturer Ayola Jolayemi leading a story boarding session. Photo by lokiñe Rodriguez



Maria Abranches from DEV, leading a biographical collage workshop for students to explore their identities as researches. Photo by Emma Gilberthorpe



Kanako Fujishima helping Robyn Chapell-Wood present her biographical collage. Photo by David Kirkham (Fisheye Images)

POETIC FREEDOM

Mia Everitt, a student who took the module last term, wrote the below poem as part of her final assessment. It sums up the impact of the learning objectives very well:

Finally, Freedom  
To be me, to create.  
A place to write, paint,  
Read and see,  
A new module- a clean  
Slate.

My potential has a chance  
to grow.  
To show what I can do.  
No longer tied down  
By my own restriction,  
You see me....  
And I see you.

As part of ‘feeling’ decoloniality, students learned to apply participatory research methods that help to decolonise knowledge, such as body-territory mapping, collage, music interviews and story boards. In their final assessment they worked in groups producing videos about the challenges and opportunities for decolonising knowledge in the UEA.

Many thanks to all the students that took part of this first edition of the module. We learned a lot together.

Written by  
lokiñe Rodriguez and  
Emma Gilberthorpe





**1<sup>st</sup>**

## **DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

Times Higher Education  
REF 2021 Analysis

**#madein1973**

School of Global Development  
Faculty of Social Sciences  
University of East Anglia  
Norwich NR4 7TJ

[dev.general@uea.ac.uk](mailto:dev.general@uea.ac.uk)

[uea.ac.uk/dev](https://uea.ac.uk/dev)