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Evaluation of FCDO's funding of the ODI Fellowship Scheme

Last edited: 26/04/2021

Final report

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This report

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The authors would like to thank the team at the FCDO and ODI that supplied information and views.

Executive summary

The ODI Fellowship Scheme

All countries would benefit from the presence of a high calibre, efficient and effective civil service. Unfortunately, in low- and middle-income countries the civil service frequently operates in challenging environments where human and financial resources are constrained. In these circumstances governments often struggle to attract and retain high-quality civil servants. When bureaucratic quality and capacity is low, even modest improvements can have a substantial impact. One way of helping to achieve this is by providing technical assistance for capacity building programmes focused on supporting the professional development of civil servants and targeting specific gaps in their technical skills.

The ODI (Overseas Development Institute) Fellowship Scheme is a programme that operates through the direct provision of staff with specific technical skills to public institutions in low- and middle-income countries. Since its establishment in 1963 it has sent more than 1,000 economists and statisticians on two-year postings to more than 40 countries across Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, the Pacific and the Western Balkans. As well as providing developing country governments with high-calibre junior economists and statisticians, it also aims to give postgraduate economists and statisticians professional experience working for, and within, local institutions in developing countries. Over the 2015–2020 period, 266 Fellows were posted to 37 countries. The largest funder of the scheme is the FCDO which, over the period 2015–2020, provided £19.7 million (86%) of the total budget of £23 million. Other donors fund individual fellowships in specific countries and geographic regions such as the Pacific, or thematic areas such as antimicrobial resistance and financial inclusion.

Purpose and scope of the evaluation

The primary purpose of this evaluation is to provide the FCDO with timely feedback on the scheme to inform the FCDO's consideration of future funding. The scope of this evaluation spans the period April 2015 to March 2020 and covers all recipient countries (with in-depth analysis through four country case studies).

This evaluation assesses the effectiveness of the scheme at achieving its aims in five ways:

1. Evaluate how effectively the scheme contributes to sustainable capacity building (its intended impact).
2. Revise the theory of change and assess the strength of evidence for its components.
3. Assess how the delivery model compares with other similar capacity building schemes funded by the FCDO.
4. Benchmark the scheme's approach to diversity and inclusion against best practice.
5. Assess whether the scheme's approach to safeguarding and duty of care is sufficient.

Evaluation approach

There are three components to our approach. Firstly, we took a theory-based approach to assess the contribution of the scheme to its stated objectives and used a capacity-focused

theory of change to gather evidence and draw conclusions. We employed an organisational capacity framework to inform the design of our data collection methods and over the course of the evaluation revised the scheme's theory of change. At the same time, we conducted contribution analysis to assess the contribution made by the scheme to developing capacity. This provided us with in-depth understanding of the mechanisms behind change and the external factors that influence the programme's outcomes and impact. Secondly, we took a mixed method approach to collecting data which allowed us to build a rich picture of all of the elements of the scheme, and to triangulate results from different sources to try to ensure our conclusions were robust. Finally, our approach was participatory, engaging with programme stakeholders such as ODI and the FCDO throughout the evaluation to ensure ownership of the findings and recommendations.

Data collection methods

We used four primary data collection methods: a desk review; semi-structured interviews; a survey of Fellows and their supervisors, and four country case studies.

Desk review: We conducted an extensive desk review of available sources including programme-related documents, FCDO business cases and annual reviews; previous survey data collected by the ODI; previous reviews of the ODI Fellowship Scheme; reports by other donors to the programme; and published reviews of other similar schemes funded by the FCDO.

Self-report survey: Based on results from the desk review, initial interviews and our organisational capacity framework, we designed a 72 question survey for Fellows and a 32 question survey for the supervisors of Fellows. The surveys were available in English, French and Portuguese, and circulated to all Fellows and supervisors who had participated in the scheme between 2015 and 2020, including fellowships not financed by the FCDO. The survey was live for one month and weekly reminders were sent to non-responders. We received 423 responses from Fellows (281) and supervisors (142), with response rates of 79% and 55% respectively. Eighty-nine per cent of Fellows, and 80% of supervisors completed all questions in the survey. Our Fellows' survey was balanced along gender and cohort, and the statistics stream was proportionally represented.

Semi-structured interviews: We conducted 120 interviews: 53 at a scheme-wide level and 67 in our four country case studies. Our interviews included: those managing the programme at the ODI (7); FCDO staff members (14); current and former Fellows (36); colleagues in host organisations (32); unsuccessful applicants to the scheme (3); staff at comparator programmes (9); and external stakeholders who were knowledgeable about the scheme (20).

Four country case studies: Case study countries (Guinea-Bissau, Myanmar, Nigeria and Rwanda) were selected to provide variation along several relevant dimensions: geography, the number of Fellows posted, how long the country has been part of the scheme, and its perceived effectiveness (proxied by the number of early terminations and re-assignments). Country-specific desk reviews and semi-structured interviews were conducted by in-country researchers in local languages and focused on building rich and granular stories of the contribution made by Fellows and detailing the factors that influenced their perceived effectiveness.

Findings

Relevance

A recurring issue emerged from many stakeholder groups; there was a general lack of clarity about the exact role and purpose of the individual Fellows and how they should most effectively support their host organisations. The central point of ambiguity was whether Fellows should be filling a gap in skills and giving embedded support over time (for example by collecting high-quality data, preparing budgets, and writing technical reports and policy papers) or whether they should be focusing on building the capacity of colleagues through the development of systems and more focused and structured training. Despite the duration of the scheme's focus on strengthening institutions, the scheme is still somewhat vague about what capacity building is and what works best for building the capacity of civil services. This is a drawback when communicating with host organisations, the FCDO and Fellows themselves, the expectations they and others have of the role and objectives of Fellows.

With these reservations and despite its longevity the central goal of the scheme remains highly relevant. In most countries in which the scheme operates, capacity constraints related to the recruitment and retention of high-calibre staff in economic and wider public management remain. The specific local skills gaps present vary widely between countries and host organisations, and Fellows help fill a wide range of these crucial gaps. The establishment of a specialised stream in statistics was widely praised as a valued and relevant development and some encouraged the scheme to develop further specialised streams such as digitalisation, climate finance and organisational management.

The scheme is highly aligned with FCDO strategic objectives around economic management for poverty reduction and good statistics to inform good decision-making. In this evaluation we document many examples of Fellows contributing to potentially highly impactful work aligned with these objectives. However, the scheme does not systematically document or communicate this impact to Fellows, its donors, or the wider public. This appears to be a missed opportunity.

Stakeholders also highlighted that Fellows mostly operate at high levels of government, and the large amount of good will they garner, is often a strong tool for soft power and key for diplomacy. In some countries the scheme is seen as a part of the history of the relations between two countries and one senior stakeholder warned that cutting funding to the scheme could cause significant damage to diplomatic relations with the UK. Finally, many stakeholders emphasised that the Fellowship is unmatched in its potential to train and prepare high-calibre professionals for roles in development.

Effectiveness

Selection. The process by which ODI selects candidates is performing well. The technical assessment in economics and statistics is demanding and Fellows are consistently recognised for their strong technical abilities. The selection process also effectively screens applicants on important soft skills through situational judgement tests developed to mimic the challenges that Fellows may face in their posting. For most Fellowships, the process of matching Fellows to their host organisation is working well with high levels of satisfaction amongst Fellows and supervisors surveyed. Most Fellows believed that their posting reflected their technical skills and qualifications, policy interests and personal preferences.

The matching process. Many Fellows are motivated to apply for the Fellowship specifically because they want to support their host organisations and have an impact on economic development and poverty reduction in developing countries. Yet every year there is a group of

Fellows for whom the matching process does not work, resulting in either early terminations of their Fellowship or re-assignment to another ministry. For these Fellows this can be deeply frustrating, particularly because these mismatches are often identified as the result of insufficient due diligence on the part of the management team. The team currently does not put enough resources into the identification of new posts, or the assessment of follow-on posts. In both cases more effort needs to be put into ensuring there is clear demand at the ministry level for a specific set of skills, and a supportive line manager that has an idea as to how the Fellow can be utilised.

Induction and onboarding. The induction of Fellows is seen in a broadly positive light, with Fellows receiving introductions to scheme management, briefings on security and health, and a Q&A with former Fellows. However, there is room for improvement with Fellows wanting more clarity on: the type of work they will be involved in, their capacity development objectives, and how to best to achieve them; as well as more practical guidance and sessions that are tailored to their country of posting. The quality of the onboarding process of new Fellows to host organisations varies a lot. The process is the responsibility of host organisations and is often seen by Fellows to be unstructured or non-existent, with an insufficient pipeline of work ready for them when they arrive. This is a key constraint to their effectiveness.

Performance. The ODI currently takes a hands-off approach to the performance management of Fellows. The working assumption is that Fellows integrate with hosts and that structured professional development will be in the form of objective setting and performance feedback from in-country line managers. However, this is rare and poor line management is identified as the most common impediment to effective work. A key constraint to Fellows growing in their roles is a lack of guidance from the ODI, and there is a clear demand from Fellows for more mentoring and support from the ODI, including objective setting, and the monitoring of progress and performance. Fellows would like more support to develop in their roles and a serious lack of performance management and professional support from the scheme is having a detrimental effect on the effectiveness of Fellows.

Support to Fellows. The ODI management team are generally seen as responsive and to be providing the necessary support to Fellows during their postings, yet are constrained in their capacity to do so. Some Fellows would prefer more active support from the ODI management in areas such as personal wellbeing, and technical support to be more effective in their jobs. This is generally perceived to be the result of a small and stretched core management team. Fellows would have welcomed a clearer system for them to draw from technical support and it seems like a missed opportunity from ODI given its links to academics and in-country practitioners. Similarly access to technical resources and training to aid them in their jobs was welcomed by Fellows. Some Fellows encouraged more post-fellowship support for outgoing fellows and saw it as a missed opportunity given the size of the ODI alumni network. ODI Fellows placed in the same country are considered the most significant source of support and provide a network to one another during their placements.

Safeguarding. The ODI has made progress in several aspects of its approach towards safeguarding and duty of care in recent years and the fellowship's overall response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been viewed as successful by Fellows. Fellows acknowledged the promptness with which the ODI reacted, the evacuations that were made possible, and the frequent advice and communication provided to Fellows who were unable to evacuate. However, in a few cases

leaving their posting damaged the relationship Fellows had with their host organisation. Despite considerable progress, safeguarding has still not been sufficiently institutionalised within the fellowship, and policies and practices to ensure a fail-safe system remain incomplete.

Equity

The scheme is open to candidates of all nationalities who have at least a master's degree in economics, statistics, or a related field. However, certain academic institutions (especially in the UK) have a long history of students successfully applying to become a Fellow and have built up institutional knowledge and a rich network of former Fellows to consult. There is evidence that a current lack of guidance to applicants about how to complete the written application or prepare for the interview is favouring selection of applicants with links to a subset of academic institutions.

We benchmarked the diversity of Fellows with data from the FCDO and the UK national average for postgraduate students along four metrics: ethnicity, sexuality, disability and parental education (a proxy for socio-economic background). We find that the scheme has room for improvement with respect to disability and socio-economic background. The ODI does not currently prioritise the recruitment of under-represented groups or follow many best practice systems in recruitment. It also does not have a system to collect or aggregate diversity data for all applicants. This makes it challenging to assess the diversity of the applicant pool, or at which stage of the application process any barriers to inclusion are greatest.

The ODI has made substantial improvements to its safeguarding and duty of care procedures in recent years. It has given specific attention to addressing frequently raised concerns around a lack of support and feelings of isolation. A buddy system now operates as well as a specialised counselling service. However, the ODI does not compare favourably to comparator programmes on the level of psychological support it provides, and some issues pertinent to those with protected characteristics remain, for example understanding and preventing sexual harassment in the workplace.

Impact

What do Fellows do?

Fellows engage in a number of activities during their postings. A core form of support is both formal and informal training to in country staff on various topics at the individual as well as groups level. There is strong evidence of Fellows being involved in the collection, collation, construction and management of high-quality data which in turn is valued by host organisations. Fellows have utilised non-traditional data sources, harmonised trade data, automated cleaning processes, constructed indices and supported the design and implementation of surveys. They often provide support by preparing budgets and fiscal analysis and building and refining macro-economic models. Additionally, they have been involved in the production of many different types of documents including planning documents, technical reports, policy papers, research pieces, evaluations and funding proposals, as well as helping to draft speeches for senior civil servants.

Fellows perform some administrative and managerial tasks using organisational skills for the management of meetings, information, time, and communication and some more generic skills. They have networks and connections that they utilise and are active members of committees at

ministry, national and international level. They support their colleagues in national and international forums and act as intermediaries between external consultants and their teams. Their soft skills are consistently mentioned alongside their technical skills including a hard work ethic, adaptability, a collaborative working style, clear communication, and personability.

The impact of Fellows

The work of Fellows may contribute to the strengthening of five capacity outcomes identified at the inception phase as key dimensions likely to be impacted by the contribution of Fellows based on the Organisational Capacity Framework (OCF) [1]. We assessed the strength of evidence linking the work of Fellows to these outcomes and in each case identified key drivers of impact. We found that, overall, the ODI's management, support and leverage plays a key role in influencing whether Fellows have a productive and useful Fellowship or not.

There was consistent and strong evidence that Fellows contribute to the capacity of individuals and teams, and some evidence that they contributed to strengthened systems and institutions. Colleagues benefited from Fellows' understanding of how to apply technical knowledge and skills to practical policy issues. Fellows also developed and improved internal systems including setting up functioning committees; building personnel and HR systems; streamlining processes and introducing new software and data-management systems. These systems that were set up were a key driver of impact. Giving formal training to colleagues in, for example, debt management was also key to strengthening the capacity of teams.

There was substantial evidence that the work of Fellows contributed to better economic, financial and public sector management through the design and implementation of many high-quality policies, programmes, strategies and action plans within their ministries. They did so either directly through co-working on a project with their colleagues, or indirectly by strengthening the capacity of the team around them who, in turn, would draft improved strategies and policies. We found strong evidence of the former and tentative evidence of the latter. Fellows brought valued technical skills to their teams and the embedded nature of Fellows, which contrasts with the use of external consultants, was a key driver of impact.

Below are examples of some of the contributions made by Fellows to impactful strategies and policies in the last six years:

- Agricultural development: Drafting, lobbying for and securing cabinet and parliamentary approval for the Warehouse Receipt Bill, a regulatory framework for agricultural development in Malawi.
- Competition policy: Redesigning Fiji's merger control regime and drafting the National Competition and Consumer Protection policy.
- Debt and borrowing: Improving inflation and GDP forecasting models in the Central Bank of Papua New Guinea. Working with a team to progress municipal borrowing policy in the National Treasury of South Africa.

[1] World Bank (2012) *Guide to Evaluating Capacity Development Results: A Collection of Guidance Notes to Help Development Practitioners and Evaluators Assess Capacity Development Efforts,* link

- Disaster response: Identifying healthcare system gaps and required health financing in Liberia in the aftermath of the Ebola outbreak; contributing to the Covid-19 response in Nigeria through work on antimicrobial resistance.
- Education: Ranking all senior high schools in Ghana based on performance, which later influenced national policy; supporting the decentralisation of textbook procurement in Malawi, allowing millions more books to reach primary schools.
- Health: Designing National Health Accounts and Client Satisfaction Surveys in Tanzania; developing health sector strategic plans in Sierra Leone; Benefit Incidence Analysis in Ethiopia.
- Investment decisions: Developing a report that guided the World Bank's maritime transportation investments in the Pacific Islands. Developing and negotiating a 30-year, $300 million concession agreement for a deep-water port on behalf of the Government of Timor-Leste.
- Natural resources: Drafting the Petroleum Natural Resource Governance Regulations in Ghana; advising on contract negotiations in the National Minerals Agency of Sierra Leone for two mining lease agreements worth a total forecasted net present value exceeding $1 billion.
- Revenue generation: Strengthening the Domestic Resource Mobilisation strategy of Liberia; producing a comprehensive analysis of property taxes in Myanmar that led to increased state revenue.
- Subsidies: Analysis on fuel subsidy reform in Sierra Leone that later contributed to a reform being passed.
- Trade negotiations: Supporting bilateral trade negotiations between Vanuatu and New Caledonia. Co-authoring a WTO trade facilitation agreement in Malawi. Modelling different scenarios to inform free trade negotiations in Ghana. Contributing to the passing of the 'Made in Rwanda' policy.
- Water: In Djibouti, designing the first EU funded water desalination plant in the Horn of Africa with the expectation that potable water in the country would increase by 40%.

There was consistent and strong evidence that Fellows facilitate the strengthening of networks and coalitions on many levels including within directorates, between ministries, with international donors, and with international investors. There are many examples of Fellows building new networks, establishing new partnerships and co-producing research with international and local partners. Fellows have helped to build the environment for future international investment and supported the membership process of international organisations including Vanuatu's accession to the WTO and Rwanda's membership of the OECD. Fellows utilise their existing networks and knowledge of the international system, including their ODI network, to strengthen the networks of their host organisation. They also leverage their role as an outsider to build coalitions and can capitalise on the scheme's good reputation to facilitate good working relationships between host organisations and the international community.

There was consistent and strong evidence that Fellows improve the working culture of those around them. They increased motivation and brought both a strong work ethic and diverse values. The professionalism of the Fellows and their attitude to work was perceived to have a positive demonstration effect on those around them acting as an example of how another way of working was possible. In other cases, Fellows were valued by their colleagues for bringing new ideas and a fresh perspective. Others improved the working culture by challenging hierarchies that other colleagues would be uncomfortable challenging.

There is strong evidence that Fellows go on to work in development. We found considerable evidence of Fellows continuing their careers in development and working for international organisations (UNDP, UNICEF, UNDF), multilateral banks (IDB, ADB, AfDB, World Bank), central banks, universities, research organisations focused on economic development, international development consultancies, and government departments such as ministries of economy, of health, education, foreign affairs or international development (FCDO, SIDA or GIZ) across European, American, Asian and African countries. Both Fellows and later their employers stressed that being an ODI Fellow leads to an improved understanding of developing contexts which is valued on a personal and professional level.

Sustainability

We found only modest evidence that the contributions made by Fellows have the potential to be sustained. The main ways in which their contributions had lasting impact is through the improved capacity of colleagues and the strengthening of institutional systems that will outlive their placements. This finding points to the importance of Fellows working collaboratively with local colleagues rather than independently to get tasks done. However, staff turnover is high in many host organisations, and poses a challenge to how hosts can retain strengthened institutional knowledge. Actions that increase the likelihood of sustainability include improving existing processes and systems, formal structured training, and developing training materials to be used after Fellows leave. Some Fellows stay in their fellowship countries beyond their posting, and others stay in touch with their host organisation professionally, both of which indicate the potential for impact beyond their posting.

We found limited evidence of the ODI making a consistent effort to measure its short- or long-term impact. Debriefs with Fellows and lesson sharing are dependent on agreement between the host organisation and the Fellow and varies widely across placements. However, we found no substantial evidence of the ODI management team participating in these sessions or capturing lessons learnt in a systematic way even when there is re-assignment of a Fellow. There is also limited evidence of the ODI actively promoting principles to strengthen sustainability beyond postings, and there does not appear to be a strategy to guide engagement with host organisations and elicit what they think the sustainable impact of Fellows is. Any longer-term benefit to the host organisations beyond a placement is only anecdotally gathered, and there is very limited evidence of any systematic effort to assess the longer-term benefits of placements although this is acknowledged to also be a common challenge shared with comparator schemes.

Monitoring of impact is an area where the fellowship compares unfavourably to comparator schemes such as fellowships from Improving Global Health and Oxford Policy Fellowships, both of which have a dedicated member of staff for monitoring and evaluation. Although the ODI keeps a record of ex-Fellows and the extent to which they stay within the international

development space, it does not do enough to learn from the experiences of Fellows to improve the scheme despite many being keen to share these experiences.

Efficiency

There is a broadly positive impression of the efficiency of the scheme. It has stayed within budget over the review period and the total cost of an ODI fellow compares favourably with similar resident adviser schemes. It also compares favourably when extrapolating the replacement costs of a Fellow from, for example, a consulting firm. Efficiency in the scheme is driven by ensuring: economy in the purchase of the few inputs needed; operating with a small central management team; and containing onboarding and preparation costs. However, greater investment in Fellows could increase development impact.

One approach to assessing the value for money of the scheme is to judge the success of Fellows on a portfolio basis. If this logic is applied to the fellowship, then individual Fellows contributing to highly impactful work may make the whole programme good value for money even if some fellows have little or no impact. For example, we document examples of the work of Fellows contributing to fewer teacher strikes in Guinea-Bissau which could have a huge impact on child development, long-term human capital accumulation and lifetime earnings. In Rwanda one Fellow demonstrated to colleagues that the country had overestimated planned power consumption needs which eventually resulted in the government's 5-year energy strategy halving its target for investments in power stations. Examples like these could easily justify the investment in the fellowship.

Lessons learned

We draw out the key lessons from our evaluation:

1. Embedded technical assistance and capacity development support remains a need for many of the countries where the ODI Fellowship Scheme places Fellows.
2. A clear definition of capacity development is important and must be communicated to the scheme's participants.
3. Government demand for technical assistance is essential to the scheme's success but can be defined more robustly.
4. The ODI Fellowship Scheme, as one of the longest standing fellowships, needs to adapt continuously to remain relevant.
5. Fellowships should work to prioritise high-quality and impactful posts where Fellows have the necessary support and environment to excel in their roles.
6. Communicating impact achieved by Fellows is essential to demonstrate the effectiveness and impact of the scheme.
7. It is difficult to assess the sustainability of the results achieved, but this is key to understanding if sustainable capacity has been developed.
8. An effective knowledge-sharing platform for Fellows and a learning strategy for the ODI to guide learning and help disseminate lessons would benefit the long-term effectiveness of the scheme.
9. A thorough analysis of early terminations and reassignments is key to ensuring the fellowship is effective and efficient.
10. The diversity of the scheme is limited by the diversity of the eligible population and requires additional investment to be ensured.

Recommendations to the ODI

Relevance to the scheme:

- The FCDO and ODI should work together to agree a definition of capacity development.
- Work with host countries/organisations to develop engagement strategies.
- Consider creating more specialised streams.

Effectiveness of the scheme:

- Prioritise ensuring quality postings by conducting more thorough research and due diligence on each posting, in particular the demand from local senior civil servants.
- Make language fluency an official requirement for some postings and increase the official language allowance in others.
- Incorporate recommendations made by Fellows to strengthen the usefulness of the induction week.
- Work to ensure that host organisations strengthen their onboarding process.
- Develop a plan for the performance management and professional development of Fellows.
- Provide more support to Fellows during their placements by drawing from their networks and providing a hub of resources for them to draw upon.

Equity:

- Make a more concerted effort to diversify the scheme.

Impact of the scheme:

- Develop a strategy for monitoring, evaluation and learning that will enable the ODI to improve over time and demonstrate impact. Consider hiring a new staff member for this role.

Efficiency:

- Devote sufficient resources to address the above-mentioned recommendations and prioritise high-quality fellowships.

Recommendations to the FCDO:

- Continue to fund the ODI Fellowship Scheme for the next business case.
- Seek internal alignment when defining objectives for funding the Fellowship Scheme.
- Avoid making changes to the priorities of the scheme within funding cycles.
- Together with other donors sit in a steering committee whose approval is required for engagement strategies and post criteria checklists for new placements.
- Amend the scheme's logical framework to include a broader range of qualitative and quantitative indicators.

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Roadmap of the report

In chapter (1.0) Introduction, we introduce the evaluation purpose, objectives and scope (1.1), and summarise the aims of capacity building programmes (1.2). We then introduce the scheme, its history, intended outcomes and Theory of Change (1.3).

In chapter (2.0) Evaluation approach, we give an overview of how to evaluate capacity building programmes (2.1), the specific approach and methodology of this evaluation (2.2) and detail how the evaluation has engaged and consulted relevant stakeholders (2.3). In the next six chapters we present the findings of the evaluation along the DAC criteria.

In chapter (3.0) Relevance, we assess the extent to which developing country governments struggle to attract and retain the necessary staff (3.1), before examining host organisations' understanding of the objectives of the scheme (3.2). We then assess the ODI's understanding and communication of its aims (3.3) before examining how aligned the scheme is to the FCDO's priorities (3.4).

In chapter (4.0) Effectiveness we examine the effectiveness of the scheme's selection of Fellows and matching of placements (4.1) induction and onboarding process (4.2) and objective setting and performance management of Fellows (4.3). We then examine the support available to Fellows during their placements (4.4) before assessing the progress that the ODI has made in strengthening its safeguarding and duty of care of Fellows (4.5).

In chapter (5.0) Equity we assess how well the scheme promotes diversity and inclusion in its recruitment process (5.1) and how much it considers diversity and inclusion during the matching process (5.2). We then assess whether the degree of support provided to people with protected characteristics is sufficient (5.3).

In chapter (6.0) Impact we evaluate the impact achieved by the scheme. We first detail the types of support that Fellows give (their outputs) (6.1) which we categorise as either technical (6.1.1) managerial and administrative (6.1.2) or implementation (6.1.3). We then assess the contribution made by Fellows towards the capacity of their host organisations (6.2) along four dimensions: Improving staff capacities and implementation know-how (6.2.1), improving economic, financial and public management (6.2.2), strengthening networks and coalitions (6.2.3) and improving the working culture in host organisations (6.2.4). We then assess the extent to which the scheme prepares Fellows for a career in international development (6.2.5). We conclude the chapter by examining the external factors that influence the ability of Fellows to do their work (6.3).

In chapter (7.0) Sustainability, we examine the sustainability of the observed impacts (7.1) and the extent to which this is monitored by the ODI beyond the placements of Fellows (7.2). In chapter (8.0) Efficiency we examine the costs and budgets of the scheme and touch upon whether it provides good value for money (8.1). In the next section we examine drivers of efficiency (8.2) and opportunities to improve it by providing comparisons with similar schemes (8.3).

In chapter (9.0) Lessons learned we presents the key lessons learned during the evaluation. Chapter (10.0) Recommendations provides recommendations to the ODI to strengthen the management and effectiveness of the scheme and to FCDO as its core funder.

This report contains a number of useful annexes. We provide our detailed methodology (1); a full bibliography (2); our approach to ethical research (3); how we built and revised the scheme's theory of change (4); an overview of the respondents to our survey (5); best practices in recruitment and how ODI compares with them (6); our use and influence plan (7); and the evaluation Terms of Reference (8).

1.0 Introduction

In this chapter, we introduce the purpose of this evaluation, give an overview of capacity building programmes, introduce the ODI Fellowship Scheme and provide a roadmap of the content of each section.

1.1 Evaluation purpose, objectives and scope

In August 2020, Ecorys was commissioned by the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) to undertake an evaluation of the FCDO's funding of the ODI Fellowship Scheme.[2] The primary purpose of this evaluation is to provide the FCDO with timely feedback on the scheme to inform the FCDO's consideration of future funding. As per the terms of reference, we conducted a performance evaluation of the ODI Fellowship Scheme from April 2015 to March 2020. The evaluation assessed:

- whether the scheme is effective in achieving its stated purpose of providing technical economic and statistical support which successfully enhances the capacity of the host organisation for improved policy-making and implementation;
- the extent to which the scheme is meeting its expected impact, i.e. making a demonstrable contribution to the improved capacity and effectiveness of developing countries and the international development community to deliver poverty reduction in line with the UK's Aid Strategy.

To support the FCDO in assessing the ODI Fellowship Scheme, the evaluation addressed the following objectives:

- Impact: To evaluate how effectively the ODI Fellowship Scheme contributes to sustainable capacity building in participating developing country institutions and where appropriate at a country level, i.e. to what extent it is achieving its stated objectives at outcome and impact level.
- Theory of change: To review and test the Theory of Change and logistical framework, with a view to revising and deepening both the Theory of Change and logistical framework/assessment criteria and ensuring that the two are consistent. As part of this review process, use interim findings to provide a draft of the ODI annual review (delivered on 30 September 2020).
- Delivery model: To assess how the ODI's delivery model compares to other similar capacity building schemes funded by the DFID (now FCDO) and other UK Government departments.
- Diversity and access: To assess how the scheme's approach to diversity and broadening access in recruitment, particularly with regards to socio-economic diversity as well as protected characteristics, compares with identified best practice.
- Safeguarding and duty of care: To assess whether the ODI Fellowship Scheme's approach to and policies on safeguarding and duty of care, of and on behalf of Fellows, are sufficient.

The scope of this evaluation covers the period from April 2015 to March 2020 and all recipient countries (with an in-depth analysis in four country case studies). There have been no substantial departures from the original terms of reference (available in Annex 9). The formal recipient of this evaluation is the FCDO, and the key target audiences for this evaluation are the FCDO's Evidence Use and Capability department, economics profession and Economics Directorate, statistics profession and relevant country offices, other

[2] The evaluation was conducted over the period August 2020 to February 2021 and during the Covid-19 pandemic. We do not believe the pandemic affected the quality of the evaluation.

current and potential funders of the scheme, and the ODI Fellowship Scheme itself. Other potential audiences include comparator schemes, development consultancies, NGOs and the wider donor community.

There are a number of key linkages between the scheme and other capacity building programmes and we intend to link with and have an impact on them as part of learning from this evaluation, in particular those commissioned by the FCDO. These include the Oxford Policy Fellowship, Voluntary Services Overseas, the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission and Chevening Scholarships.

1.2 Capacity building programmes

The productivity of the Civil Service in low- and middle-income countries is critical for development, yet often civil servants operate in challenging environments where human and financial resources are limited.[3]. The bureaucratic environment is also often complicated by more severe issues of corruption and political patronage. Governments in these countries often struggle to attract and retain high-quality civil servants which limits their technical and institutional capacity. When bureaucratic quality is low, small improvements can have substantial developmental benefits. Analysis of bureaucratic productivity data from Ghana for example, suggested that one standard deviation increase in the quality of public management would increase GDP by 8 percentage points.[4] In this context therefore, capacity building programmes that seek to promote professional development through the provision of technical assistance can be highly effective in supporting low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) to fill capacity gaps. Capacity building programmes with an economic focus typically aim to fill four types of areas:[5]

- Technical: the capacity to analyse economic problems, provide effective solutions and design macroeconomic policies.
- Implementation: the extent to which policies can be delivered.
- Administrative: the effective administration of basic public services and infrastructure.
- Institutional: the legal and institutional frameworks that regulate political and economic activity.

The ODI Fellowship Scheme and other similar programmes focus on addressing gaps in technical capacity in LMICs. There is also a range of other approaches to improving the technical capacity of civil servants in LMICs such as the direct placement of early to mid-career professionals from developing countries to UK-based organisations. These programmes seek to provide professionals in LMICs with opportunities to enhance their technical skills in reputable institutions in high-income countries, which they can then employ in their own institutions upon return to their home countries. The FCDO currently funds at least two schemes of this type including scholarships and fellowships through the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission and Chevening Secretariat.[6]

1.3 The ODI Fellowship Scheme

1.3.1 History and funding

The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) Fellowship Scheme is a capacity building programme that operates through the direct provision of staff with specific technical skills to government departments in

[3] Rogger, D. (2017) *Who Serves the Poor? Surveying Civil Servants in the Developing World*, link
[4] World Bank (2019) *Innovating Bureaucracy for a More Capable Government*, link
[5] Grindle (1996) *Getting Good Government: Capacity Building in the Public Sectors of Developing Countries*, link
[6] Chevening, link

low- and middle-income countries. It was established in 1963[7] and in the 58 years since, has sent more than 1,000 economists and statisticians on two-year postings to more than 40 countries across Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, the Pacific and the Western Balkans. The scheme has two official objectives:[8]

1. To provide developing country governments with high-calibre junior economists and statisticians where there are gaps in local capacity.
2. To give postgraduate economists and statisticians practical work experience inside a developing country institution.

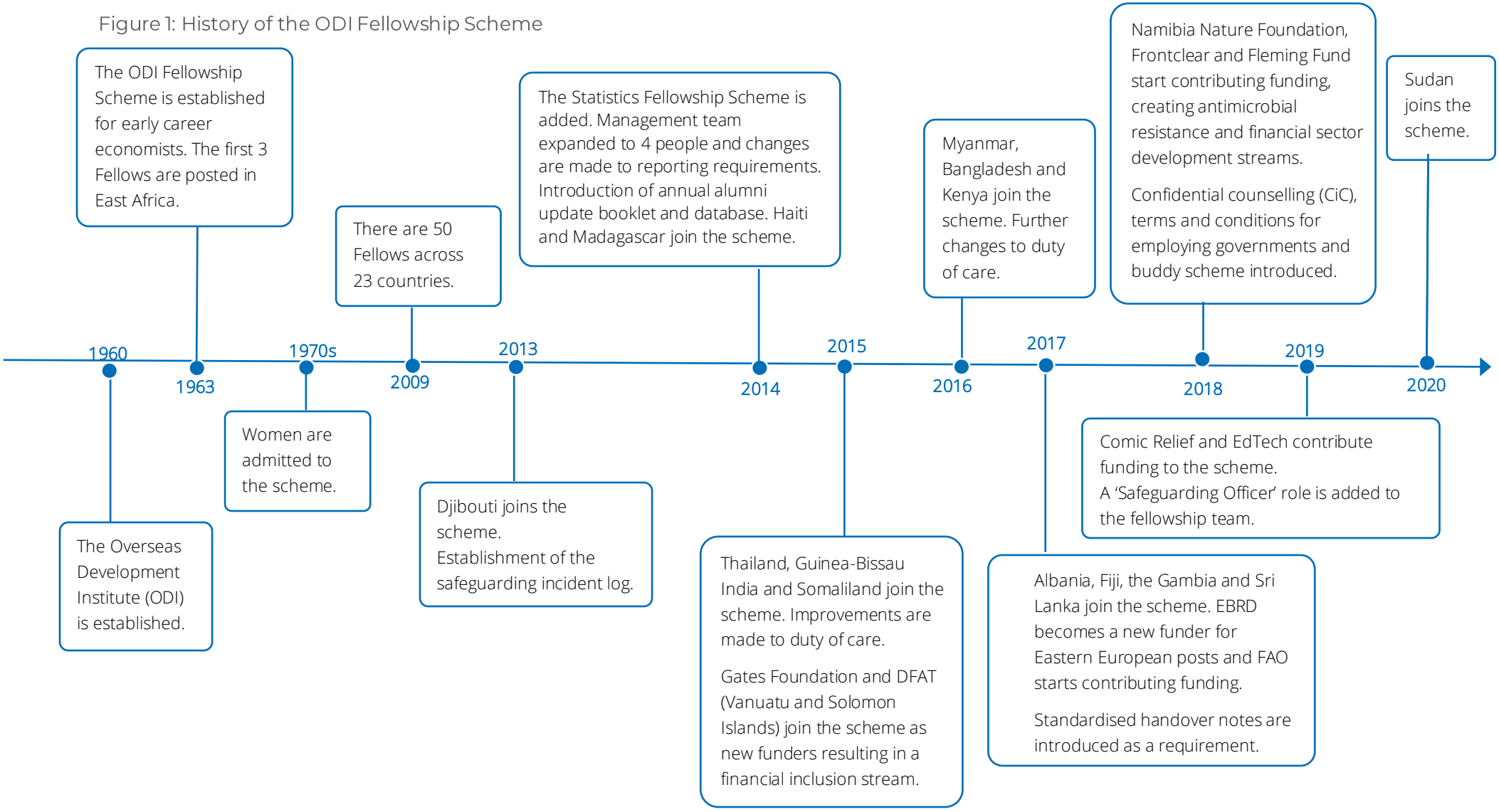
Although these are the official objectives of the scheme, there is some tension with its largest funder, FCDO, which believes Fellows should not just fill gaps in capacity but instead concentrate on building capacity and strengthening institutions in a sustainable manner. The nuance of these distinctions is discussed further in sections 3.2 and 3.3. The detail of what Fellows do and what capacity building and gap filling looks like in practice is discussed in detail in section 6.2.

Each host ministry pays Fellows a local salary commensurate with what a local official with equivalent education and experience would receive. The ODI then provides a supplementation to each Fellow so that they receive £21,000 in salary in the first year and £23,000 in salary in the second year, plus health insurance and a housing and travel allowance. Each Fellow that completes the full 24 months of their fellowship receives a completion bonus of £2,400. The average number of Fellows per cohort has increased over time; in 2005 there were 34 posted and by 2015 this had increased to 59. Over the 5 cohorts from 2015-2020, 266 Fellows were posted to 37 countries (an average of 53 per cohort).

The total funding for the period 2015–2020 was approximately £23 million, of which £19.7 million (86%) was funded by the FCDO.[9] Others fund individual fellowships in specific geographies or thematic areas, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (4%); the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT, 3%); the Fleming Fund (3%); the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD, 2%); and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO, 1%). Partial contributions from other organisations and governments account for the remaining 1%. A few governments (Fiji, Papua New Guinea, and Timor-Leste) pay the entire cost of Fellows themselves with no donor contribution. Occasionally FCDO country offices fund Fellows directly (e.g. FCDO in South Sudan). Although the scheme is run independently by ODI, as its largest funder the FCDO has some influence over the operations and direction of the scheme.

[7] The original version of the Scheme was funded by the Nuffield Foundation and participants were known as ODINs link
[8] ODI Fellowship Scheme, link
[9] The UK's planned Official Development Assitance budget in 2021 is planned to be £10bn. If expenditure on the programme remains constant into the future (with an average annual spend of £3.4m) the scheme will account for approximately 0.034% of the budget (as a proportion: 0.00034) link

Figure 1: History of the ODI Fellowship Scheme



1.3.2 Intended outcomes and Theory of Change

A key principle of theory-based evaluation is to identify the causal pathways between inputs and outputs, outputs and outcomes, and outcomes and impact, helping to identify the processes that need to occur for change to take place.[10] As a part of our contribution analysis, the evaluation team has revised the ODI Fellowship Scheme Theory of Change (ToC), explained in detail in Annex 5. In our revised ToC, we outline the outcomes that the ODI Fellowship Scheme aims to achieve and assess the existing evidence of the impact pathways to achieving them holding true. The diagram below provides a visual illustration of how the ODI Fellowship Scheme aims to achieve its results and the strength of evidence gathered through this evaluation of each pathway holding.

Overall, we found considerable evidence of Fellows contributing to the development of high-quality and implementable strategies and policies. We found that through Fellows' direct technical contributions to developing high-quality policies and strategies, Fellows can have a long-lasting impact without directly contributing to sustainable capacity. Moreover, Fellows' implementation support provided through their managerial and soft skills and networks contributed to improving the working culture and strengthening networks.

However, we found less evidence of Fellows contributing to host governments' understanding of economic analysis and social contexts. Evidence from the country case studies shows that host organisations' improved capacity and understanding of economic analysis to develop strategies and policies was mainly achieved through Fellows' contributions to strengthening systems and the capacity to implement changes within host organisations, which contributes to the institutional capacity of host governments to improve policies and services. We also found evidence that implementation support helped to improve the working culture which contributed to the institutional capacity to make changes. In terms of the training provided by Fellows, we found that the causal pathway of the training contributing to a better understanding of economic analysis and social contexts is strong for colleagues, especially through informal training and working alongside colleagues in delivering technical outputs. However, given high turnover in host organisations, this causal pathway is not always sustainable.

Finally, we found considerable evidence of the work done by Fellows, technical and non-technical, contributing to Fellows improving their understanding of developing contexts and this significantly contributed to the likelihood of Fellows having a career in international development.

In terms of the long-term outcomes, we found some anecdotal evidence of strategies and policies contributing to better economic, financial and public management in the fellowship countries and of Fellows having a career in development contributing to donor organisations being more effective. However, given the scope and timeframe of the evaluation, we were not able to gather evidence of Fellows' contributions, either through contributing to better policies or through their careers in development, leading to services better reaching poor people. As such, an assumption remains that better economic, financial and public sector management can significantly contribute to poverty reduction.

We found that the ODI's management, support and leverage plays a key role in contributing to Fellows having a productive and useful experience that can influence the extent to which they can produce relevant outputs that, in turn, can influence host organisations. The evaluation confirms the influence that effective matching, performance management, learning and leveraging of networks have on the effectiveness of fellowship posts.

Finally, in terms of the assumptions that need to hold for the ODI Fellowship Scheme to achieve its outcomes, we identified several assumptions during the inception phase that we have tested during the evaluation and updated in Annex 5.

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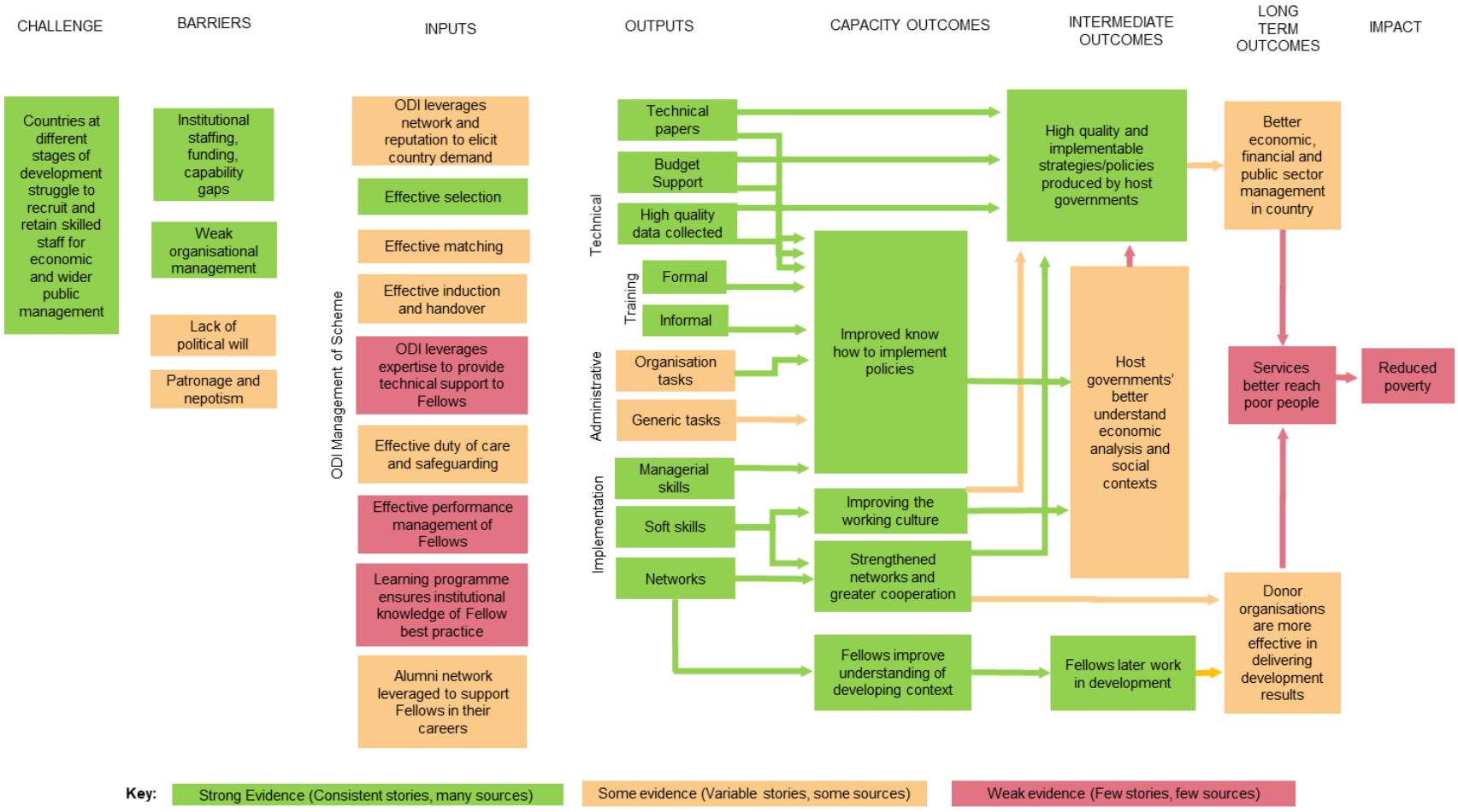
[10] White, H. (2009) *Theory-based Impact Evaluation: Principles and Practice,* International Initiative for Impact Evaluation Working Paper 3.

Figure 2: Theory of Change (with strength of evidence)



2.0 Evaluation approach

In this chapter, we outline how to evaluate capacity building programmes, describe our evaluation approach and methodology, and summarise which stakeholders were engaged in this evaluation. A more detailed overview of the methodology and evaluation framework is presented in Annex 1.

2.1 Evaluating capacity building programmes

Capacity building programmes with standard monitoring and evaluation frameworks are often criticised for inadequately measuring and assessing real capacity change.[11] This is partly due to differing interpretations of what capacity development means. We follow FCDO and OECD definitions:[12]

- Capacity: 'The ability of people, organisations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully' (FCDO).
- Capacity development: 'The process whereby people, organisations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time' (OECD-DAC).

Capacity and capacity development are multi-layered concepts and a narrow focus on, for example, an individuals' knowledge and skills, may miss important external and enabling factors. Capacity development is also not static; it can be either created or adapted and improved from what already exists, but it must be maintained over time[13].

The FCDO emphasises that capacity development is an intervention that builds on existing organisational capacities and assets and is 'internal' to the stakeholders aiming to make changes. As an endogenous process, external actors such as donors, partners and projects can therefore play a supporting (or distorting) role, but 'real' change emerges from the improvements made within the individuals and organisations targeted. In the context of the ODI Fellowship Scheme these would be changes in the functions and effectiveness of people and systems at different levels of the host organisation such as individuals (Fellows and staff members); organisations (the department Fellows are assigned to); and institutions (the ministry they are hosted in). Given these complexities, many guidelines indicate that capacity development approaches should employ a 'best fit' rather than 'best practice' approach, recognising that what might work well in one context may not be as effective in another.

To evaluate the extent to which Fellows contribute to capacity development, we used a bespoke framework based on an organisational capacity framework (OCF) that provides a clear typology of capacity domains and the World Bank's intermediate capacity outcome (ICO) framework.[14] While the dimensions across both are similar, they are complementary frameworks that will contribute to different parts of the Theory of Change.

The OCF provides a useful structure for capturing the multiple dimensions of capacity development that may be gained through a Fellow being posted to a host organisation – both in terms of an individual Fellow's own capacity as well as that of the receiving ministry. Using the ICO framework provides us with support to

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[11] See, for example, DFID (2012) *How-To Note on Capacity Building,* link; World Bank (2012), *Guide to Evaluating Capacity Development Results: A Collection of Guidance Notes to Help Development Practitioners and Evaluators Assess Capacity Development Efforts,* link
[12] DFID (2012) *How-To Note on Capacity Building,* link
[13] See DFID (2003) *Promoting Institutional and Organisational Development: A Source Book of Tools and Techniques*, link
[14] World Bank (2012) *Guide to Evaluating Capacity Development Results: A Collection of Guidance Notes to Help Development Practitioners and Evaluators Assess Capacity Development Efforts,* link

assess not only capacity among host organisations, but also whether Fellows have substantially increased their own capacity through postings, which will in turn benefit them in future development careers. It provides a comprehensive, multi-layered conception of capacity that allows for an understanding of 'building' the capacity of others (i.e. sustainably transferring or institutionalising a Fellow's skills, knowledge and achievements within a host organisation, building responsibilities for key departmental staff to take initiatives forward and deliver on objectives) rather than just 'providing' capacity (e.g. seconding experts or consultants to carry out work).

Figure 3: Organisational Capacity Framework

The ICOs represent a strong sub-framework for assessing intermediate capacity changes, particularly at individual and in-organisation coalition level, and include: 1) raised awareness (which also includes attitude, confidence, motivation); 2) enhanced knowledge and skills; 3) increased implementation know-how (factors that control or influence the ability to put into practice learning or skills); 4) improved consensus and teamwork (which includes factors such as communication, coordination, cohesion and contributions by individuals and groups); 5) strengthened coalitions (improved collaboration between individuals or groups that share a common agenda, such as within an organisation); and 6) strengthened networks (improved collaboration between individuals or groups that do not necessarily share a common agenda, such as different organisations in a network).

2.2 Evaluation approach and methodology

Our overall approach to this evaluation is based on the following three principles: theory-based, mixed methods and participatory.

Theory-based: Theory-based approaches use explicit theories of change to gather evidence and draw conclusions about whether and how an intervention has contributed to observed results, whether these are in line with anticipated results and the key factors influencing this. We see all of the evaluation objectives as interconnected, tied together by the revised programme theory of change and logistical framework, informed by our OCF framework. We conducted a contribution analysis to assess the contribution made by the ODI Fellowship Scheme in developing capacity. This enabled a more in-depth understanding of the mechanisms behind change and external factors that may positively or negatively affect programme outcomes and impact, helping to identify areas for learning and adaptation for programme and wider stakeholders in the sector. We provide more detail on how we conducted our contribution analysis in Annex 1.

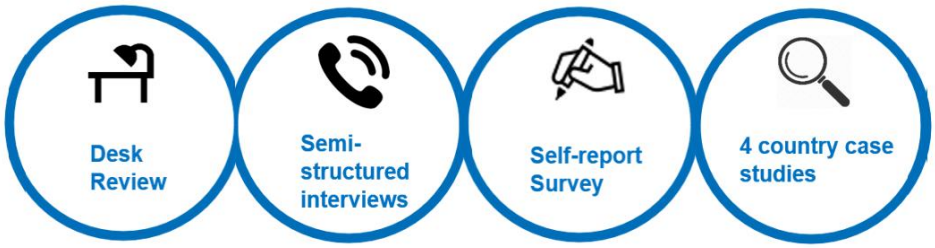
Mixed methods: The results of capacity building efforts can rarely be assessed through quantitative or qualitative methods alone and instead require using various methods and approaches to build up a picture over time of what has changed, why it has changed, and how learning can be applied in the future.[15] For this reason, we take a mixed methods approach.

[15] ECDPM (2008). *Capacity Change and Performance: Insights and implications for development cooperation*. Policy Management Brief 21.

Participatory: A key priority of the evaluation is to ensure relevant FCDO and ODI stakeholders have the opportunity to shape and learn from the evaluation. Our approach was therefore participatory, supporting them to share their experiences, make discoveries, prompt discussions and take an active learning role. We included the FCDO and ODI through a facilitated self-reflection process, including: a kick-off workshop to share understanding of the evaluation's priorities and build familiarisation with the evaluation's methodology and approach; a theory of change workshop; formal meetings with the management group; and final presentations with the FCDO and ODI. At each stage our role was as a 'critical friend', facilitating and bringing a level of external rigour to the evaluation. We produced a detailed engagement strategy for external stakeholders during the evaluation inception phase (see Annex 8 for details).

Our proposed approach relied on triangulation between different methods and data sources, both qualitative and quantitative. In using multiple methods, the aim was to adequately address each evaluation objective and question, mitigate the limitations of each and conduct a robust assessment that confidently responded to all evaluation questions.

Figure 4: Overview of data collection methods



As detailed in our evaluation framework in Annex 1, the four primary data collection methods for this evaluation included a desk review, semi-structured interviews, a self-report survey and four country case studies, as outlined above in Figure 4. Given the evaluation's theory-based approach, we sequenced the data collection methods to ensure that each data source contributed to developing a story of how the ODI Fellowship Scheme contributed to capacity development.

We started by conducting a desk review, followed by the self-reported survey, interviews with relevant stakeholders in the UK, the completion of the data collection for the four country case studies (Guinea-Bissau, Myanmar, Nigeria and Rwanda) and finally, some sector-relevant interviews. This sequencing helped us identify gaps in the evidence and allowed us to explore these in a robust and consistent way. More detail on the sequencing of data collection is provided in Annex 1.

Our analytical approach links to the evaluation objectives outlined in Section 1.1. In order to address all evaluation objectives, we conducted two levels of analysis: scheme-wide analysis and country case studies.

We undertook a scheme-wide analysis to understand how the scheme is delivered and how effective the model is. We analysed qualitative and quantitative data collected at scheme level, as well as the survey results and qualitative findings from interviews to assess both the programme's effectiveness in achieving results and the effectiveness of the delivery model.

We conducted four country case studies to understand how effectively the ODI Fellowship Scheme contributes to sustainable capacity building in participating developing country institutions. Case studies were selected to provide variation along several dimensions: the number of Fellows posted; how long the country has been a part of the scheme; whether it receives Fellows from both the statistics and economics streams; the number of early terminations; and geographic location (three case studies in Africa and one in Asia). More detail on the sampling process is included in Annex 1. The final selection of case studies was as follows:

1. Guinea-Bissau: Guinea-Bissau is a small country in West Africa. It joined the scheme relatively recently: Fellows were first posted there in 2015, and since then there has been twelve Fellows, both economists and statisticians. There has been one re-assignment and one early termination (due to frustration with the post).
2. Myanmar: Myanmar is a lower middle-income country in Southeast Asia. It is also a new country within the scheme, Fellows were first posted there in 2016, and has had eight Fellows with two of them terminating their fellowships early.
3. Nigeria: Nigeria is a fragile, conflict-affected state in West Africa. There have been nine Fellows posted since 2015 with four early leavers and one reassigned (it has the highest rate of non-completion of the four countries in its category). It no longer provides placements in ministries, but rather in other state government agencies.
4. Rwanda: Rwanda is a medium-sized country in East Africa. It has an established fellowship programme with a large number of Fellows since 2015 (19) no re-assignments and only 3 early terminations. Both statisticians and economists have been posted.

Given the evaluation's theory-based approach, we conducted a contribution analysis to examine the findings emerging from the country case studies, and interrogate the programme Theory of Change, pathways to outcomes and impacts, and Fellows' contributions against other external factors.[16]

Listed below are three key limitations of our method and how we mitigated them in the delivery of this evaluation.

- Weak pre-existing available evidence: The central limitation of our evaluation was an initial absence of evidence on the components of the programme's Theory of Change which made an initial attempt to answer evaluation questions difficult before primary data collection. We mitigated this by using a contribution analysis which makes a judgement on the strength of the existing evidence before purposefully trying to find more evidence where weak evidence exists. Additionally, we triangulated evidence from multiple sources and thus do not rely on any one source for answering our evaluation questions.
- Limited number of country case studies: We only included 4 country case studies out of a possible 37 that are in our sample. This number was specified in the Terms of Reference to the evaluation and was largely determined by the budget available. This posed a risk that there is an overemphasis of our findings from these countries at the expense of the others. We mitigated this by interviewing key stakeholders (such as former Fellows and donor staff) who have working knowledge of the ODI Fellowship Scheme in countries outside of our case study list.
- Interviewee sampling bias: Our sampling approach for key informants to interview is a combination of purposeful sampling and snowball sampling. The limits of snowball sampling are that because ODI stakeholders were our first key interviewees, the interviewees referred by the ODI staff could have an overly positive impression of the programme's impact and effectiveness and posed a risk of biasing the results. To limit this potential bias, we also used a type of purposeful sampling where interviewees were selected by the evaluation team and the FCDO to gain a broader scope of opinions by snowballing from the interviews with initial global interviewees and through suggestions of interviewees from the FCDO.

2.3 Stakeholder engagement

The evaluation was managed by the FCDO's Senior Responsible Officer. The evaluation team reports directly to the evaluation management team formed by Dawn Lindsay (Programme SRO), Gary Cassidy,

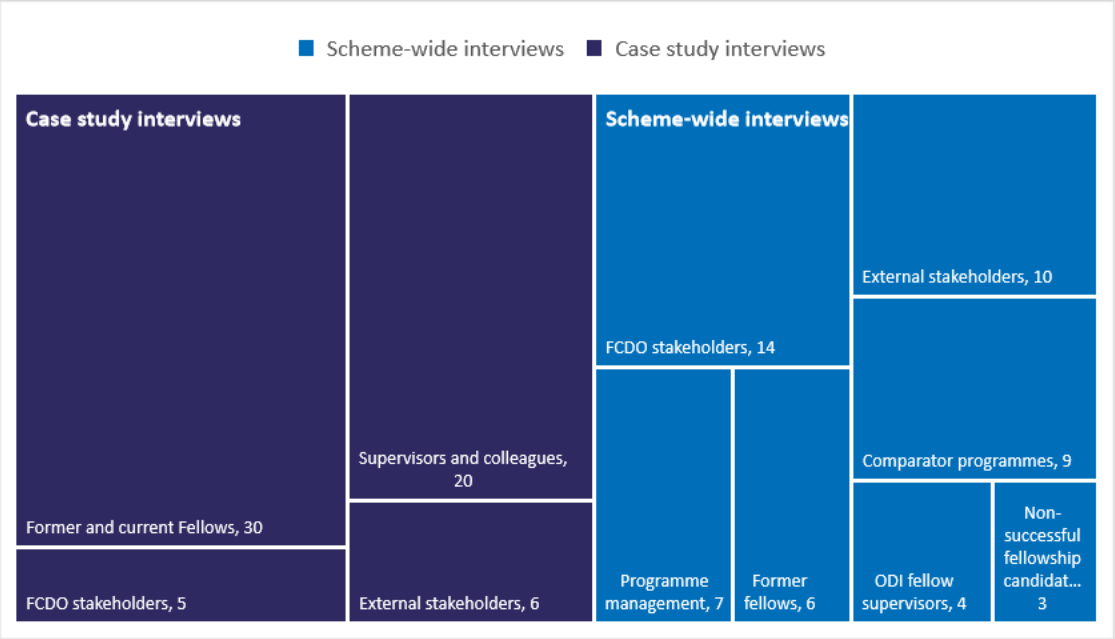
[16] Mayne, J. (2008) *Contribution analysis: An approach to exploring cause and effect.* ILAC Brief 16 p.4

Andrew Shaw, Paula McLeod, Joanna McGowan and Avril McLellan. Relevant stakeholders to the evaluation include the FCDO's Research and Evidence division (RED), the FCDO's Evidence and Capability Department, and the ODI Fellowship Scheme. The evaluation team has engaged with the FCDO regularly during the evaluation process through regular catch ups. The involvement of the ODI management has been key in conducting this evaluation and ensuring ownership, alignment, and mutual accountability.[17] Moreover, we did not face any interference in conducting this evaluation.

We consulted stakeholders in the UK and multiple fellowship countries to understand the effectiveness of the delivery model and impact of the scheme, as well as the contextual factors affecting its success. We conducted remote case studies in four fellowship countries – Guinea-Bissau, Myanmar, Nigeria and Rwanda – and hosted an online survey for Fellows, and local colleagues and supervisors.

Our sample of stakeholders interviewed includes 120 stakeholders with 53 scheme-wide interviews and 67 interviews for the country case studies: Guinea-Bissau (22); Myanmar (10); Nigeria (14); Rwanda (21). Below, we outline the number of stakeholders interviewed by stakeholder type.

Figure 5: Sample size by stakeholder type

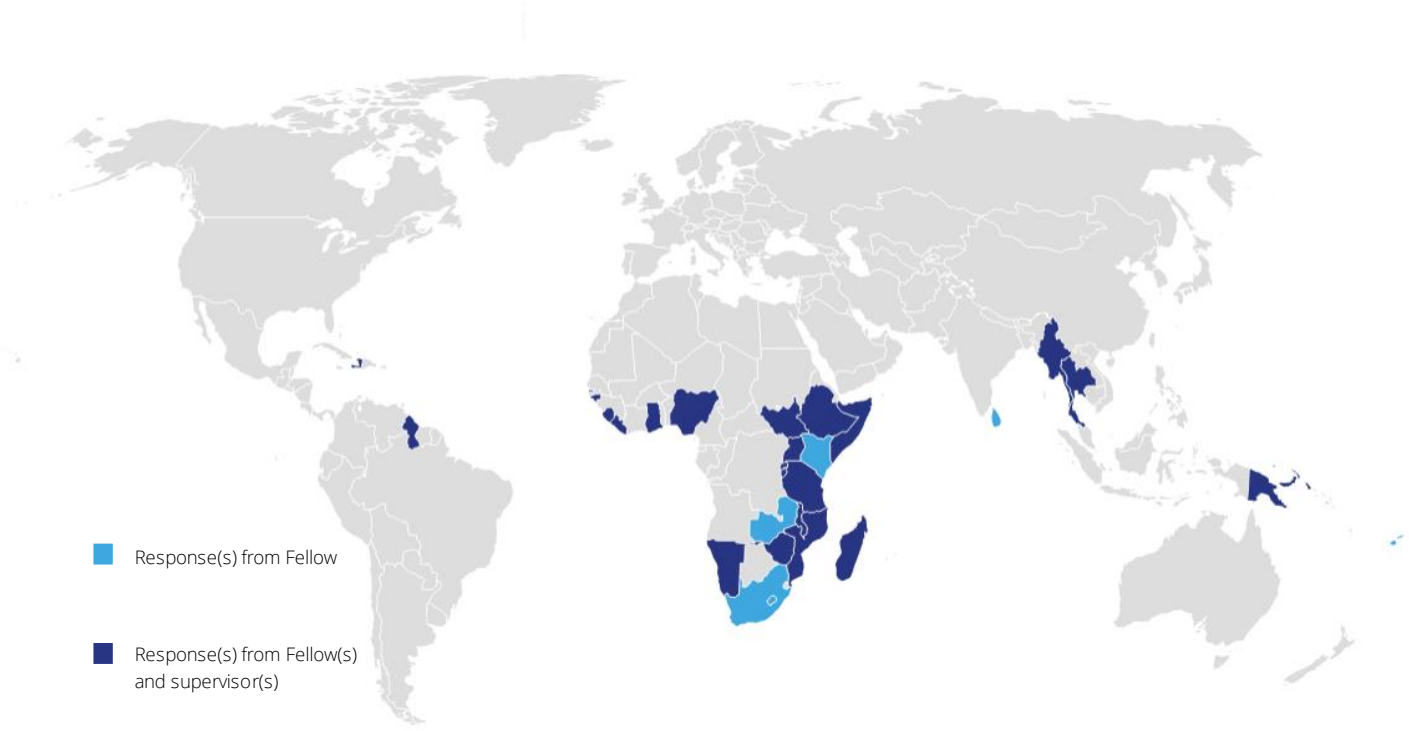


We faced no significant challenges in engaging stakeholders to conduct the survey[18]. We did, however, face a few challenges in engaging stakeholders suggested by the ODI management team to be interviewed who argued that their involvement with the scheme was outdated and they were not able to provide relevant insights for the review period. Our survey was shared with all Fellows and supervisors from cohorts between 2015 and 2020 and includes 281 Fellows and 142 supervisors with response rates of 79% and 55% respectively. High completion rates for Fellows (89%) and supervisors (80%) gave us confidence in the robustness of our survey findings. More detail on the interview methodology and how the survey was administered is provided in Annex 1. Details on the demographics of the survey respondents is provided on the next page.

[17] OECD (2005), *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*. Available at: link

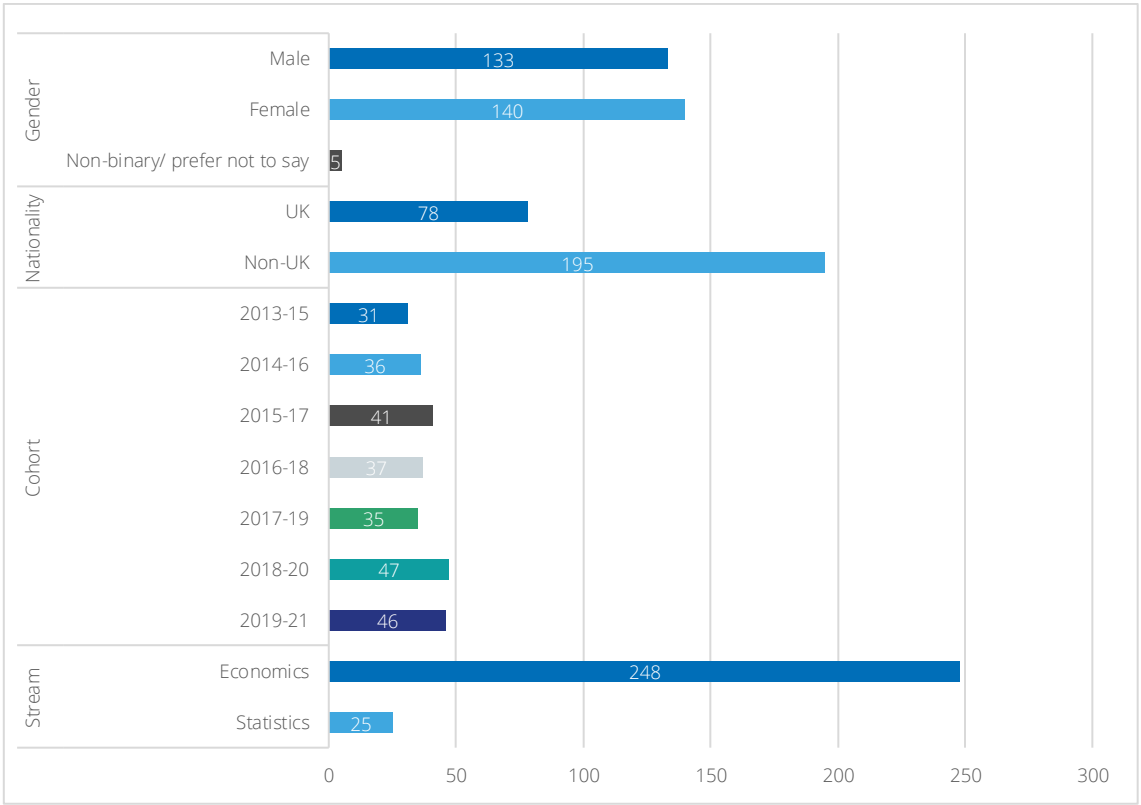
[18] Due to the ongoing global pandemic all of all of our scheme wide interviews were conducted as phone or video-calls using MS Teams. Our country case study interviews were a combination of in person (socially distanced) and remote interviews. We think there were negligible negative effects on the evaluation; indeed the nature of online interviews allowed us to conduct more interviews (120) than we originally planned (100).

Figure 6: Survey responses: all fellowship countries over review period



Note: Countries not shown – Albania and India (no responses), Bangladesh (only supervisor response)

Figure 7: Characteristics of Fellows surveyed



Notes: streams not shown but represented in survey: financial inclusion (3 responses), antimicrobial resistance (2).

Findings

3.0 Relevance

In this chapter we assess how relevant the ODI Fellowship Scheme model is in supporting low- and middle-income countries to build capacity that will contribute to improved policy-making decisions.

3.1 The problem statement: Capacity constraints and retaining technical staff in host organisations

In this section, we explore extent to which developing country governments struggle to attract and retain technical staff of high calibre who can contribute to better policy decisions. A repeated point raised in previous FCDO annual reviews of the scheme was the need to review whether the scheme's aim remained relevant to the current context. Given that the scheme was established 58 years ago, and its stated aim has changed very little over time, this is a reasonable concern.

In the FCDO's 2015 business case for the scheme, the Theory of Change states that countries with high poverty levels lack skilled staff for economic and wider public management. According to the business case, '*developing countries face multiple and complex decisions over the assessment of needs, policy and programme effectiveness and resource allocation, which economists and statisticians can contribute to through the technical skills they bring*'.

In September 2020, a theory of change workshop was held and ODI and FCDO staff explained the need to revise the existing problem statement to acknowledge that the ODI Fellowship Scheme aims to fill gaps in capacity in developing countries with varying levels of development and that the size and type of challenges faced in different countries varies depending on their degree of development. As such, workshop participants suggested to revise the problem statement to: 'Countries at different stages of development face challenges to recruit and retain civil servants for economic and wider public management'.

In this evaluation we tested the revised problem statement and found that in most contexts where the ODI Fellowship Scheme operates capacity constraints related to the recruitment and retention of high-calibre staff remain. The evaluation team found strong evidence that capacity gaps exist – civil services either struggle to recruit staff with the necessary skills with the wages they can offer, or they struggle to find the skills available in their country at all. In countries with acute gaps in capacity there can be high expectations on stretched civil servants to deliver as well as challenging political environments. Many stakeholders highlighted that in these cases the challenge of embedding certain technical skills through technical assistance and capacity provision is all the more difficult.

Because the ODI Fellowship Scheme operates in such a wide variety of contexts, we cannot provide systematic understanding of how capacity constraints vary across countries. However, we do provide an assessment of capacity constraints based on qualitative interviews conducted with stakeholders in several countries of operation, including the four country case studies.

We found clear evidence that the capacity constraints of different organisations hosting Fellows varied greatly in the skills gaps they faced. Some struggle to hire civil servants with basic skills, some struggle to hire civil servants with specialised technical skills, and others struggle to retain skilled staff.

There were differences in the constraints faced across countries. For example, in Guinea-Bissau some institutions struggle to hire staff with even basic literacy, numeracy or computer skills. Fellows in Guinea-Bissau highlighted that continuous public sector strikes in the country were a result of poor working conditions and low and intermittent wages, and that this put a strain on institutional capacity. Effective public recruitment was constrained by political patronage in Nigeria and Liberia, and by nepotism in Myanmar. There was evidence that in Liberia nationals who studied abroad and returned were often treated with suspicion or as a threat to their managers, and they were given mundane tasks before they became demotivated and moved on.

The nature of capacity constraints also varies between organisations and ministries within the same country. Some institutions were also better at identifying their needs. It was common for national statistics offices to have a clearer understanding of the specific technical gaps they had and how a Fellow could add value. Other ministries however struggle to identify the exact skills that they are missing and are less able to articulate how they would utilise a Fellow. Some stakeholders highlighted that previously skills in economics were clear gap in developing country capacity, but that this is no longer the case, and that the fellowship needs to be more responsive to the most pressing skill needs of the countries it works in. Stakeholders in Rwanda highlighted that at higher levels of the Civil Service they have good capacity and that at lower levels they are weakest.

There is also strong evidence that host organisations face challenges in retaining motivated and driven staff that have the necessary soft skills to contribute to better policy decisions. Several Fellows surveyed by the ODI over the years stated that staff turnover due to low wages was one of the biggest challenges host organisations faced, and that this in turn affected Fellows' abilities to integrate and adapt to their role. Soft skills are also important for institutional development and there is ample evidence (from e.g. interviews with stakeholders in Ethiopia, Rwanda, Ghana and Guinea-Bissau) that the following are lacking in many instances: work ethic, organisational abilities and communicating with multiple parties (e.g. other ministries and donors). In several cases Fellows highlighted that some of their more talented colleagues, who could have taken over the responsibilities of Fellows, would leave their positions for better paid positions in international donor agencies.

Overall, interviewees highlighted that Fellows fill a wide range of crucial gaps and that there are many examples of Fellows contributing to important projects and being highly valued by host ministries. To see a thematic list of projects that Fellows have been involved in, see Section 6.2.2 Better economic, financial and public sector management. One of the key elements that is considered to make the scheme particularly relevant is the embeddedness of the Fellows, which contributes to building trust and strong institutional relations. Some interviewees highlighted the value of adding a statistics strand to the scheme as a way of responding to more specific capacity needs, and suggested the opportunity to develop further specialised strands such as digitalisation, climate and organisational management.

The ODI Fellowship was perceived to be one element within a wider universe of technical assistance and to address a particular and valued need. According to the Fellows surveyed, the organisations they worked at received other capacity building support including external training and courses (86% of respondents), support provided by external consultants (77%), support provided through other programmes (44%) and staff seconded to the organisation through other donors (43%).

Overall, there is limited evidence that the ODI conducts a systematic assessment of capacity gaps in the countries where it operates. It is proud of its demand-driven approach but there is a risk that sometimes a demand for a Fellow by a host organisation is too easily equated with a genuine identified skills gap. Further discussion of whether the scheme is genuinely 'demand driven' is covered in Section 5.1.

3.2 Host organisations' understanding of the aim of the scheme

The evaluation aims to assess what understanding host organisations have of the capacity building aims of the scheme and the distinctions they see between building capacity and filling capacity gaps. Based on qualitative interviews with supervisors and colleagues in host organisations across a wide range of countries, hosts do not tend to think in explicit terms of building vs providing capacity although they often recognise the roles that Fellows play in filling technical gaps, supporting (directly or indirectly) the growth of the abilities and skills of colleagues, and contributing to important programmes and policies. Overall, stakeholders thought that in cases where capacity gaps are large, the distinction is not always appropriate.

When Fellows were asked in our survey what they saw as the role of an ODI Fellow, their answers covered several things including capacity support, supporting teams in improving technical skills, bringing dynamism, building relationships and supporting policy-making, amongst others. Some of the responses

acknowledged that capacity development is not always possible and depends on the context. Others mentioned gaps in capacity that Fellows can help to fill.

Survey responses from supervisors and colleagues broadly agreed with Fellows, although there were fewer explicit mentions of capacity building. Some respondents highlighted how an ODI Fellows' role is to support the objectives of the organisation they are working for, as well as policy development, while providing technical support, technical backstopping, sharing knowledge and mentoring colleagues.

> *"The role of the ODI Fellows is to contribute to the development of the country in which they are serving. In many cases, this involves supporting improved economic and social policies, as well as helping implement these policies. The ODI Fellows play vital roles in shaping policy choices."* – Supervisor

The motivations for requesting a Fellow varied significantly. In Myanmar, we found that in some host organisations, supervisors have a clear understanding of both what they want to achieve and the role that a Fellow will play in helping them to achieve these results. By contrast, other organisations had a less clear understanding:

> "*They had lots of expectations but struggled to articulate them or plan… [the Executive Director] had all these ideas but couldn't land them into concise tasks or delegate projects. They didn't have this experience.*" – Recent Fellow

There were several examples across Sub-Saharan Africa (e.g. Nigeria) where there was a clear expectation that a Fellow could fill a gap on something that existing staff could not do. In many cases (e.g. Rwanda, Ethiopia, Malawi) we found strong examples of host organisations requesting Fellows to fill a gap temporarily, but in others there appears to have been an overreliance on a stable stream of Fellows to fill this gap on a more long-term basis.

When surveyed Fellows were asked what they thought their ministry or agency's main motivations for taking on a Fellow were, most said to fill specific gaps in capacity (78%). Others thought it was to recruit someone with high-quality education and experience (57%), to fill current inadequate technical skills (57%) and to build the skills and motivations of colleagues (54%). 42% thought it was to recruit someone with high levels of energy and motivation, while only 10% thought it was motivated by the salary subsidy.

Stakeholders thought there was potential to further tailor the approach that the ODI takes in engaging with host organisations and communicating the aim of the scheme.

3.3 The ODI's understanding and communication of scheme aims

In the FCDO's 2019 Annual Review, the ODI committed to creating clear objectives on capacity development with each Fellow.[19] To date, the ODI have developed a capacity building statement and it has a list of types of capacity, but further work is needed to operationalise it and link it to the performance management of the Fellows. A similar scheme, the Oxford Policy Fellowship, has a much more nuanced and multi-faceted understanding of what capacity and capacity development are, which, by comparison, makes the official ODI understanding appear rather under-developed. There is a lack of agreement within the ODI on exactly what the aim of the scheme should be and no clear and official definitions of capacity development, capacity filling and institutional strengthening.

Perhaps related to this we also found that the ODI does not appear to emphasise or explicitly communicate the FCDO's capacity development aims of the scheme, to either Fellows or host organisations. This has resulted in some tension between the team at the ODI and the team responsible for the scheme at the FCDO, the fellowship's largest donor. The FCDO management team has, over time, pushed for improvements to the scheme in, for example, performance management, but feels that it is often met with some resistance from the ODI. The explanation the ODI gives for resisting has been that after Fellows have been selected, matched and placed, their performance management is largely the responsibility of the

[19] DFID (2020) *Overseas Development Institute (ODI) Fellowship Scheme 2015-2020 Annual Report*. link

national employer. This has been described by multiple stakeholders as a deliberate 'firewall' to protect the integrity of the Fellows and preserve the trust of employers that Fellows are answering to and not driven by the agenda of the UK government. Although this trust is important, some stakeholders thought the firewall was overly restrictive and preventing necessary change.

For these reasons, the ODI management team does not have clear expectations of what each Fellow should achieve during their placement. Our scheme-wide desk review showed that capacity building has not been given sufficient emphasis in the scheme and that host organisations have variable expectations of the role of Fellows.[20] Documentation shared with employers (the ODI's terms and conditions for host employers) is not clear about the capacity building aims of the scheme, only stating that '*the purpose of the scheme is to provide high-calibre staff at the junior professional level (hereafter referred to as 'ODI Fellows') as technical assistance where gaps in local expertise exist. Under the scheme, ODI recruits economists and statisticians to work for two years in the public sectors of developing countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific*."

When interviewing Fellows, we discovered many that were unaware of these objectives in their induction and during their placement and that a lack of specific objectives around capacity building meant they had not attempted to systematically change the capacity of those around them. In a few instances, Fellows considered that the framing of their objectives during the induction week had a 'colonial aftertaste' and that the scheme should modernise its presentation and objectives. Several stakeholders highlighted that a change in narrative was needed to ensure the scheme is presented as a cross-learning opportunity.

The lack of clarity on what capacity building is, and how it works best appears to represent an important missed opportunity for learning. One stakeholder argued that the ODI Fellowship Scheme should have been learning from the Fellows' experiences and contributing to the debates on best practice in ODA technical assistance, but that it had largely missed this learning opportunity for the last 58 years. In turn, a greater understanding of what capacity development is, and how to deliver it most effectively, could lead to more effective support to ministries (and the development of a clearer framework for attributing results to individual Fellows, the scheme and its donors).

3.4 Relevance of the ODI Fellowship Scheme's aim to FCDO priorities

The UK Government has continuously supported the ODI Fellowship Scheme almost since its inception in 1963. In its latest business case dating from 2015, the ODI Fellowship Scheme is considered a good fit with the FCDO's strategic objectives, and specifically in supporting two key FCDO priorities: economic management for poverty reduction and good data to inform good decision-making. Evidence from stakeholder consultations also highlighted the value of the ODI Fellowship Scheme in providing the UK with soft power.

A review of other FCDO-funded technical assistance programmes found that they frequently articulated both a framework of objectives for capacity development in economic management and the role of technical assistance to achieve these objectives. In each of the countries, the need for improvements in economic management was identified as central to the prospects for poverty reduction.[21] On this point this evaluation found strong evidence that the role played by Fellows in ministries central to economic development contributes directly to supporting policies and strategies and strengthened institutional capacity that could lead to poverty reduction. There is also strong evidence of Fellows contributing to collecting, collating, managing and constructing good data for decision-making, in particular through the statistics stream, and that this is a base for better decision-making. However, in many cases Fellows acknowledged that uptake of data for decision-making was politicised and challenging for Fellows to overcome.

[20] See DFID's 2015 Internal Review, interviews with supervisors for the 2019 Annual Review, documentation provided for host employers and documentation advertising the Scheme to prospective Fellows.
[21] DFID (2006) *Technical Cooperation for Economic Management: Synthesis Report.* link

During the evaluation, some stakeholders however argued that the link between the capacity provided by Fellows and poverty reduction was too far removed and did not provide a strong enough justification to continue funding the scheme. This view is perhaps because the ODI Fellowship Scheme does not communicate the impact that it has. As explained in Section 6.0, the causal pathways from the inputs of the scheme to a reduction in poverty are indirect and rely on a number of assumptions.

Stakeholders also highlighted the considerable soft power that the scheme gives UK institutions in certain countries. The scheme is seen by many as a well-suited programme to contribute to strengthening Global Britain and new FCDO priorities. Several stakeholders highlighted how the scheme was envied by other countries such as France or Canada for its diplomatic value. Others were surprised to find out that the ODI Fellowship is mostly funded by UK aid and argued that the UK should capitalise more on its role. One stakeholder argued that the current modality helped the UK Government in its own recruitment: the "*FCDO would be foolish to make it a south-south scheme…the current design of the scheme goes in line with current politics. When recruiting statisticians, you have a ready-made pool of prepared people*." Moreover, a UK Government stakeholder in the South Pacific, explained that the scheme is the strongest soft power tool for the UK, buying the UK "*enormous, goodwill and getting us a seat at the table"*, which is considered a key tool for diplomacy in the region. Other strategic stakeholders relayed that in some countries the scheme is seen as a part of the history of the relations between two countries. Finally, a senior stakeholder warned of the danger of cutting funding to the scheme, arguing that no longer sending Fellows to support key ministries in a country could damage diplomatic relations with the UK. They emphasised the very high cost of re-establishing trust and the need for strategic engagement.

Several stakeholders highlighted that, given its dual objective of preparing economists and statisticians for a career in development, the fellowship is unmatched in its potential to prepare high-calibre professionals for roles in development, and this brings much value to the UK by preparing a pipeline of strong development professionals. The fellowship is considered incredibly relevant to Fellows' careers. Most interviewees argued that Fellows are better development professionals because they have a better understanding of the challenges faced by civil servants in developing countries.

The scheme is aligned with FCDO's seven key global priorities which were outlined in 2020. There is strong evidence of contribution towards four of the objectives: (i) Open societies and conflict resolution, (ii) Global health security (iii) Science, research, technology, and (iv) Trade and economic development; and some evidence of contribution towards the further three: (i) Climate change and biodiversity, (ii) Girls' education, and (iii) Humanitarian preparedness and response.

FCDO further committed to focusing programme delivery on countries where the UK's development and security interests align, including the Indo-pacific and ASEAN regions to amplify the UK's influence around the world. Whilst not all of the Scheme's postings are within FCDO priority countries, a significant number are located in sub-Saharan Africa and the Indo-pacific region.

4.0 Effectiveness

In this chapter we assess how effective the ODI's delivery model is in delivering the scheme's intended results.

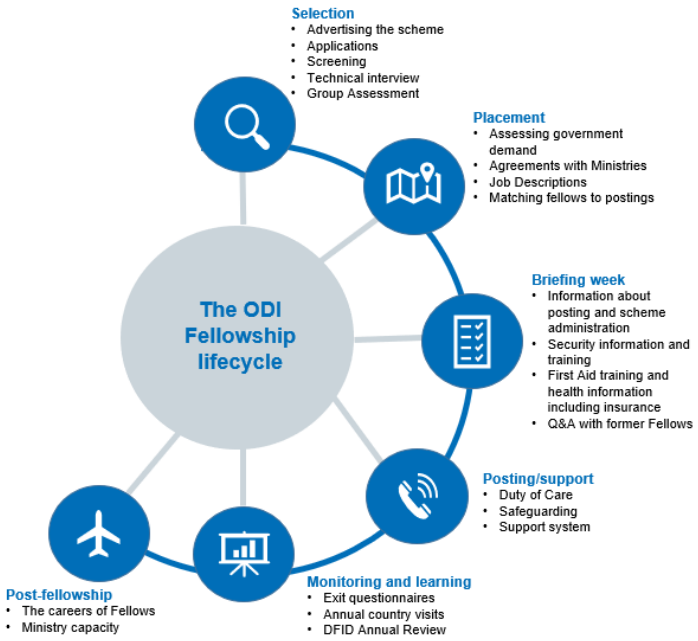
In the sub-sections we answer the following five evaluation questions:

1. Identification and matching: How robust is the process of identifying posts from existing and new host organisations, and matching candidates to them?
2. Induction and onboarding: How is induction and onboarding managed? How well are Fellows prepared for their roles and personal responsibilities during the scheme, including the provision of pastoral care?
3. Performance management: How robust is placement management, objective setting and performance monitoring by both the ODI Fellowship Scheme team and line managers?

4. Support during placement: What support is available to Fellows during placements?
5. Safeguarding: To what extent does the scheme consider the safeguarding and duty of care of Fellows, conduct necessary due diligence and communicate roles and responsibilities regarding safeguarding?

We align these questions with the different stages of the ODI Fellowship Scheme lifecycle: selection; placement; preparation; posting; monitoring and learning; and post-fellowship (covered in Section 8).

Figure 8: The ODI lifecycle



4.1 Identification of placements and matching of candidates

Overall, Fellows and supervisors expressed satisfaction with the identification of placements and matching of Fellows to posts, but the current approach risks a disconnect between Fellows selected for their high-quality technical skills and postings which are more soft skill intensive.

Identifying high-quality placements:

The ODI's management conducts due diligence visits to each country before a potential post is taken forward, and this process has screened out a total of 11 potential fellowship countries since 2015. However, it is not very systematic. Country strategies developed in 2015 outline how the ODI engages with host organisations, but these strategies do not include any long-term planning or guidance around how to assess success. Only in 2019 did the ODI produce a definitive list of criteria for making assessments around whether to take a potential post forward. The criteria are made up of 15 questions which are summarised below.

ODI Fellowship Scheme post criteria:

- Questions 1 and 2 check whether there is clear demand for additional economic and statistical capacity.
- Questions 3, 4, 5 and 12 check whether Fellows will work under a local supervisor and have access to local counterparts with a good understanding of the scheme for the full duration of the posting.
- Question 6 checks whether the host is likely to fulfil local contractual, salary and administrative obligations.

- Questions 7 and 8 check whether previous Fellows have been successful.
- Questions 9, 10 and 11 check if there would be any specific language, technical or gender considerations.
- Questions 13, 14 and 15 more broadly question the scope for capacity building, the likelihood of disruptive events occurring or dependence on the scheme being created.

The ODI does not fill in a sheet for each post and there is no scoring system, but the expectation is that, if all the above criteria are met, a post is taken forward. An example of a placement visit report (Rwanda, 2019) was not very thorough. For example, it recommended placing another Fellow in the Ministry of Trade and Industry but gave no explanation as to why or what the role would be. As a result, not all ineffective placements are successfully identified during the screening process. The first three fellows posted to Gambia in 2017 terminated early, for example. Survey responses indicated that it took longer for Fellows posted to new fellowship countries to find out what kind of tasks they could perform and found it more difficult to effectively integrate in their organisation without an existing in-country network. Whilst comparator programmes such as the Oxford Policy Fellowship identify their placements through a similar approach, previous reviews of the ODI Fellowship Scheme have called for improvements to the system of country visits to better assess demand for Fellows, the ability to effectively utilise a Fellow, and to understand local context.

Selecting high-quality candidates:

Overall, the interview and selection process is performing well. It involves an online application, reviewed by ODI management staff, followed by a selection day in which candidates take part in a short interview that includes an economist or statistician from FCDO and a senior external economist. The selection day also includes a group assessment containing technical exercises and situational judgement tests developed over time to mimic challenges that Fellows often face in-post. The selection process is considered among the most demanding for graduate economists in terms of technical skills, but the emphasis placed on soft skills has evolved over time. This evolution has helped to strengthen the process considering the variability in the degree of technical economics or statistical knowledge required across postings.

Matching successful candidates to appropriate postings:

Candidates are selected before the ODI receives job descriptions from host organisations, at which time there is a pool of confirmed candidates with the right mix of technical and soft skills to perform in a variety of postings. There are specialist strands for statistics, financial inclusion and antimicrobial resistance, but the majority of Fellows are early-career economists with no particular specialism. Fellows can inform scheme management of countries they are not prepared to go to, and these preferences, along with specific language skills and country experience are the primary dimensions with which the ODI determines where to place Fellows. This pooling approach contrasts with more targeted approaches used by comparable resident advisor model schemes, such as the Oxford Policy Fellowships (OPF) and Fleming Fund Fellowships (FFF). The box below describes the OPF and FFF approaches, which representatives interviewed considered to be effective for involving host organisations in selection and reducing the potential for mismatch between job descriptions and actual responsibilities.

Figure 9: Comparator approaches to matching

How do others match candidates to postings?

The **Oxford Policy Fellowship** reaches out to host organisations to identify the specific skills they need and uses its selection process to find candidates with the skills and experience to fit those needs. Some selected candidates interview directly with host organisations. The OPM has a standard Terms of Reference that is shared with hosts and Fellows that both gives a realistic description of the role of the job whilst allowing Fellows a broad remit. The **Fleming Fund Fellowship** works with institutions in partner countries to develop bespoke packages of support, where the profile of Fellows and the number and length of fellowship placements are tailored according to the specific capacity development needs of host ministries identified as needing additional capacity in antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

Whilst these alternative approaches have their benefits, the ODI's approach to matching is generally considered good practice for allocating a limited number of postings that vary in terms of attractiveness, whilst minimising the administrative burden on host organisations. Most of the Fellows surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed that their posting was well-reflective of their technical skills and qualifications (75%), policy interests (71%) and personal preferences (73%). Where criticisms of the matching process were made by Fellows, they usually alluded to the high technical requirements of the selection process not aligning well with the actual requirements of postings. Job descriptions from host organisations vary significantly and not all postings are as demanding of technical skills as is the ODI Fellowship Scheme application process. Some survey respondents acknowledged a mismatch between their expectations of the role and the reality.

> *"There's absolutely no reason to send top graduates with cutting edge technical skills to vegetate in the backroom of a corrupt ministry. The technical requirements for my role could have been fulfilled by an A-level student."* – Fellow survey respondent

> *"[…] several Fellows in my cohort expressed feeling a disconnect between their highly technical qualifications and the more soft-skill intensive nature of the fellowship."* – Fellow survey respondent

Where criticisms regarding the matching process were made by supervisors, they usually alluded to a dissatisfaction over their level of involvement or the level of support the ODI provides to help them clarify their needs.

> *"In the selection of the Fellows, we mainly rely on the candidates' CVs, yet we feel this is not enough information to determine the skills, experience and other personality traits needed for the job. We would prefer additional information to allow for a rigorous selection process. Examples could be reference checks from previous employers and other references."* – Supervisor

> *"Usually, we prepare and share the job description with the scheme, but we do not receive feedback from the scheme on the submitted job description. Probably, the review and feedback from the ODI Scheme could help improve the job description and make it more specific and aligned to capacity building goals."* – Supervisor

Overall, evidence examined as part of this evaluation confirms that the selection and matching process is working reasonably effectively considering the lack of understanding around the individual needs of host organisations. The matching process is designed to recruit Fellows who have the skills and motivation to perform in any post, but a more rigorous, demand-driven approach to selection and matching may improve the overall impact of the scheme. One option for this could be for ODI to include supervisors in the interview process in a second round after Fellows have been shortlisted for specific roles.

4.2 Induction and onboarding process

In this section, we explore the effectiveness of the induction and onboarding process of the ODI Fellowship Scheme. Overall, we found a broadly positive view of the induction week, but room for improvement in terms of the content of the induction week as well as the onboarding process.

We explored the content covered by the induction week and found this to be relevant to the roles ODI Fellows were preparing for. The induction week has a series of sessions that Fellows attend in person including introductory sessions, technical, security-related sessions and country specific Q&A sessions with former Fellows. According to Fellows responding to the survey, a majority of Fellows argued that the Q&A with former Fellows was the most useful section, with 93% of respondents agreeing it was useful and some Fellows suggested that this session could be extended. Security training and the first aid training were considered useful (68% and 69%), but several Fellows suggested this could more clearly be linked to the contexts Fellows are working in. Some Fellows considered the security training to be too focused on conflict contexts and to not provide advice on the day-to-day challenges faced by Fellows. For instance, the security training framed the advice as if Fellows were going on short-term missions rather than two-year placements.

In addition to this, Fellows are provided with an induction handbook and country briefing documents which cover the terms and conditions of Fellows, pre-departure guidance, guidance whilst in post, medical assistance and post-fellowship guidance. We reviewed one ODI country's briefing note (for Guinea-Bissau in 2018). It was a 42-page, thorough briefing note. Fellows echoed these views and considered all relevant pre-departure documentation to be useful. This was echoed by Fellows in the survey with 82% of respondents agreeing and strongly agreeing with its usefulness. Moreover, Fellows considered that the briefing was clear in explaining the responsibilities of Fellows and the code of conduct (90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed). Findings from the case studies and the survey suggest that these briefings could be more practical, and some Fellows suggested allowing incoming Fellows to be in contact with supervisors and Fellows in their future placements to cover the more practical side of the briefing.

Finally, when asked in the survey, and in interviews, Fellows were less positive about the clarity that the induction week provided on the type of work they would be involved in (only 53% of Fellows surveyed agreed or strongly agreed with this statement)[22] and the expectations from the ODI around capacity development. Several Fellows suggested that it would be beneficial to have a day in the induction week focused on capacity development objectives, guidance on best practice and lessons learnt from former Fellows with another suggesting a 'crash course in how to be an effective civil servant'. In this case the alumni network could be leveraged more effectively. For example, a former Fellow helped to establish the World Bank's Bureaucracy Lab, a leading research centre on the constraints of and solutions to improved productivity in the Civil Service of developing countries.[23] The UK Civil Service, where many former Fellows work, also has extensive institutional knowledge of civil services.[24]

When examining comparator programmes, we found that Improving Global Health (IGH) fellowships incorporate country-specific breakout sessions into their three-day pre-departure training offer. Sessions are usually delivered three months in advance of postings, giving Fellows sufficient time to mentally prepare and reflect on the environment they are going to be working in. The induction session is designed to encourage Fellows to follow-up and reflect on the material covered over the three days. Moreover, the IGH training offer dedicates two of the three days to quality improvement and leadership training, which is delivered by an external specialist. This includes modules on quality improvement and project management, orchestrated self-assessments of personality type and personal leadership qualities, and

[22] It is worth noting that no significant differences were identified in the sub-group analysis between genders or ethnic groups in survey question 40. We found some differences for respondents who considered to have a disability, who were less positive about the clarity around their responsibilities and the usefulness of briefing materials, although the sample size of Fellows with a claimed disability is small (18 respondents in total, 7 with a physical disability and 11 with a mental health disability).
[23] World Bank Bureaucracy Lab (2021). link
[24] How UK Aid Learns (ICAI _ 2019) link. The OECD also has guidance on best practice. See 'Skills for a high performing civil service' OECD (2017), link

one-to-one feedback regarding how to approach the fellowship experience from this perspective. Previous IGH Fellows highly valued this aspect of the training and considered it crucial guidance for how to develop in their roles once posted.

In terms of the onboarding process of new Fellows, Fellows identified considerable gaps. The onboarding process is the responsibility of the host organisation and the quality of this process varied greatly from placement to placement (more details are provided in Section 5.3). In terms of Fellows' experiences, according to survey respondents, we found that only 24% of Fellows claimed to have received a structured induction from their host organisation, while 72% were introduced to colleagues and 73% were provided with the necessary equipment to work effectively. Only 46% had a sufficient pipeline of work prepared to start working on. This was corroborated by qualitative findings in case studies. For instance, we found that Fellows in Guinea-Bissau were expected to use their personal laptops to work. In Myanmar, Fellows claimed host organisations were well prepared with desks organised and clear tasks outlined, as well as an orientation session. A host organisation in Thailand included all Fellows in the organisation's onboarding process which consisted of a series of induction sessions, including training. In terms of supervisors' views, only 54% of supervisors and colleagues surveyed claimed the materials received from the ODI to prepare for the arrival of posted Fellows were useful.

Overall, Fellows claimed that they did not receive sufficient information about their host organisations pre-departure and would welcome more contact with supervisors prior to deployment. The ODI incorporated a formal handover process in 2017 with standardised handover notes being a new reporting requirement. Former Fellows were considered the greatest resource in the onboarding process, highlighting the importance of a clear handover process and the need to ensure that this process is done thoroughly.

'My feeling is that ODI did not know what my role would be pre-departure, so little could be done in that area. It relies on Fellows supporting each other, which works largely well, but fails if there are no Fellows or they are not cooperative.' – Fellow survey response

4.3 Objective setting and performance management of Fellows

In this section, we explore the professional support provided by the ODI and host organisations during placements. Interviews with current and former Fellows across the breadth of the scheme indicate that the ODI does not provide Fellows with support in the form of regular objective setting and performance monitoring, but the quality of support received from host organisations is an important driver of possible development impact. There is a risk that placements without structured line management undermine the overall effectiveness of the scheme.

During a two-year fellowship, ODI management checks in with Fellows on several occasions through progress notes, country visits, quarterly check-ins by email and end of fellowship (EoF) questionnaires. Standardised country visit reports are used by ODI management to assess Fellow performance, and when visits are not possible this has been done through a standardised fellowship appraisal form since 2015. However, this provides little support and guidance to Fellows around their performance and objectives, and performance management is rarely discussed during ODI visits. 62% of Fellows surveyed disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement "my performance was systematically assessed against clear criteria". Fellows are encouraged to contact the ODI only when necessary, rather than for ongoing support with setting objectives and monitoring their progress towards building capacity during postings.

"ODI should do more with us to check on progress. It is left to the individual. Some people might need more structure." – Recent Fellow

While some Fellows considered that the independence and flexibility afforded to them by fellowship scheme management enabled them to be effective in their roles, others cited a lack of guidance as a key constraint to them delivering effective capacity building. Feedback from previous EoF questionnaires

consistently indicates that some Fellows have a demand for more monitoring and management by the ODI, including objective-setting and more regular progress evaluations. 29% of respondents in the 2016-18 cohort agreed with the statement "Would you like more contact with ODI during your fellowship?" Fellows interviewed and surveyed as part of this evaluation confirm that this is still the case. More could be offered to proactively monitor Fellows' progress and performance and offer support to help them develop in their roles.

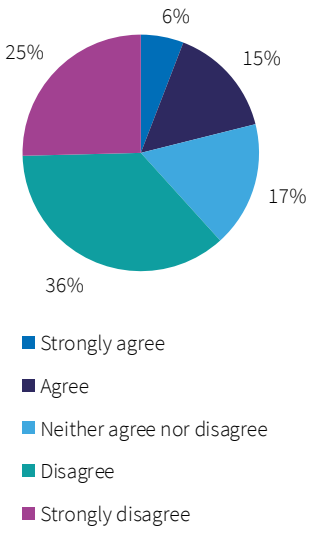
> *"The thing I've realised is that I didn't have anyone to learn from. Fellows need a bit of extra support to grow in their roles, otherwise you get attrition after the initial enthusiasm wears off."* – Recent Fellow

Furthermore, the hands-off approach taken by the ODI places the onus of the Fellow being integrated and supported to grow in their role on the host organisation, yet expectations around line management are not consistent across all placements, and structured professional development in the form of objective-setting and performance feedback is not commonly provided by in-country line managers. Poor line management was considered a significant constraint (reported by at least 50% of Fellows) to high-quality work in 12 fellowship countries (Ethiopia, Haiti, Lesotho, Liberia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Vanuatu, Zimbabwe). Furthermore, the charts below demonstrate that most Fellows either disagreed or strongly disagreed with statements indicating that they received regular feedback and performance assessments from their host organisation.

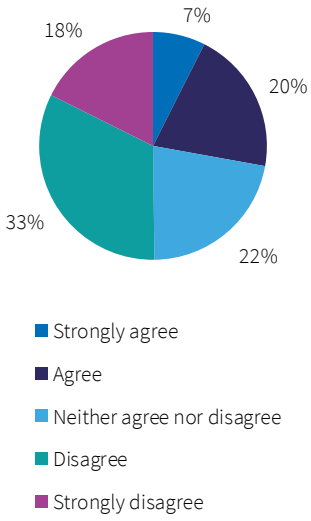
An alternative source of professional support for Fellows is the network of other Fellows in each fellowship country. Other Fellows in-country are consistently seen as an effective pastoral support system (see Section 5.3), but the system for Fellows to provide each other with professional support is not particularly formalised. When asked what could be done to improve the scheme, a common suggestion from the Fellows surveyed was to establish more formal channels to provide Fellows with structured professional mentoring in-post. Interviews with comparators generated examples of where other resident adviser model schemes had sought to strengthen the performance management of fellows.

Figure 10:Does the ODI effectively assess performance?

"My performance was systematically assessed against clear objectives.".



"I received regular feedback on my performance.".



Source: Survey of Fellows: Q63: How much do you agree with the following statements regarding your ministry/agency's approach to line management during your posting?, N=255

Figure 11: Comparator approaches to performance management

How do others monitor the performance and support the professional development of Fellows?

IGH and FFF provide Fellows with structured mentoring, for example IGH leverages and trains some of its former Fellows to mentor current Fellows in their posting country. IGH mentors provide their support on a voluntary basis, and as a minimum they are required to take part in initial training, maintain regular contact with one current Fellow, attend a session with the management team once a year (to stay up-to-date on any changes to the scheme), and take part in the two briefing sessions that take place each year. They provide individual personal support to the IGH Fellow before, during and after their placement, helping each Fellow to identify learning opportunities and provide support and challenge to them throughout their fellowship experience. OPF actively monitors the activities of Fellows, for example by obligating them to report monthly timesheets and bi-monthly reflection diaries with categories including general policy work and capacity development. The OPF management staff interviewed considered this information helpful to identify general trends, course-correct and intervene with additional support where necessary.

The emphasis placed on professional support by other schemes is reflective of the evidence suggesting that objective setting and performance management are crucial components of organisational productivity.[25] The ODI management's current approach therefore risks not maximising the productivity and ability of Fellows to contribute to sustainable capacity building. We consider the professional support provided by the ODI to be insufficient considering the inconsistency of approaches to line management across host organisations.

4.4 Support available to Fellows during placement

In this section we explore the support available to Fellows during their placements and its effectiveness. To do so we explore the evidence collected from the survey with Fellows and supervisors, interviews with Fellows, supervisors and the ODI management team. Overall, we have found that the ODI's approach to managing placements is very hands-off. The support provided is generally considered to be sufficient in a well-functioning placement. However, Fellows and supervisors have raised concerns in situations where Fellows faced challenges. In this section we explore the personal support provided by the ODI during placements, as well as the technical support and the support provided by other Fellows.

In terms of the support provided by the ODI during placements, we found that generally during the course of a two-year fellowship, the scheme's management would check in with Fellows on multiple occasions including two progress notes, one or two country visits, quarterly check-ins by email and end of fellowship questionnaires. We found examples of cases where exceptional circumstances led to more regular contact with the ODI, such as at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, when security incidents occurred in fellowship countries or when personal circumstances such as accidents or health concerns required it.

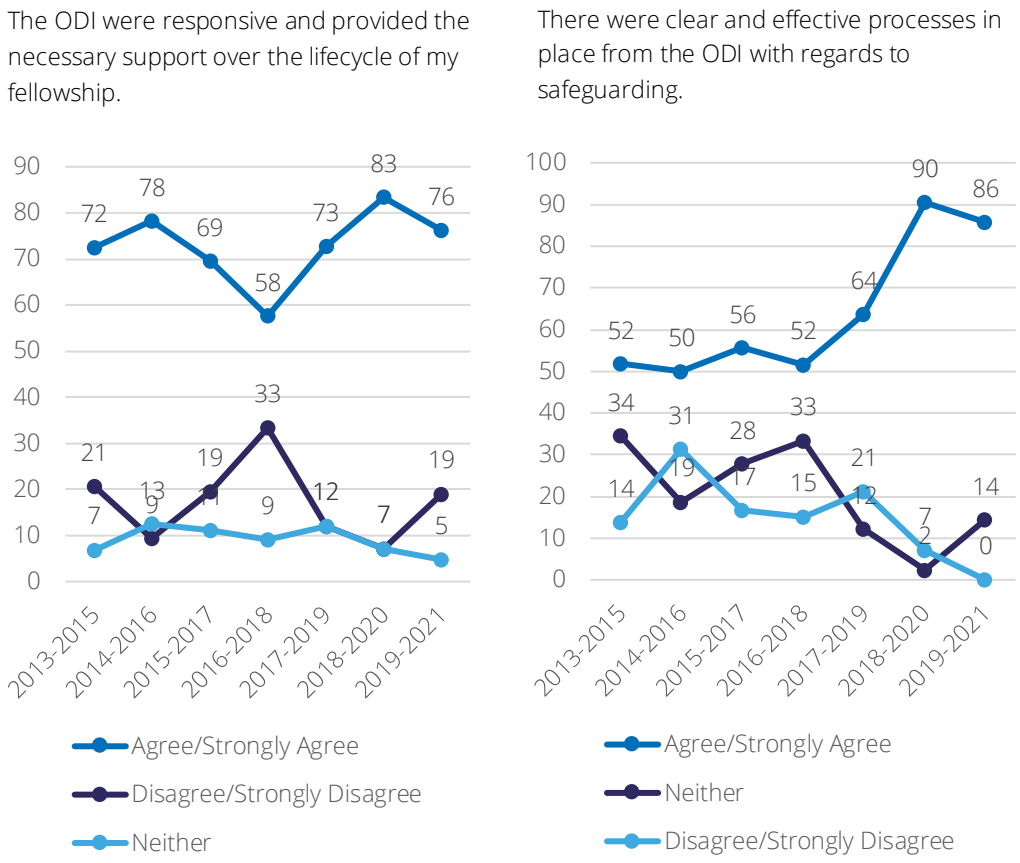
The majority of Fellows and supervisors considered the ODI management team to be responsive. In response to the statement: 'ODI were responsive and provided the necessary support over the lifecycle of my Fellowship', on average 73% agreed (36% strongly) and 9% disagreed (2% strongly). There is evidence that this indicator has achieved strong outcomes over the past three cohorts, after weaker outcomes were identified in 2015-17 and 2016-18. Support provided during placements was considered helpful in all case study countries, and many Fellows felt that the ODI struck an appropriate balance between being supportive and encouraging independence. Most Fellows appreciated the 'hands-off' approach of the ODI and felt that this approach was instrumental in ensuring that host organisations had ownership over the

[25] 'Does Management Matter? Evidence from India' (Bloom et al. (2013)

placements and allowed Fellows to develop trusting relationships. 64% of surveyed supervisors felt that the ODI was responsive and provided necessary support over the lifecycle of the fellowship, and 16% felt that it was only somewhat responsive.

> *"The strength of the fellowship is that they largely leave you to it – ODI doesn't interfere too much. It's better to have independence. If ODI had intervened regularly, it would have made distrust issues with [host organisations] more difficult."* – Fellow in Nigeria

Figure 12: Does the ODI provide the necessary support? (By cohort)



Source:: Survey of Fellows Q41: How much do you agree with the following statements regarding duty of care? Total N=248, cohorts vary between N=29 and N=42

Another key source of support identified by Fellows that was considered instrumental during their placements was the presence and support of other Fellows. Other Fellows in-country are consistently seen as a great support system and should be an important consideration when assigning Fellows. For instance, Fellows often look for accommodation together or are in contact through WhatsApp groups. Outgoing Fellows were also seen as key to supporting a handover process with incoming Fellows, both in their role and to adapt to their new location.

Despite this support provided by other Fellows, the evaluation has found evidence across multiple data sources that some Fellows would prefer more active support from ODI management.

> *"It could be better. They did a quarterly check in … using a form. I highlighted issues that I had had… was surprised that I gave a candid response and nobody from ODI picked up the phone. It felt like the check in was just about box-ticking."* – Fellow in Nigeria

Moreover, reviews and evaluations highlight areas where both the support with wellbeing and job placement, as well as technical support, could be enhanced.[26] This is supported by the evidence collected in our survey and interviews. External stakeholders and Fellows acknowledged that the ODI management team is very small, argued that the team had the best intentions and that it often worked out okay and claimed that the limited support provided was likely due to resource constraints and suggested that the scheme had too many Fellows for its capacity to support (see more detail in Section 9 under Efficiency).

Several Fellows highlighted that they would have preferred to have more regular check ins with the ODI management team or with an appointed responsible person in-country. Some Fellows highlighted challenging situations in which they would have welcomed more support from the ODI. For instance, one Fellow highlighted that he had not been paid his local salary for seven months of his fellowship and that this was not resolved until the ODI management country visit. Another Fellow was threatened by his ministry to revoke his visa if he did not accept a pay cut and claimed to not have received support from the ODI. In Nigeria, one Fellow even remarked that they felt the ODI did not do enough to provide support when their placement continued through the election period, a traditionally dangerous time in Nigeria with the possibility of airport closures. One Fellow pointed out that whilst friends of theirs in other organisations (such as the FCDO) were provided with detailed evacuation plans for their staff should the airport close, the ODI did not provide this.

According to Fellows' survey responses, key areas where Fellows would have welcomed more support included their personal wellbeing (covered in Section 5.5), logistical support related to their duty of care (also covered in Section 5.5), support in their placement roles, technical support and post-fellowship support.

Some Fellows highlighted that it took them up to six months to develop a clear role for themselves. While Fellows are expected to be proactive, more active engagement from the ODI on the management of their placements would have been welcomed in circumstances where their line managers were not supportive.

> *"Fellows don't get a great deal [of support from the ODI]. They leave you to it. They visit once a year and take you to dinner. They say, contact us if you need to. Partly because you are meant to be a local employee. But they could do more. They didn't cover whether you were meeting your objectives or needed training. … ODI should do more with us to check on progress. It is left to the individual. Some people might need more structure."* – Recent Fellow

Fellows also would have welcomed a clearer system for them to draw from technical support. This was seen as a clear missed opportunity from the ODI given its links to academics and practitioners in-country. Support and mentoring from ODI researchers appeared to be ad hoc and could have been structured better. Access to technical resources and training would also have been welcomed by Fellows to support their roles. While the language learning allowance was welcomed by Fellows, many were not able to access this when their country placement had English as an official language. Others considered that the language training should be a requirement for countries such as Myanmar or Guinea-Bissau where speaking the local language is considered essential to the success of the placement.

Moreover, some Fellows also raised the missed opportunity of not providing more post-fellowship support for outgoing Fellows. Some Fellows argued that more engagement from the ODI to ensure Fellows have a means to stay in touch as well as a mentoring scheme for Fellows to sign up to would have been welcomed.

[26] See Ecorys (October 2005) Review of ODI Fellowship; Coffey International Development (January 2009) Review of the ODI Fellowship Scheme; DFID (2015) Internal review of the ODI Fellowship Scheme 2012-15 and DFID Annual Reviews between 2016 and 2020.

4.5 Safeguarding and duty of care of Fellows

In this section we review the extent to which the scheme considers the safeguarding and duty of care of Fellows, conducts necessary due diligence, and communicates the roles and responsibilities regarding safeguarding. Recently, the ODI has made progress in several aspects of its approach towards safeguarding and duty of care. For example, in 2019 the ODI updated its safeguarding policy, and, in collaboration with the FCDO, included a new safeguarding session during the Fellow's briefing week. Furthermore, one of the programme managers of the fellowship took on the role of safeguarding officer (on a part-time basis), responsible for keeping a log of all safeguarding complaints and concerns reported by Fellows and ensuring that more attention is focused directly on the duty of care of Fellows. This is reflected in the clear increase over time in the number of respondents agreeing with the statement: 'There were clear and effective processes in place from the ODI with regards to safeguarding'. In the 2013–2015 cohort 52% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement and in the 2019–2021 cohort that has risen to 86%, as shown in Figure 12 above.

The fellowship's overall response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been viewed as successful, with feedback from Fellows acknowledging the promptness with which the ODI reacted, with Fellows evacuated wherever possible, and frequent advice and communication provided to Fellows who were not. The ODI convened a crisis management team (CMT) to formulate the COVID-19 strategy through weekly meetings. The scheme received no serious incident reports during the first quarter of 2020/21 and no cases of COVID-19 were registered. However, there were several issues reported pertaining to the response, such as the fact that host institutions were not consulted during the decision to evacuate Fellows.

Despite the improvements there is some evidence that it has not gone far enough and that some issues continue. The ODI safeguarding policy does not seem to adequately account for some issues including reports of bullying and sexual harassment. For example, previously a Fellow stated that they were told to report issues of bullying or harassment to their managers, but no advice was given on how to report these issues if their manager was the perpetrator, which they reported to have occurred. Although much improved, safeguarding has not been sufficiently institutionalised within the fellowship, and policies and practices remain incomplete. Although a safeguarding log has been introduced (which is shared with FCDO), it is not clear if all incidents logged are always satisfactorily resolved.

As a result, a couple of Fellows reported feeling 'lucky' that they had not faced a major incident, since they did not feel confident that the ODI would provide the necessary support in such a scenario. This is in part due to the limited contact that Fellows have with the ODI and further reflected in the lack of guiding documents or policies that the ODI has published pertaining to safeguarding. The ODI Fellowship Scheme's terms and conditions for host employers appears to be the only document setting out the responsibilities of and processes for hosts, and is only five pages long, but attempts to cover a large variety of topics. In contrast, comparator schemes have more rigorous systems. VSO, for example, has designed a legal framework at organisational level to establish clear obligations and clarify the responsibilities of volunteers and hosts across all of its programmes.

5.0 Equity

In this chapter, we assess how well the scheme ensures diversity and inclusion throughout the fellowship lifecycle.

In three sub-sections we answer three evaluation questions:

- How does the ODI Fellowship Scheme recruitment process aim to broaden access for harder to reach groups? Is this in line with best practice standards?
- To what extent are diversity and inclusion issues taken into account when matching Fellows?
- When Fellows are in place, to what extent is support provided in line with protected characteristics?

5.1 Diversity and inclusion in recruitment

This sub-section explores the extent to which the ODI Fellowship Scheme recruitment process aims to broaden access for harder to reach groups including those with protected characteristics (such as disabilities, sexual orientation, gender and race[27]), as well as those from lower household income levels, and how the scheme's efforts compare with standards of best practice. The scheme is open to candidates of all nationalities who have at least a master's degree in economics, statistics or a related field. There are currently two streams of fellowships: economics and statistics. The annual recruitment cycle begins in November and accepts online applications that are screened before a shortlist of applicants is invited to interview in London the following year (typically in February). Applicants successful at the interview stage are given either a firm offer, which guarantees the award of the fellowship, or a conditional offer which is dependent upon whether the fellowship team finds a suitable posting for the applicant. Posting allocations are, in turn, completed in June, with fellowships commencing between August and October.

The majority of Fellows surveyed indicated that they understood what to expect from the application process and that the assessment criteria was clear and relevant. Similarly, unsuccessful applicants interviewed as part of this evaluation did not view the process as ineffective or inaccessible. However, interviews with some Fellows highlighted that there was a lack of guidance about how to complete the written application form and how to prepare for the interview. Some Fellows who had applied to the scheme on more than one occasion but did not make it through the written application screening process, explained that they did not know how best to present their CV or describe their skills and experience the first time they applied.

Conversely, certain academic institutions (especially in the UK) have a long history of students successfully applying to become a Fellow and building up institutional knowledge and a rich network of former Fellows to consult with.[28] This support given by the alumni network of these institutions includes advice on how best to fill in the written application form, examples of previous interview questions, and in some cases mock interviews with former Fellows. Fellows who were successful from outside of these networks described that a lack of guidance or detail in the scheme's application process was a barrier to inclusion. During the online application there is an equal opportunities form, however it is not compulsory for candidates to complete, and it is not considered by the ODI during the shortlisting process.

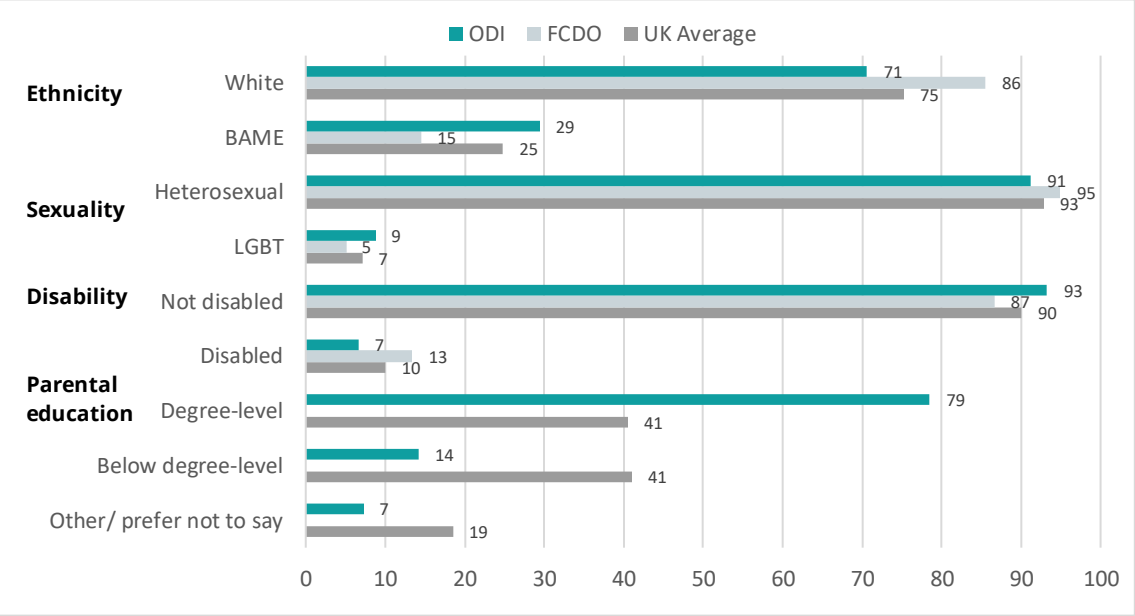
Although the fellowship collects and publishes data on successful applicants, it does not have a system for collecting and aggregating diversity data for all applicants or those who are invited to the interview. It is therefore challenging to assess how diverse the pool of applicants is or at which stage of the fellowship lifecycle any barriers to inclusion are greatest. For successful applicants the only data systematically collected, analysed and published are age, gender, nationality, undergraduate and postgraduate universities and years of work experience. This implies a lack of understanding of the reach of the fellowship for those with protected characteristics. The data collected on the past seven cohorts reveals that the gender balance is equal (49% female). Fellows also come from a broad range of nationalities: UK (30%), EU (39%), Asia (10%), Africa and Middle East (6%), North America (4%), South America (4%) and Oceania (4%). Moreover, the percentage of BAME Fellows (29%) is commendable compared with the figure at FCDO (15%). The rough proportion of Fellows from the Global South however is small (24%), which stands in contrast with some comparator schemes.[29]

Figure 13 reveals the diversity of the ODI, the FCDO, and UK postgraduate students. The central limitation of comparing the figures is that neither the FCDO, nor the Office for Students, Equality and Diversity publish data disaggregated by degree subject. Thus, we are comparing a sample of Fellows who were exclusively chosen from a pool of economics and statistics postgraduates, with samples that include all degree subjects. This makes comparison challenging as there is already extensive literature on the lack of diversity

[27] Protected characteristics, as defined by the UK Equality 2010, are: age, disability; gender re-assignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation. Link
[28] Across the 2015-2019 cohorts, nearly half of the Fellows completed their most recent postgraduate degree at either Oxford, Cambridge, LSE, UCL, or SOAS.
[29] For example 80% of Oxford Policy Fellows are from the Global South.

in the economics profession both in the UK[30] and the US.[31] Indeed, the FCDO has recently launched a new initiative with the explicit objective to make economics more diverse.[32]

Figure 13: How diverse is the fellowship?



Source: The figure above provides diversity data for ODI Fellows over the review period from our survey and compares this with FCDO published statistics[33]; and the UK national average for postgraduate students.

Despite this, the data above does imply that there is significant room for improvement when it comes to the diversity of Fellows, with respect to disability and socio-economic background. This claim is supported by the fact that the ODI does not prioritise the recruitment of under-represented groups. As an independent scheme the Fellowship is not obligated to comply with FCDO policies and strategies, however it could make efforts to more closely align with its Strategic Vision for Gender Equality and Disability Inclusion (2018–2023). This states that there should be a comprehensive disability inclusion plan in place. Furthermore, the Equal Opportunities Policy recommends that equality screening should take place, which does not occur in a thorough manner.[34]

Annex 7 explains further best practices for recruitment and details the extent to which such practices are achieved by the fellowship and comparable schemes.

5.2 Diversity and inclusion in the ODI's matching process

This sub-section explores the extent to which diversity and inclusion related issues are accounted for when matching Fellows to host institutions. The ODI aims to match Fellows based upon the skills that they hold (such as language skills and specific areas of thematic expertise) and the requirements of the hosts, as well as Fellows' preferences (Fellows are able to provide a list of countries that they would and would not like to be posted in and the type of ministry they would prefer to work in). The host institutions are provided with several potential Fellows' CVs and send back a ranked order of their preferences. On the basis of these

[30] Advani, A., Sen, S., and Warwick, R. (2020), *Ethnic diversity in UK economics.* Link; and Advani, A., Griffith, R., Smith, S. (2019), *Economics in the UK has a diversity problem that starts in schools and colleges* link
[31] Bayer, A., Rouse, C E., (2016), *Diversity in the Economics Profession: A New Attack on an Old Problem* Link; Akee, R. (2020), *The race problem in economics.* Link; and Rosalsky, G. (2020) *Economics Still Has A Diversity Problem* link
[32] The Next Generation Economics Competition link
[33] DFID diversity and inclusion annual report (2017-18) link; Office for Students, Equality and Diversity Student Data link
[34] Equality screening involves considering the likely or actual effects of employment policies and practices to ensure that the needs of different individuals (primarily those with protected characteristics) are accounted for.

preferences, the ODI award firm offers (to candidates who are highly ranked by at least one of the hosts) and conditional offers (to candidates ranking less highly who are yet to be allocated to a specific host). The matching process is conducted in a systematised manner, with Fellows rated on a set of 15 criteria. During this process however few considerations are made regarding protected characteristics unless a specific request is made by the Fellow themselves.

The feedback from Fellows reveals that the ODI needs to provide more extensive resources to enable Fellows to make informed decisions on their preferences. For instance, one of the Fellows in Myanmar stated that they were not given sufficient information on the political context of the country – there are deeply ingrained religious and ethnic divides, and during the placement there was a genocide taking place against the Rohingya Muslims. The Fellow argued that had a black or Muslim Fellow been posted, they could have faced severe discrimination and/or danger. By contrast, one Fellow made the ODI aware of his hearing issues and this was discussed with potential hosts to understand which posting would be most suitable. Similarly, some host organisations are known to be wheelchair accessible, however such considerations need to be understood and presented in a more systematised manner.

Several female Fellows have claimed that their contributions were constrained because of their gender – thus, it is important for the ODI to have a comprehensive understanding of where female Fellows are least restricted based upon their gender, as well as how to best manage these constraints. Not only will this produce the best results for the hosts, but it will also ensure that Fellows are comfortable during the scheme and any discrimination they face is minimised. These insights are supported by our survey which shows females facing more discrimination, bullying and harassment than men.[35]

The current system places too much of the burden on the Fellows themselves to research and understand whether a posting is suitable for them. There were many Fellows who felt they did not have sufficient time to consider whether to accept the posting they were offered, and this is especially important for those with protected characteristics.

5.3 Support provided to people with protected characteristics

This sub-section explores the extent to which support is provided to Fellows in line with protected characteristics. As noted in Section 4.4, the ODI has made substantial improvements to its safeguarding and duty of care procedures in recent years. It has given specific attention to addressing frequently raised concerns around a lack of support and feelings of isolation. For example, it introduced a 'buddy' system for new Fellows, and an additional internal travel allowance for Fellows in particularly remote locations (e.g. in Myanmar those posted in Naypyidaw were provided with an additional allowance to travel to Yangon or Bangkok during the weekends). In addition, the ODI has recently appointed a safeguarding officer who keeps a log of all relevant complaints submitted by Fellows. This responsibility has been adopted by an existing member of the management team and is not a new appointee. The numerous improvements to safeguarding procedures over the past four years appear to have translated into observable improvements in how Fellows perceive the support they receive from the ODI.

Although there are intrinsic risks related to employment overseas in developing countries, the FCDO has stated that there is still room for improvement in the ODI's safeguarding procedures. For example, Fellows commented that, even when reported, safeguarding risks were not always adequately addressed, and that they did not feel confident that the ODI had processes in place to support them, especially when the issues

[35] 16% of female respondents viewed discrimination as either somewhat of a constraint or a significant constraint to conducting their work during the Fellowship, whereas only 4% of male respondents reported it to be somewhat of a constraint and none of the male Fellows reported it to be a significant constraint. 13% of female Fellows reported that bullying and harassment was somewhat of a constraint during the Fellowship, compared with 4% of male Fellows.

were of a sensitive nature (such as harassment or gender-specific issues). Reflecting this, there appears to be a difference in how male and female Fellows perceive the safeguarding procedures of the ODI, with 59% of female Fellows agreeing that there are strong safeguarding procedures in place, compared with 71% of male Fellows. Additionally, Fellows were not aware of any additional support relating to protected characteristics.

There is limited evidence of progress in understanding and preventing sexual harassment in the workplace. The 2020 Annual Review revealed that 21% of DFID-funded Fellows in the 2017-19 cohort claimed to have faced sexual harassment at some point during the scheme, and the fellow survey revealed that 9% of survey respondents considered harassment and bullying to be a constraint to their work (around 22 respondents, of which 17 were female).[36] It does not appear as though the ODI offers an appropriate level of advice or support on the issue, at least partly due to a lack of ability and/or drive by the team, as well as the lack of a clear policy for dealing with allegations. In one West African country posting, one of the Fellows who left early had been facing issues with sexual harassment within the posting and, according to one interviewee, the level of support provided by the ODI had been insufficient. In 2019, a new 'terms and conditions' document was introduced and sent to all postings. Although the document has no legal force in the countries of posting, the ODI's aim was to send a clear signal to employers about what is and is not acceptable in terms of workplace behaviours including bullying and harassment. As of yet, it is unclear how successful the document has been (as noted in Section 4.5). The document appears too short to provide sufficient guidance on the wide variety of possible safeguarding issues.

The ODI's safeguarding procedures for Fellows with protected characteristics are not always effective. For example, a Fellow who identifies as gay was posted to a country where homosexuality is illegal and after one year in the posting they were re-assigned. Whilst the decision to undertake the posting was the Fellow's choice and followed consultation with the ODI team, the subsequent re-assignment may imply that this consultation was not sufficiently exhaustive. Although the processes in place have improved over time, they still do not appear to adequately address all of the issues that are raised, and some persist over time as evidenced by the fact that they are present within the feedback of Fellows from multiple cohorts. Ensuring access to adequate medical support is one such issue (such as obtaining prescription drugs in Guinea-Bissau). Similarly, issues associated with mental health are particularly common. In 2018, the ODI introduced a specialised counselling service – CiC Employee Assistance – which provides confidential counselling to Fellows. During the 2019/20 financial year, 41 calls were made and 6 emails sent, with 9 Fellows receiving counselling. Whilst Fellows regarded this support as helpful and appreciated the ODI's efforts to promote the use of the service should it be needed, feedback suggests that further support is still necessary, such as a psychologist or psychiatrist joining the ODI team. Additionally, although health insurance had been expanded to ensure that mental health is covered (as requested by previous cohorts) feedback from the 2017–2019 cohort reveals that several Fellows felt uncomfortable making claims since they went through the ODI.

Moreover, comparable schemes offer more extensive psychological support – Volunteering for Development, for example, offer free and extensive mental health support and develop personalised support plans for volunteers with protected characteristics whilst also ensuring that host institutions are made fully aware of their related obligations and expectations. However within the current fellowship scheme, it is not clear how feasible further advancements in this area are since, due to budget pressures, the ODI's capacity has recently reduced, with the loss of a programme administrator and a reduction in a programme officer's hours. Although there has been internal reprioritisation of staff roles (with a team member now explicitly in charge of safeguarding and duty of care) the overall reduction in capacity may pose a risk to safeguarding and the perceived support available to Fellows.

Feedback from Fellows also states that the pre-departure session could better prepare them for the safeguarding risks that they will face within their postings. 10% of our survey respondents disagreed with the statement 'The security training was helpful, and I felt safe and supported on departure' and 10%

[36] These claims were raised by Fellows placed in Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guyana, Haiti, Mozambique, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Uganda, Vanuatu, and Sri Lanka.

disagreed with the statement 'The first aid training was comprehensive and valued'. There did not appear to be any differences in answers to this across different protected characteristics.

Of the most recent three cohorts, only 55% of Fellows reported that the briefing week has prepared them either well or very well. Similar issues have been flagged between cohorts, with limited progress apparent. Most commonly, Fellows claim that the session is not well tailored for specific postings, which leads to unrealistic expectations. This is evidenced by the fact that several Fellows who attended low-risk postings felt that the session was far too intense and meant to 'scare them', when in fact they faced very few of the discussed risks. On the other hand, Fellows in the most high-risk postings (such as Nigeria) felt that they remained unprepared. The generic nature of the induction process is further illustrated by the case of Myanmar (discussed in Section 4.2) where one Fellow stated that they were not made aware of the background regarding the genocide of the Rohingya people, nor the deeply-ingrained religious and ethnic divides in the country.

Fellows also cited the fact that the ODI appeared to be lacking rich contextual knowledge which can be vital for successful safeguarding. For example, one Fellow discussed how during the election season, other foreign workers were provided with specific guidance such as how to leave the country (if necessary) since the airport was closed. In contrast, they felt as if the burden fell on them to keep the ODI updated rather than the other way around. Similarly, although Fellows praised the ODI's responsiveness during the COVID-19 pandemic, with the ODI implementing regular communications and advice for Fellows having difficulties returning to their home countries, Fellows in some placements reported that the ODI could have been more proactive in safeguarding them against the risks associated with the response from local people who were, in some cases, blaming foreign nationals for the pandemic. Additionally, the ODI failed to consult with host institutions when making the decision to evacuate Fellows – as did many other development organizations – which may have long-lasting impacts on their relationships with local communities and institutions.

In addition to this, further work is required to conduct analyses of early termination/re-assigned Fellows due to 'dissatisfaction with the posting'. The ODI could develop a more thorough approach to such situations in order to fully understand the nature of the issues experienced, and whether or not further follow-up necessary.

6.0 Impact

In this chapter we assess how effective the scheme has been in contributing to sustainable capacity building.

In three sub-sections we answer three evaluation questions:

- What kind of inputs/skills/capability (technical and non-technical) do Fellows provide to their host ministries?
- To what extent is the programme successfully delivering contributions to sustainable capacity development in its host organisations?
- To what extent is the programme's Theory of Change realistic, relevant and achievable?

6.1 Fellow's outputs

In this section we begin by describing what Fellows do during their fellowships. Fellows engage in a number of activities during their posting which can be broadly broken into three areas of support:

- Technical: Giving training to staff, collecting high-quality data, supporting with budgets and preparing technical reports, policy papers and bills.
- Managerial and administrative: Utilising skills in organisational management as well generic skills to contribute to effective administration.
- Implementation: Being members of networks and building partnerships

6.1.1 Technical

Technical reports, policy papers and bills produced

From our survey we find that the most common work that Fellows engage in is the production of technical reports, policy papers and bills. Working together with their colleagues to produce these outputs is widely recognised to be a good use of Fellows' time. Fellows use their analytical skills and apply their training in technical economics and statistics on issues key to economic development. Fellows often report that the production of a particular report or strategy was the greatest contribution they made during their Fellowship.

Co-producing national strategies and policies with senior civil servants increases national ownership and the likelihood that the work of Fellows will have an impact. Although Fellows are often able to improve these documents through clearer writing, they are often most valued for the level of analytical rigour that they bring to the production process, applying their technical training in economics and statistics to important economic problems.

Fellows have been involved in the production of many different types of documents including planning documents, technical reports, policy papers, research pieces, evaluations, funding proposals, and helping to draft speeches for senior civil servants. We list some examples below:

- Supporting the drafting of Somalia/Somaliland's first Macroeconomic and Fiscal Framework and supporting Uganda's first charter of fiscal responsibility.
- Elaborating Zanzibar's 3rd iteration of the Health Sector Strategic Plan and supporting the formulation of the Development Vision 2050.
- Developing the first ever published National Statistical Report of the Rwanda Revenue Authority.
- Delivering an evaluation of the impact of a government information campaign on cashew farmer knowledge through a randomised controlled trial in Guinea-Bissau.
- Drafting a successful application to the African Development Bank for funding for policy support to the National Revenue Authority in Sierra Leone ($1.4 million).
- Helping to draft the budget speech delivered by the Minister of Finance of Somalia/Somaliland to Parliament in 2019.
- Finalising a fiscal reform roadmap and VAT policy paper on which two fiscal reform laws in Timor-Leste were based.

Training for staff

Fellows provide training and support the development of their colleagues, with 61% of our survey engaging in both formal and informal training. The majority (67%) engaged in one-on-one training such as report writing, basic IT skills (especially Excel) and presentation skills. Slightly fewer Fellows engage in one-to-many training (61%). Only 10% of respondents said they were not involved in any training or development activities.[37] The types of training given were diverse with the most common being IT skills (75%), writing skills (51%) and economic analysis (46%). Other training included statistics and econometrics (34%), presentation skills (34%) and evaluation methods (27%).

Many Fellows supported their colleagues with formal training in basic data manipulation (Microsoft Excel); database management (Microsoft Access); presentation skills (Microsoft PowerPoint); survey design (Survey Solutions); or advanced data analysis (Stata). There were also examples of other training sessions on the principles of preparing accurate budgets, and how to write funding proposals and well-structured reports. In Myanmar Fellows delivered up to 200 hours of training on STATA, R, statistics and qualitative analysis as

[37] In almost all of these cases these training courses are developed from scratch by fellows. Given how common some of them are across postings it appears inefficient from the perspective of the ODI's and points toward a possible efficiency if more training materials were made available to fellows.

well as on-demand training for the Ministry of Labour. In Rwanda Fellows provided training on R and Python.

In Vanuatu, a Fellow developed a programme to improve the statistical capacity of members of parliament. In Fiji, a Fellow developed a formal training course for the Fiji Public Service Commission as part of the Pacific Cost Benefit Analysis Initiative and provided training on the fundamentals of economic analysis to over 200 civil servants in four Pacific Island countries. In Nigeria, a Fellow delivered a week-long training course on economic evaluation in healthcare to an epidemiology and public health class of 35 students, and in Ethiopia a Fellow in the Ministry of Health managed the full recruitment, training and coaching of 30 young professionals.

Perhaps the most striking thing about the training conducted by staff was the range of technical depth. Some Fellows described training their colleagues one on one in relatively basic skills in Excel and that this was valued and led to useful gains in productivity for their colleagues. One external stakeholder warned that Fellows should be careful about the type of training that they give; noting that some host organisations find it patronising to have a relatively junior outsider come into their ministry and try to teach them relatively basic skills. They emphasised that Fellows are being brought in for their high technical skills and that this is where they can add most value.

At the other end of the scale, one Fellow in Rwanda was recognised to be so technically capable, and so organised, that they became the head of training in the National Institute of Statistics. Whereas side-by-side training is valued at the individual level, one-to-many training may have more impact at the institutional level, and may lead to more sustainable impacts. This is particularly the case if Fellows develop training materials themselves that can be used after they finish their posting (46% of Fellows surveyed developed training materials themselves). In Nigeria, a colleague described how different cohorts of Fellows had contributed significantly to the implementation of the Nigeria States Health Investment Project and that an important part of this was the development of training manuals.

High-quality data collected

Accurate data in developing countries is not always available but it is vitally important to the efficient working of the Civil Service. There is strong evidence of Fellows being involved in the collection, collation, construction and management of high-quality data which in turn was valued by host organisations. The technical skills needed to collect high-quality data were often a clear strength that Fellows brought to their teams, although few reported that their skills in this area improved over the course of their Fellowship.

In Ghana a statistics Fellow was praised by colleagues in the National Statistics Service for utilising non-traditional data sources. They experimented with several pilot projects, and now rather than using survey data they use data which is a by-product of other available sources to inform official statistics which in turn allows for cross government savings. In Liberia, a Fellow was involved in harmonising data collection (on trade) across the government and implementing a trade data classification system. In Guinea-Bissau, a Fellow was key to the improved collection and management of civil servant payroll data across a number of ministries, which in turn contributed to a reduction in teacher strikes in the country.

A fundamental process that some fellows have supported is setting up data cleaning processes. A Fellow described their greatest contribution as working with the statistician general in setting up a new monitoring and data cleaning process for trade data in Nigeria which in turn led to more accurate official trade figures. In Somaliland, a Fellow described their most significant contribution as greatly improved data management in the Ministry of Trade that led to much improved regular statistical reports.

Survey work is often a vital input in high-quality data and statistics and many Fellows have been directly involved in the design and delivery of surveys. A colleague described how the Fellow supported the design and implementation of Liberia's first ever multi-indicator Household Budget Survey, a crop cutting survey and its first agriculture recall survey. In Guinea-Bissau a Fellow was involved in the design and management of the country's first market survey of cashews, its largest export. A Fellow in Ghana described managing fieldwork and the piloting of new tools for the next national Census.

Fellows have also supported the creation of new statistics through the construction of indices. For example, a Fellow contributed to the creation of an all-urban consumer price index in Guyana, and another helped to develop a financial stress index for the Central Bank of Uganda.

Budget support

Supporting the preparation of budgets is a fairly frequent task of ODI Fellows and there are examples of Fellows being involved in this work across many countries and ministries. The strong training in macroeconomics that many Fellows have, and the frequent postings in ministries of finance, make this a natural activity for Fellows to add value to.

Some of the teams that Fellows work with have little collective experience of budgeting and fiscal analysis and there are therefore theoretically high marginal gains to be made (e.g. the Department of Budget and Economic Affairs within the Ministry of Finance in eSwatini). The level of complexity varies depending on the ministry but in some cases, the work is relatively straightforward, for example supporting colleagues in Excel and other IT software to prepare accurate budgets in spreadsheets (e.g. adding key missing activities to the health budget in Guinea-Bissau or budget analysis for a project in the Health Financing Unit in Nigeria).

These pieces of work are often a core recurring responsibility of ministries and Fellows often support in the preparation of periodic budget frameworks (e.g. the Ministry of Trade in Malawi) or national budgets for submission to parliament (Timor Leste). Being embedded in the workings of a ministry's budget can enable Fellows to pick up on important flaws. In Liberia one Fellow identified that inconsistent use of USD and Liberian dollar exchange rates was resulting in the Ministry of Education's budget execution rate falling below forecasts. Discovering this and explaining it to senior officials across multiple ministries avoided the ministry having its budget incorrectly cut by 20%.

More complex support on budgets includes the building and refining of macroeconomic models and there are many examples of this work enabling ministries to have more accurate macro-economic forecasts (e.g. in Djibouti and Guinea-Bissau). One Fellow designed a model that automated and enhanced the accuracy (by 0.4%) of the projected uptake of the social grants programme in South Africa. This programme has a large scale (it reaches over 30% of the population and costs about 3% of GDP) and the 0.4% accuracy improvement saved the government $40 million per annum.

These examples of models being developed are more likely to result in sustainable impact at an institutional level, and not just the improved capacity of one individual, who may leave in the future. There is good evidence that building macro-economic models together with local staff strengthens both individuals and the systems within the ministry. In Rwanda one colleague described the long-term benefit of successive fellowships as helping to increase the revenue-to-GDP ratio of the country, through strengthening its internal revenue capacity over time, and that this was "*a remarkable achievement*". However, on the whole there is less evidence of host organisations taking this learning forward independently and operationalising it without the involvement of a Fellow.

Of the types of technical work that Fellows engage in budget support stood out for two reasons. It was one of the few areas that Fellows felt their technical skills developed over the course of their Fellowship. It was also consistently an area where Fellows felt that support from ODI (through access to materials or being connected to technical experts in the field) would help them do their jobs better.

6.1.2 Managerial and administrative

Organisational management

Across the teams, directorates, ministries, and countries that different Fellows worked in there appears to be a large amount of heterogeneity in the skills and capacity of their colleagues. Some ministries are relatively well managed, and Fellows fit into functioning teams that are simply missing a specific high-level skill. In other cases, ministries are dysfunctional and disorganised, and Fellows use their skills in organisational management to fill a needed gap. For example

- Meetings: Scheduling meetings, taking minutes, drafting action points, and following up on them.
- Information: Setting up online drives and managing folder systems and basic data and information management. In Malawi's Ministry of Education, one Fellow was adept at collating the necessary documents and information required to apply for external education funding.
- Time: Time management of oneself and others was demonstrated by some Fellows and in Rwanda one external stakeholder thought that the Fellows she had worked with modelled good practice in this area.
- Communication: Facilitating better communication between groups is common. Fellows were particularly valued for facilitating communication in Guinea-Bissau, where a combination of political patronage and high turnover in the civil service resulted in distrust and poor communication between directorates and ministries.

In Ghana, a Statistics Fellow found their niche, not because of her technical skills but instead because she was very capable at managing and coordinating projects. This wider project management role in turn gained her some visibility within the government. In her eyes, "capacity development was more around coordination". In Zanzibar's Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, a Fellow explained that although the managerial tasks were unedifying, they thought this support was where they likely had the most impact: "*just making sure grant applications were submitted on time and that all the boxes were checked, probably helped the Ministry get more funding in some cases, which is something*". Elsewhere Myanmar Fellows went further than this and supported the development of an organisational development strategy which was commended for bringing greater structure, communication and processes to the organisation lasting beyond the lifetime of a fellowship. Even fairly basic skills around organisational management can be exceptionally valued when lacking, especially in a crisis situation, as was the case for a Fellow in the Ministry of Health in Guinea-Bissau when the COVID-19 pandemic struck.

Fellows often use generic administrative skills to perform administrative tasks. For example, in terms of writing skills, Fellows pointed to improving the writing skills of colleagues through the report writing process. This mostly came in the form of proofreading written English as part of quality assurance processes. In Nigeria one Fellow was asked by their supervisor to oversee the writing of the department's annual reports. In Myanmar, Fellows also provided support in strengthening IT systems.

6.1.3 Implementation

Networks and partnership building

Fellows have networks and connections that they utilise, and they do so at various levels. Fellows are active members of networks within ministries. A Fellow was a member of a financial inclusion sub-committee in Uganda working with mobile network operators to extend coverage and in turn lead to greater financial inclusion. They are also members of networks between ministries, for example a Fellow was a member of the national taskforce for financial inclusion in Fiji. Additionally, they join networks between the government and the international community. A Fellow in Rwanda was tasked with coordinating the Private Sector Development Working Group, comprising government and donor stakeholders.

Fellows often support their colleagues at national and international forums. A Fellow accompanied the Statistician General of Nigeria to the UN Statistical Commission and supported their preparation and participation in meetings. Another described their biggest contribution as supporting Liberia's representative at the UN Climate Change Conference in 2019 (COP 25). In Myanmar, the support included writing speeches for deputy ministers and in one instance drafting a speech for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi (State Counsellor).

There is strong evidence of Fellows acting as intermediaries between external consultants and their team. They often act as a point of contact for the ministry and facilitate communication (as 'interlocuters') with consultants as well as digesting reports and analysis into a 'usable' form. There were several examples of Fellows supporting their teams in applications for international funding. For example, in Timor-Leste Fellow

supported their team at the Ministry of Education in successfully applying for $3.5 million of funding from the Global Partnership for Education to support WASH and distance learning during COVID-19.

6.2 Capacity outcomes

In Section this section we assess the evidence that the ODI Fellowship Scheme contributed to strengthened capacity outcomes along five dimensions. These are:

- improving staff know-how for policy implementation;
- better economic, financial and public sector management;
- facilitating the strengthening of networks and coalitions;
- improving context, working culture and operating environments;
- Fellows better prepared for a career in development.

These outcomes were identified during the inception phase of the evaluation and correspond to the columns in the matrix below[38]. The table summarises the evidence gathered through this evaluation of the impact of the ODI Fellowship on each outcome. The outputs of the Fellowship (examined in section 6.1) are included as rows. The matrix highlights the evidence we have gathered of the support provided by Fellows (their outputs) and its contribution to different types of capacity outcomes. Our sources of evidence come from documentation and scheme-wide interviews as well as case studies in Guinea-Bissau, Myanmar, Nigeria and Rwanda. Here we focus on the capacity outcomes of host ministries and therefore exclude 'Fellows better prepared for a career in development' from the matrix (we describe how the experience of an ODI Fellowship better prepares Fellows for a career in development at the end of the section). Points of different colours represent different sources of evidence linking outputs to the capacity outcomes.

Table 1: Contribution analysis matrix

Evidence of Fellows' contributions to capacity development					
Type of support	Outputs	Improving staff capacities, skills and implementation know-how.	Facilitating the strengthening of networks	Contributing to improving the working culture and operating environment	Fellows contributing to the design and implementation of policies or strategies within a Ministry
Technical support	Technical reports & evidence produced	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	●	● ● ● ● ●
	High-quality data collected	● ● ● ● ● ●	●		● ● ● ● ●
	Policy papers and bills produced	● ● ●	●		● ● ● ● ●
	Technical trainings to staff	● ● ● ● ● ●		● ●	
	Budget support	● ● ●	●		● ● ●
Administrative support	Generic tasks				
	Organisational management	● ● ●	● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Implementation support	Networks and partnership building	● ● ●	● ● ● ●	● ●	● ● ●
	Soft skills (ambition, willingness...)	● ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	●
	Reputation of Fellows		● ● ● ●		●
Summary assessment on strength of contribution (0 to 3)		3	3	3	3

Legend: ● Evidence in documentation; ● Evidence in Scheme-wide interviews; ● Evidence in Guinea-Bissau case study; ● Evidence in Myanmar case study; ● Evidence in Nigeria case study; ● Evidence in Rwanda case study

[38] This work was guided by our organisational capacity framework; in particular the decision on the outcomes to use, and the causal pathways at work.

Reading each row of the table in turn we can see the strength of evidence (as represented by the number of dots in each cell) linking the outputs of Fellows to each capacity outcome. We can see for example that technical training for staff is closely linked to improving the capacity of staff (column 1) but not to facilitating the strengthening of their networks and coalitions (column 2). In contrast, the active networks and partnership building that Fellows engage in, the soft skills they utilise and the reputation they have as Fellows are more closely linked to the strengthened networks and coalitions of their host ministries.

77% of Fellows and 97% of supervisors viewed fellowships as either largely or very successful and we found considerable and consistent evidence of Fellows contributing to all four capacity dimensions listed above. The outputs and support provided that contributed the most were technical and implementation support which together contributed to all capacity dimensions, although there was less evidence of implementation support contributing to the design of policies compared to technical support. We found limited evidence of administrative and managerial support being instrumental to capacity outcomes being achieved, but did find that this type of support is important in ensuring there is sufficient overall capacity within organisations to achieve organisational objectives.

Below we describe what improved capacity outcomes look like, summarise the strength of evidence for each capacity outcome, and explain the key drivers of this change.

6.2.1 Improving staff capacities and implementation know-how

Overall, there was consistent and strong evidence that both the capacity of individuals and the capacity of teams and institutions were strengthened by Fellows. We have evidence of Fellows contributing to improving individual staff capacities and to improving systems that have strengthened the institutions they work in. There was evidence connecting almost all the types of work that Fellows engage in with strengthened capacities and know-how among their colleagues. We identify that key drivers of these improved capacities were the training that Fellows provided and the setting up of internal systems. Although Fellows often admitted that they engaged in generic administrative tasks, there was little evidence to suggest that this improved staff capacity. In Guinea-Bissau, colleagues acknowledged that although individual staff capacity was strengthened due to the Fellows, there was a very real risk that this institutional knowledge would not be retained due to high staff turnover.

Fellows across all strands claimed their ministries benefited from understanding how to apply technical knowledge and skills and put them to use on practical policy issues. Many colleagues described the greatest contribution of the scheme as the improved analytical skills of colleagues through 'skills transfer'. These types of skills include those related to research and analysis. For example, one Fellow in Rwanda guided colleagues through the entire research process (identifying research questions, data collection methods, analysis and writing) and this resulted in their colleagues gaining a better understanding of how to conduct research on their own in the future. Other Fellows mentioned their greatest achievement as supporting the professional development of colleagues through mentoring and supporting them to pursue postgraduate studies abroad. In turn, these staff may return to the country and contribute to its development.

Key driver: Setting up systems

A key way that Fellows contributed to improving staff capacities and their ability to implement was by developing and improving internal systems within the governments they work in. In some cases, this involved implementing a system; in Zambia, a Fellow helped to implement a Credit Market Monitoring Programme to be used by both the Central Bank and the Financial Market. Another Fellow set up a functioning committee (treasury) at the Ministry of Finance in Guinea-Bissau, which had been a longstanding request from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and was hailed as a key reason for the approval of an Extended Credit Facility.

In Liberia, one Fellow thought their greatest contribution was building personnel and HR systems in the Ministry of Education, and for another it was the creation of best practices with the Central Statistics

Authority in line with the World Bank's Public Financial Management Reforms for Institutional Strengthening. This work resulted in a large disbursal of money from the World Bank, enabling the country to recruit new teachers. In Burundi, a Fellow helped improve debt management by improving data management and streamlining the process for government securities issuance. In Uganda and eSwatini, Fellows were praised for contributing to the automation of systems.

There were also multiple examples of the introduction of new software and data management systems. A colleague in the Rwanda National Institute of Statistics said that their largest contribution was the introduction of Stata to the Institute. In Ghana, a Fellow moved the internal system for inflation calculations from an expensive and inaccessible system to one that was freely available using open-source software, and in Ethiopia a colleague praised the fellowship for introducing them to new approaches to data analysis and visualisation.

Key driver: Formal training

There was considerable diversity in whether Fellows gave formal training to their colleagues, but when it did occur, there was widespread acknowledgement that it contributed to improved staff capacities. In some cases, but not many, there was evidence of the wider training processes in ministries changing. In Rwanda, one Fellow trained colleagues in coding to allow them to compile statistical reports efficiently once he had gone. Another introduced financial modelling tools and trained colleagues in using them. One Fellow developed a training programme and resources, in collaboration with a local colleague, to enable the institution to switch to using a more appropriate statistical system. In Papua New Guinea, colleagues in the Internal Revenue Commission described Fellows "*training other junior officers to carry on the roles that the ODI have been doing*". In the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Development in Uganda, one Fellow was widely praised by others, including colleagues, other ODI Fellows and external stakeholders that knew of their work, for the approach they took to their fellowship and the formal training they gave.

Figure 14: Structured training in Uganda, a model for future Fellowships?

Context

The Debt Management department sits within the Ugandan Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic development. Its primary role is to mobilise external resources to support the funding of government programmes. It does this by co-ordinating development partners and bilateral or multilateral negotiations, preparing financial documents and overseeing the utilisation of resources. Debt management has taken on an increasingly important role in Uganda, as the country has tapped into multiple debt markets both domestically and internationally.

Activities

In 2015, a Fellow joined the newly formed Debt Management Department. The Fellow's focus was specifically on domestic debt, including running debt auctions, reforming the system of primary dealers and liaising with the Central Bank of Uganda on the development of the domestic debt market. Due to the new status of the department, it was lacking in processes and trained staff. As such, in the first half of their placement, the Fellow built a database of domestic debt, working on it themselves. In the second half, their role became more supervisory, and they supported capacity building of the department by handing work over to colleagues and supervising and training staff that were newly recruited to the domestic debt team. This included weekly training for the department on domestic debt concepts and issues, with the aim to of having the Fellow to no longer be required by the end of their placement. The fellowship was extended due to multiple department restructurings, but in the Fellow's last year their role become purely supervisory. Domestic debt trainings were increased to twice a week, and the Fellow played a key role in the development of the newly-formed Contingent Liability Section. The section's purpose was to manage Uganda's burgeoning loan guarantees, with a focus on public-private partnership Public Private Partnership Projects.

By the end of the Fellow's final year on the placement, the department now has a functioning domestic debt team, to the point where an ODI Fellow is no longer required to supervise and/or train. The Fellow was able to create the processes and primary database for staff to use, and then provided adequate training and supervision to enable staff members to be fully equipped to work within the team and train new recruits themselves.

The Fellow was highly praised by the Commissioner of Debt Policy and Issuance, pointing to their fellow's consistent support to the team.

"[They have] been a fantastic addition to our team, helping to train up our young recruits so that our department can carry out its debt management functions fully and effectively. The fact that she was fully embedded in my team, interacting with our young economists on a daily basis, was key to achieving what we have achieved together."

6.2.2 Better economic, financial and public sector management

Overall, there was consistent and strong evidence that the work of Fellows contributed to the design and implementation of many high-quality policies, programmes, strategies and action plans within their ministries. Key drivers of these high-quality policies were the technical skills that Fellows brought to their work, and the fact that they were able to transfer some of their knowledge and skills because they were embedded within their host organisations.

Below we list indicative (but not exhaustive) examples of policies and programmes across a wide range of sectors that Fellows have contributed to within the last 6 years of the fellowship scheme.[39]

- Agriculture: The development and implementation of development strategies for agribusiness in Mozambique. The structuring of a $500 million grant to the agriculture sector in Rwanda.

- Biodiversity: A comprehensive review of biodiversity expenditure in Namibia, following international best practice (the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) methodology); the first of its kind undertaken globally. Support for the UNDP with updating the methodology in response to their work, and presentation of the results as part of the Namibian delegation to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity in 2015. Various projects around sustainable use of encroaching bush in Namibia, with colleagues noting that "*we have significantly enhanced access to knowledge and evidence on this topic, and therefore improved decision-making towards greater sustainability*".

- The business environment: Compilation of a database of 60+ business laws and reforms relevant for improving the business environment in Haiti. A long-term study assessing the competitiveness of the single largest FDI infrastructure project in Sri Lanka.

- Climate: Production of the first Greenhouse Gases Emission Inventory for Freetown (Sierra Leone), submission of it to C40 Cities, and coordination of the Freetown Climate Action Plan process.[40] Contribution to Fiji's National Climate Adaptation Plan and to implementation of the post-disaster needs assessment in Vanuatu, as well as the design of the Vanuatu Recovery Framework.

- Competition policy: Reshaping of policies and processes around competition enforcement as part of the Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission. Design of a fixed merger assessment process and standard assessment guidelines. Assistance with the running of several high-profile cases, redesign of the country's merger control regime and with drafting of the country's National Competition and Consumer Protection Policy.

- Debt and borrowing: Delivery of a 40-year debt repayment plan to the International Monetary Fund, which was a condition for an extended credit facility for Liberia. Improvement of debt transparency in the Debt Unit of eSwatini, as required by the Public Finance Management Act. Progression of the municipal borrowing policy from within the Treasury in South Africa.

- Disaster response: Support for the Ministry of Health in the aftermath of the Ebola outbreak in Liberia through the identification of gaps in the healthcare system, analysis of the required health financing and design of a proposed national health insurance system. In Nigeria, a colleague at the Centre for Disease Control endorsed the work of the Fellow, saying that they had 'contributed immensely in the COVID-19 response', and that their work on antimicrobial resistance would help in evaluating the implementation of the National Action Plan.

- Education: Ranking of all the Senior High Schools in Ghana based on performance, which later had an influence on national policy. Design and finalisation of a $219 million project for basic education, which included the design and approval of the first impact bond in education in Sub-Saharan Africa. Development of the medium-term development plan (2018–2021) and the flagship Education Sector Plan (2018–2030) in Ghana. Implementation of the National Education Sector Improvement Project in Malawi, which resulted in the construction of over 800 low-cost classrooms in one year. Support for the decentralisation of textbook procurement, helping millions more books reach primary schools in Malawi.

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[39] The majority of these examples come from our surveys and were responses to the question: "What do you think your/their biggest contribution was during your/their Fellowship?"

[40] C40 is a network of the world's megacities committed to addressing climate change. C40 supports cities to collaborate effectively, share knowledge and drive meaningful, measurable and sustainable action on climate change.

- Financial inclusion: Design of a nationwide survey questionnaire, together with an implementation plan (hosting stakeholder workshops, developing the budget), to inform policymakers on their approach to financial inclusion in Kenya. Raising of the profile of important issues around financial inclusion in Uganda, specifically bringing digital financial services to the forefront of the Ministry of Finance's financial inclusion agenda.

- Health: Design of national health accounts and client satisfaction surveys in Tanzania. Development of healthcare policies and national health sector strategic plans in Sierra Leone. Provision of technical support for a Pan-American Health Organisation-funded assessment of public health facilities in Guyana; help with the design of the survey, management of visits to health facilities, and analysis and presentation of data results to stakeholders and the Ministry of Health. Support for the analysis of the Benefits incidence analysis process and guidance towards more cost-effective choices for health interventions at the Ministry of Health in Ethiopia. Estimation of the physical accessibility of Vanuatu's health care system, which was instrumental for human resource and capital planning.

- Inflation forecasting: At the Central Bank of Papua New Guinea, colleagues described how the ODI Fellows "*helped develop and improve inflation and GDP forecasting models and other macroeconomic models, which informed policy discussions*".

- Investment decisions: Co-development of a report in Fiji that guided the World Bank's maritime transportation investments in the Pacific Islands. Presentation of these recommendations to Ministers of Transport from 8 countries, which resulted in them being endorsed and implemented. In Rwanda negotiation of loan terms for Rwanda's first private equity firm worth $100 million.

- Job creation: Co-design of a public employment reform in Ethiopia as part of the Job Creation Commission, which secured $7 million from the World Bank to pilot the initial phase of the reform.

- Market development: Drafting and lobbying, and ultimately securing of cabinet and Parliamentary approval for the Warehouse Receipt Bill, a regulatory framework for agricultural development, at the Ministry of Trade in Malawi. Development of a project at the same Ministry on structured markets for agricultural commodities, including drafting of the initial concept note and contribution to the drafting of several pieces of legislation. Support with the revision of the private sector development programme and preparation of exporters for the US market under the African Growth and Opportunity Act at the Ministry of Trade in Ghana.[41] In Uganda, contribution to the financial sector development strategy, as well as to improved coordination between financial sector stakeholders.

- Natural resources: Assistance with drafting of the Petroleum Natural Resource Governance Regulations at the Ministry of Trade in Ghana. In Sierra Leone, advising the contract negotiations team at the National Minerals Agency during two mining lease agreement negotiations on projects with a total forecasted net present value exceeding $1 billion, and leading on the design and implementation of a nation-wide mineral royalty assessment and transfer pricing audit system, which led to an increase in revenue for the Government of Sierra Leone of more than $5 million.

- Revenue generation: In Liberia, strengthening of the Domestic Resource Mobilisation Strategy, particularly with regards to the management of taxes in arrears, as well as research on taxation in the informal sector and forecasts for revenue. In Sierra Leone, a colleague described the ODI Fellows as playing "*an integral part in the Freetown revenue mobilisation team that launched property reforms in the city*".

[41] The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) is a piece of legislation passed by the US congress in 2000, with the stated purpose of assisting the economies of Sub-Saharan Africa and improving economic relations between the United States and the region.

- Subsidies: Analysis of a fuel subsidy reform in Sierra Leone, as well as briefing of ministers, which later contributed to the reform being passed. Analysis of subsidies in Zimbabwe which in turn led to many suggestions on service delivery and containing costs being taken forward by the then permanent Secretary and Minister of Finance, to convince Parliament and the President of necessary reforms, which were implemented.

- Trade negotiations: In the ministries of Trade to which Fellows have been posted, examples of the contributions they have made to trade agreements include through the provision of support for bilateral trade negotiations between Vanuatu and New Caledonia, the co-authoring of a World Trade Organization (WTO) trade facilitation agreement in Malawi, and the economic modelling of different scenarios to inform free trade negotiations in Ghana.

  In Rwanda, colleagues described the contributions of Fellows "*developing substantive policy positions on several ongoing trade negotiations, forming the blueprints for negotiations going forward, preparing policy briefs on trade matters related to COVID-19 and the African Continental Free Trade Agreement; and participating in an ongoing review of national trade policies and strategies*". Fellows also supported with the passing of the 'Made in Rwanda' policy, intended to address the ongoing trade deficit.

- Water: In Djibouti, assistance with the design of the first water desalination plant in the Horn of Africa, which was funded by the EU and was expected to increase potable water in the country by 40%. In Timor-Leste, development and negotiation on behalf of the government – as part of a small team in the Major Projects Secretariat – of a 30-year $300m concession agreement for a deep-water port.

The reports and policies that were co-produced and described in this section have contributed to host organisations' economic, financial and public sector management. These policies strengthen institutions and may have sustained impact on the country through what the policies and strategies themselves achieve. However, there were few concrete examples of organisations taking forward their learning independently and operationalising their strengthened capacity to deliver new strategies or policies. This is, in part, due to the limited evidence gathered of the sustainability of the results achieved (see section 7.1) but may also be linked to a barrier in sustaining capacity development when working with individuals given the high turnover in most of the fellowship countries.

There is some evidence that, as a result of the fellowship, host governments have a better understanding of core economic principles. In Guinea-Bissau one Fellow fundamentally affected the planning process of the Ministry of Health. The status quo system was a top-down planning and drafting process for health expenditure. However, the Fellow recognised the need for the country's health plan to be dependent on demand from regions and supported her colleagues in developing a system to elicit demand from the lowest level of the Health System Hierarchy. Her colleagues expressed that they feel this fundamental shift in approach "*is going to be very influential in the government*". In another example, the work of Fellows strengthened the institution's ability to calculate property taxes, which led to a permanent increase in revenue for municipal governments.

Key driver: The technical skills of Fellows

The examples above across various sectors are strong evidence of improved economic, financial and public sector management, many of which may have long-lasting impact. In these examples, extracted from the survey, we cannot be sure how much each Fellow contributed to the policies and projects. We do, however, have strong evidence from other sources, especially our case studies, that Fellows make an important and valued contribution to these projects, sometimes being integral to their outcome. In particular the high level of technical skills that fellows brought to their roles was valued by their colleagues. In many cases they brought core skills in economic analysis that were missing from their teams. For example, cost benefit analysis; inflation forecasting; bargaining models; designing surveys; structuring grants; calculating trade scenarios.

There are also numerous examples of Fellows using their technical skills to drive social issues to the front of the agenda. In Rwanda, one Fellow started conversations and analysis on policy changes (that have since been implemented) to improve equity in the tax system and reduce the burden for the lowest earners. In Liberia, a Fellow formulated an argument for changing the tax incentive scheme to reduce its scope and improve targeting. They provided their department with a position that was taken to a cross government committee and ultimately accepted, resulting in greater tax revenue and a more equitable policy. In Zimbabwe's Ministry of Education, a Fellow developed a new funding policy to target schools with the most at-risk children (those that were at risk of not being able to pay school fees and therefore not attending). One Fellow in the Nigeria Sovereign Fund used their role in the Fund to promote green investments and prioritise development impact as an indicator to be used for deciding on investments.

Key driver: Embedded support

A key driver in strengthening capacity and implementation know how appears to be the embedded nature of Fellows. There was general agreement amongst Fellows and supervisors that working alongside each other in the co-production of policies and strategies strengthened the capacities of the staff around them. This was pointed out by many stakeholders to be in stark contrast to the alternative modality of short-term external consultants. A former Finance Minister who had had extensive experience with ODI fellows described it as such:

> *"The beauty is that fellows are embedded. It is not Technical Assistance (TA), bringing in external experts. ODI people are embedded in the system and help the system to develop from inside it. It is different from a classic TA approach".*

Illustrating this, are multiple examples from our case studies highlighting how Fellows have played a key role as an intermediary with external consultancies producing work for ministries. Their embeddedness within the organisation facilitates communication with external consultants and gives them time to adapt important reports and models to the needs of their host organisation. Being embedded over a period of two years also enables colleagues to learn from Fellows on the job, as they work alongside them and receive informal training and support. In Rwanda, a colleague described how the Fellow in the Ministry of Trade provided:

> *'invaluable support to the Director General, offering a one-on-one team that could develop technical economic analysis essential for policy and decision making.'*

Figure 15: Improving the effectiveness of tax authorities

Context

In Myanmar, a country emerging from decades of military dictatorship, the governing National League for Democracy has struggled to define its economic vision and manage public administration to implement policies and programmes. According to interviewees, many Ministers were ex-political prisoners and lacked sufficient policy implementation expertise, requiring time to understand their mandates and to grapple with the complex socio-economic issues at stake. Fellows posted in Myanmar were a key force in transforming government mindsets, helping both to raise their awareness and provide them with the knowledge and tools to implement new and more effective technical processes.

Activities

Two Fellows focused their efforts on Taunggyi, Shan State, explaining to local officials why property tax is a valuable tax to raise. They spent a few weeks teaching local government staff about the value of property tax and how to use government data to see how much property tax has been raised. They travelled to different cities to understand different perspectives and capacity constraints, and determine how a range of options could be implemented. They also held engagement workshops bringing officials from different districts together to share ways of working and learning.

At the start of Fellows' placements, citizens were paying approximately one dollar per year in property tax, but Fellows taught staff how to conduct reviews of relevant literature, gather reliable data and observe different ward needs, and presented options for valuing State properties more realistically to ensure a higher evaluation in the city in order to raise tax revenue.

The Shan State government worked with Fellows to co-design a new Municipal Tax Reform evaluation formula to raise property tax three-fold for houses and land, which continues to be used today – marking an end to the use of an old formula for over 50 years. The formula is currently being digitised by the Asia Foundation to strengthen its functionality.

Testimonials

One government representative highlighted that his own skills and know-how had increased as a result:

> *"I got this knowledge as a heritage from [Fellow] and now I can provide training and explain it to other townships that want reform. Municipal departments love this new formula, which will increase average revenue."* Government of Myanmar representative

Fellows also helped to advocate to the government so it understands the 'economics' behind property taxation and why it is important to advance this and communicate findings to the public. In collaboration with the Asia Foundation, a Fellow supported all states and regions in the country to produce Citizen Budgets through producing a common framework and principles. This involved travelling to sub-national regions to discuss economic health and how to produce pre-budget statements with officials, and conducting economic analysis to inform budgets. Given that in 2010, the country's budget was classed as a state secret, this represents a significant achievement and provided valuable insights for the UK.

> *"[This] work would not have been possible without Fellows. Papers and pre-budget statements wouldn't have been produced to the same quality…Data wouldn't have been analysed in same depth. We [RI] would have still done the work without a Fellow, but the rigour, speed and analysis used by ODI Fellows is only present in two other staff members. They are good but chronically overstretched"* Host organisation

6.2.3 Strengthening networks and coalitions

Overall, there was consistent and strong evidence that Fellows facilitate the strengthening of networks and coalitions on many levels. They do so within directorates, between ministries, with international donors, and with international investors. When they arrive in ministries, they bring with them new networks of Fellows, former colleagues, friends and organisations in country and internationally. They often use these rich networks to strengthen the networks of their hosts. They also use their role as an outsider to challenge certain dynamics. The key drivers of these strengthened networks were clear: Fellows have a network that they utilise, and a range of soft skills, including the ability to build coalitions. Their reputation as ODI Fellows can help them, but only in some cases.

In Sierra Leone, a Fellow made connections between university students and the Ministry of Finance by initiating a programme for the ministry to fund undergraduate theses. In Malawi a Fellow described their role as 'providing a bridge between the government and the development community', which was essential, as the government faced the biggest financial fraud scandal in its history (Cash-gate). In the Ministry of Agriculture in Fiji, a Fellow set up a national taskforce on agricultural insurance, together with the Reserve Bank.

There are many examples of Fellows supporting the formation of new partnerships with international organisations and the building of new networks. In South Africa, a colleague at the National Treasury described the greatest achievement of the ODI fellowship as "*the formation of a regional network of budget/debt managers across Africa*". In Rwanda, colleagues praised the Fellows for supporting them in building a 'data science community' in the National Institute of Statistics, bringing in speakers and building momentum. There were also examples of Fellows establishing partnerships with new stakeholders. One Fellow in the Ministry of Health in Guinea-Bissau, for example, instigated a funding proposal and created a platform for a partnership with Oxford University.

There is evidence of Fellows and their colleagues co-producing research with international and local partners. Property valuation is a valuable tool for effective tax revenue collection, but traditional methods are expensive, time consuming and vulnerable to corruption. In Rwanda, a Fellow jointly worked with the International Growth Centre on an innovative property valuation project to improve the existing methods. There was evidence that Fellows helped to build the environment for future international investment. Examples include Fellows drafting industry profiles (Myanmar) and investment opportunity booklets (Mozambique), and helping to build an Open Data Portal for potential investors (Haiti).

In some cases, Fellows were directly involved in supporting the membership process of international organisations. In 2002, the ODI sent its first Fellow to Vanuatu to work in the Ministry of Trade, and over the next ten years, successive fellows have supported the Ministry in its attempts to join the World Trade Organisation. On 24 August 2012, Vanuatu was admitted. Although not involved in the WTO accession process, a current colleague of a Fellow in the Ministry of Trade described their contribution as an 'outstanding performance'.

In many cases, Fellows either remain in their country of posting after their fellowship or return to the country for work in the future. There is evidence of Fellows maintaining professional relationships with colleagues after their postings and reaching back to their ministries to establish partnerships. In Myanmar, for example, a Fellow went on to work for the UNDP's Social Economic Response to COVID-19 team and reached out to the Myanmar Development Institute with plans to work professionally on projects together.

Key driver: Utilising networks

Fellows across all strands in the survey claimed that their ministries benefitted from collaboration and joint working between the organisation and networks of wider stakeholders. A key driver of this improved collaboration is that Fellows utilise their existing networks and knowledge of the international system to strengthen the networks of their host organisations. In Rwanda, a Fellow who had previously worked at the OECD explained the advantages of being a member to her colleagues at the Rwanda Development Board and encouraged them to apply for membership. They went through the internal approval process and she supported them with the application process, introducing them to her previous colleagues, who then gave

advice. On 21 May 2019, Rwanda became a member of the OECD. Colleagues on the Rwanda Development Board report that membership has opened up opportunities for the country including new networks, a new platform to share ideas and support with policy design and review.

In Thailand, colleagues in the Research Institute of the Ministry of Health (HITAP) emphasised that the main added value of hosting Fellows instead of other international staff was their individual networks and their connections to other Fellows through the ODI network. It is potentially interesting to note that Fellows in new countries were more likely than those in older fellowship countries to claim that host organisations benefitted from collaboration and joint working with networks of wider stakeholders.

Key driver: Coalition building

Although embedded within government and employed by their host organisations there is evidence that the role of an outsider allows Fellows to help build coalitions across different ministries. In Haiti, for example, a Fellow at the Centre for the Facilitation of Investments (Ministry of Trade and Industry) was praised for their work on launching an Open Data Platform for potential foreign investors and centralising economic data from multiple sources. In order to do this, they had to create relationships with several ministries, the Prime Minister's office and the presidential palace to ensure continuous data flow. Another good example of coalition building occurred in Guinea-Bissau, where Fellows helped to improve coordination, collaboration and communication across directorates and ministries. One striking example of building coalitions to striking effect in Rwanda is below.

Figure 16: Building coalitions and influencing Energy Policy in Rwanda

In 2014, power outages in Rwanda were a challenge, but the government was not considering power reliability in their planning.

At that time, a Fellow was working in the Ministry of Infrastructure and realised that if the government was to change its plan for power infrastructure (the power generation capacity the country was trying to reach), they would have to build a coalition across multiple ministries. The Fellow worked pro-actively across different parts of government to make connections and identified those who agreed that the wrong target for power consumption needs was being used. They worked alongside one another to use the available data on household electricity use, to demonstrate that rural households were using very little electricity, and that the generation target was therefore too high. This ability to build a coalition and willingness to challenge hierarchies helped the Fellow stand up to another department's Minister when they perceived that the Minister was not thinking equitably.

They were able to convince their supervisor, and then in turn the Minister for Infrastructure and the Prime Minister. The Fellow led a team that then developed a revised five-year Energy Strategy, which cut in half the target for building power station capacity, and saved the country a great deal of money in infrastructure expenditure.

The Fellow described how, despite the Rwandan Civil Service being quite hierarchical, a foreign Fellow could network in this way, and in a way that a local employee might struggle to do.
"Being a foreigner makes you an exception to the rules."

Key driver: Reputation and trust

The ODI Fellowship Scheme is simultaneously relatively unheard of and world renowned. Unless a Fellow has worked in or with a ministry, many Civil Servants have never heard of it. Even within a ministry hosting Fellows, the scheme can exist in a relatively anonymous way. However, within certain international donor institutions, such as the FCDO and the World Bank Group, the scheme is extremely well known. There is a reputation that Fellows are bright and technically competent and there is evidence that this reputation facilitates good working relationships between host organisations and the international community.

In Myanmar, for example, the Asia Foundation knew of the good reputation of ODI Fellows and convinced the Renaissance Institute to host them. In turn, when they were posted there, Fellows forged new

partnerships with donors such as the International Trade Centre and the World Bank, and strengthened the Institute's partnership with the Asia foundation. One Fellow in Guinea-Bissau perceived that staff in their Ministry were "*uncomfortable challenging the opinions of high-value donors*", and a colleague described the Fellow as "*a good link [that] works together with those institutions…[he can] press them to get what we need*".

6.2.4 Improving the working culture

Overall, there was consistent and strong evidence that Fellows improve the working culture of those around them. In several organisations that Fellows work in, civil servants face low and intermittent salaries, poor working conditions and sub-optimal management practices resulting in low levels of motivation and little innovation. Fellows across all streams believed their ministries benefitted from their attitude and motivation, and there is strong evidence that Fellows improved the working culture of the teams that they worked in. The key drivers of this improved working culture were soft skills. The work ethic and professionalism of Fellows had a positive demonstration effect on some of those around them. Another key driver was the new perspectives they brought and their willingness to challenge in built hierarchies.

Soft skills were consistently mentioned alongside technical skills as valuable in the implementation of the work of Fellows. There is strong evidence of Fellows bringing a range of soft skills to their postings, although the combination of skills differs across Fellows. These include: work ethic and adaptability including evidence of proactiveness and perseverance; bringing fresh perspectives and willingness to challenge orthodoxy; collaborative working style including a team-oriented attitude and approach to collective problem solving, openness and ability to receive and give constructive criticism; communication (many Fellows were highlighted for their communication skills with colleagues, other ministries and donors); and personability (many Fellows received high praise for their interpersonal skills and there are many examples of strong friendships within an office being formed during a fellowship).

In Myanmar, we found that a key success factor for a Fellows' role was their own initiative and willingness to learn and immerse themselves in the culture, as well as that of their colleagues. Others mentioned that Fellows brought a diversity of values, as well as skills. In Myanmar, for example, one Fellow engaged in an open discussion with colleagues on issues such as religion, politics and race, and colleagues noted this as useful:

"*There has been progression where ODI Fellows have started norms and normalised certain good practices*."

From the case studies, there is reasonable evidence that after Fellows leave, the impact they have had on improving working culture is sustained, but longer-term monitoring is required to be more certain about this claim. There is good reason to think that changes in organisational culture can be sustained, however. Recent experimental evidence from a randomised controlled trial conducted across the entire Civil Service in Ghana is highly encouraging with regards to the potential of training to positively influence culture and performance.[42]

Key Driver: Demonstration effects

The professionalism of the Fellows and their attitude to work was perceived to have a positive demonstration effect on those around them, and in some cases, they worked exceptionally long hours and far beyond what was expected of them. In Rwanda, for example, colleagues reported that Fellows "*set a hard-working example*", and this had spill over effects (although they also acknowledged that the Rwandan Civil Service is already a relatively committed environment). Similarly, a supervisor argued that local staff had changed their work habits because of observing the Fellows as good examples, mentioning "*punctuality, meeting deadlines, confidence, presentation skills, speed and accuracy, and quality*."

[42] Azulai, M., Rasul, I., Rogger, D., and Williams, M. J. (2020), *Can Training Improve Organizational Culture? Experimental Evidence from Ghana's Civil Service.*

Colleagues in many countries including Ghana, Myanmar, Malawi, Madagascar, Rwanda and Guinea-Bissau highlighted that working with Fellows led to increased motivation within their teams. In these cases, colleagues praised Fellows for bringing drive and motivation to their teams, as well as a strong work ethic. Fellows were also highlighted as having modelled good practices in areas such as project management and organisational skills, which were then followed by colleagues.

One colleague explained that the Fellow "*acted as an example of how another way of work was possible*". This extends beyond work ethic to also include, in the words of one Fellow, "*a change to a planning mindset*". In many cases, working with Fellows led to an increase in confidence and self-belief among colleagues, after they were able to see what they could achieve. One colleague said that, as a result of working with a Fellow, the "*team has more motivation… and a better way of solving problems*". Although a colleague said that one Fellow had "*made living in the office a lot easier*", they highlighted that the "*working environment in the ministry continues to hinder the effectiveness of the team*". Fellows also encouraged teamwork in their posts, which appears to have improved collaboration amongst certain groups. In Djibouti, a colleague described this as the greatest contribution of the Fellow.

Key driver: Bringing new perspectives and challenging hierarchies

In some cases, working culture was improved because Fellows brought new ideas to a problem and a fresh perspective. Several Fellows reported that bringing in fresh perspectives on policy issues was a central purpose of fellowships, and in Rwanda, an external stakeholder mentioned that they had seen multiple examples of Fellows supporting colleagues to evaluate technical issues in new ways. In Liberia, a colleague in the Civil Service Agency explained that the overall contribution of Fellows related to their approach to critical thinking; "*their approach for thinking deep was always what I admired*".[43]

Several interviewees noted that ODI Fellows brought strong critical thinking, self-discipline, initiative, time management and judgement skills that enabled them to excel, even in chaotic or uncertain environments. They accepted feedback and advice, and were able to adapt to different situations and solve a range of problems.

There were examples of Fellows improving the working culture of their teams by challenging hierarchies that other colleagues would be uncomfortable challenging. In Timor-Leste, for example, a Fellow detected a form of mismanagement in the use and reporting of a large donor fund and spent considerable time in dialogue with different actors to make the accounting more transparent. They believe that this in turn set a positive example for their colleagues. In Liberia, one Fellow worked with a colleague to uncover a state-owned enterprise that was not in compliance with Public Financial Management (PFM) regulations, meaning the country was forgoing millions of dollars in revenue. In Nigeria, a supervisor described how fellows were able to "*break the barrier of the civil service and contribute to collaboration for the mid-level personnel*".

6.2.5 Fellows go on to work in development

There is strong evidence that Fellows go on to work in development, but the link between this and donor organisations then being more effective is anecdotal. Key to their future work in development is their improved understanding of developing contexts.

We found considerable evidence of Fellows continuing their careers in development and working for international organisations (e.g. the UNDP, UNICEF and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNDF)), multilateral banks (e.g. the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank), central banks, universities, research organisations focused on economic development, international development consultancies and government departments such as ministries of economy, health, education, foreign affairs or international development (e.g. the FCDO, the Swedish

[43] There is evidence in the academic literature showing that the introduction of evidence to colleagues can affect policy decisions; Rogger, D. and Somani, R. (2019) *Hierarchy and Information*, Link

International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) or GIZ) across European, American and African countries.

From the case studies, we found that in Myanmar, since completing the scheme, a significant proportion of Fellows have chosen to continue working in the development sector in Myanmar. Fellows have since joined the FCDO, the World Bank, the UNDP and the World Health Organisation (WHO), bringing a unique understanding of how the Myanmar government works, which was noted previously as being 'missing' in a lot of these sectors. Notably, the quality of work coming out of the Fellows, their relationships across wide networks and the evidence of their competence were noted as key factors in offers for employment by wider international organisations. Fellows in Guinea-Bissau have gone onto a variety of roles, including founding a consultancy firm and research centre in the country before becoming a post-doctoral researcher; undertaking a PhD in development economics; becoming a health researcher and conducting cost–benefit analysis for a consulting firm. One Fellow intends to return home and try to enter national politics, and only one Fellow has returned to their home country to work in the Civil Service (Colombia).

The resounding message from interviews with Fellows in Guinea-Bissau was that the fellowship has been useful to their career. The practical experience they gained in a developing country's civil service and the understanding it gave them was the most important contribution to their skills and career prospects. This was also highlighted by external stakeholders who employed young professionals including former Fellows. Few Fellows thought that their technical economics abilities had improved, but most valued the improved understanding of the reality on the ground that they gained.

We found that the country a Fellow is placed in influences their post-fellowship professional interests in the following ways:

- they gain a useful network in that country that they use afterwards (54%);
- their knowledge of the country and its systems make it a natural focus of interest (47%);
- their appreciation for the culture they experience and the people they meet means they are keen to continue working there (37%).

Only 16% of respondents said the country they worked in had no influence on their post-fellowship professional interests.

Key driver: Fellows' improved understanding of developing contexts

There is strong evidence that the experience of being an ODI Fellow leads to an improved understanding of developing contexts. This is something stressed by Fellows as a positive outcome for them on a personal and professional level. It is also something that employers (especially at the FCDO) agree is of high value.

Our survey results confirm that Fellows perceived themselves to have an improved understanding of developing contexts. When asked which skills/knowledge or expertise they learned over the course of their fellowship, they responded as follows:

- Improved understanding of country of posting (97%);
- Understanding of capacity in ministries in developing countries (95%);
- Improved understanding of policy landscape in country of posting (94%);
- Understanding of processes in developing countries (93%);
- Improved understanding of subject matter of ministry (92%);
- Language and cultural skills learned (79%);
- Improved technical skills learned on job (62%).

A Fellow in Malawi, for example, argued that in her current role within a donor organisation, she is better prepared to set her expectations when working with a ministry. When she was a Fellow, she saw how donors have very high expectations of what can be done with a limited budget, yet her experience showed her the misalignment between what is said can be done and what can actually be done in practice. Working in the ministry, the Fellow now understands what is realistic, and it helps them to set more achievable goals. In Myanmar, some Fellows who were previously working as FCDO staff felt that through the fellowship, they saw "*the other side of the donor–beneficiary relationship*".

6.3 External influencing factors

We conclude this chapter by describing the external factors that influence the capacity outcomes. We first use our contribution matrix to explore these factors before looking at our survey data to describe the constraints that are most common across all fellowships.

The ODI Fellowship Scheme and the Fellows' placements are only a small factor influencing capacity development in host organisations and countries. Several other relevant factors were identified that influence the effectiveness and sustainability of the work of Fellows. Moreover, there are other TA programmes that host organisations may benefit from. External influences, such as governmental attitudes, the political climate and the activity of other donors, can positively or negatively influence the level of results attained. In this section, we examine factors that affect government effectiveness and Fellows' contributions. The findings are summarised in the Figure below and provide an assessment of how each factor influences the capacity of Fellows to contribute.

Figure 17: External factors that affected Fellow's ability to contribute to capacity development

External factors	Improving staff capacities, including skills and implementation know-how.	Facilitating the strengthening of networks and coalitions	Contributing to improving the context, working culture and operating environment	Fellows contributing to the design and implementation of policies, programmes, strategies or action plans within a Ministry
Staff turnover	● ● ●		●	● ●
Logistical constraints	●	●	●	●
Leadership and work culture	● ● ●	●	● ●	● ●
Hierarchy of ministry	● ●	●	●	● ● ●
Support from line manager	● ● ● ●		●	● ●
Language skills	● ● ●	●	● ● ●	● ●

Language skills were critical to the success of Fellows in Myanmar and Guinea-Bissau. This finding is mirrored by the survey results, where 4% of Fellows considered this a significant constraint (see Figure 19). In Myanmar, one Fellow learnt basic Burmese before his placement and continued to refine this throughout his posting, ultimately being able to take notes and engage with the government in the national language.

On the other hand, Fellows are affected by external factors related to the effectiveness of host organisations. The survey found that the biggest constraint cited by Fellows was poor line management (37%). Many Fellows in Guinea-Bissau argued that the dynamism and talent of their line manager was a key factor in determining how effective they were in their postings. Similarly, the motivation of other staff members was also considered an enabler and barrier in other fellowship countries, such as Nigeria. In the ODI's survey of the 2017–2019 cohort, Fellows stated that the unavailability of colleagues also acted as a constraint (63% somewhat, 20% significant). Moreover, the high levels of turnover within host organisations was mentioned as a key constraint to the sustainability of results achieved by many Fellows.

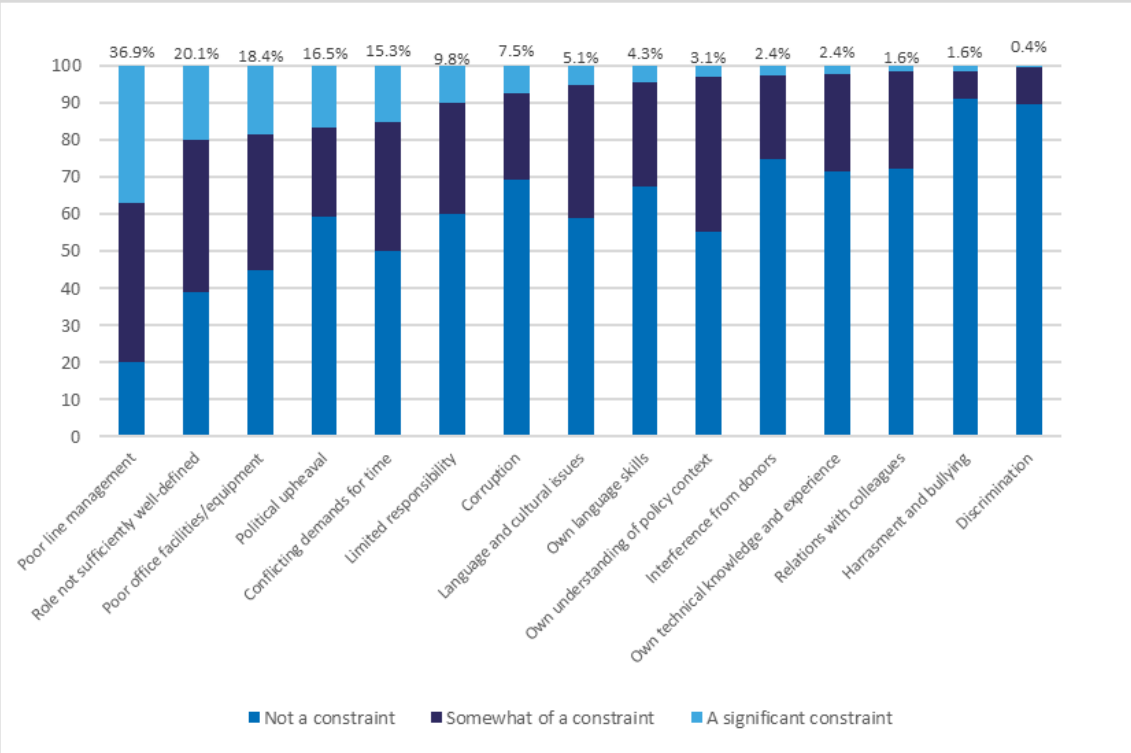
Moreover, the preparedness of host organisations was also seen as an influencing factor. In the survey, 20% of Fellows stated that their role not being sufficiently defined was a significant constraint. Moreover, 15% stated that conflicting demands for time were a significant constraint. In Nigeria, Fellows found some difficulty in navigating their position as a young foreigner that was placed in a usually well-respected role, close to management. Due to Nigeria's principles on seniority being important, Fellows struggled to be respected highly enough to adequately complete their work.

On the contrary, Fellows in Rwanda argued that the work culture and openness to international donors was an enabling factor for them and their ability to have an influential role. Interviewees in Rwanda consistently commented on the outward looking nature of the Rwandan government, its ambition and its openness to international support. This is likely to have been a factor enabling Fellows in Rwanda to have an impact. Moreover, at senior levels in the Rwandan government, capacity was strong. Some interviewees thought that institutions were therefore able to use Fellows strategically to contribute to organisational capacity development. This provides evidence that the same factors (such as capacity) can act as enablers or barriers depending on the context.

Poor office facilities or equipment was cited as a constraint by 18% of Fellows in the survey. In Nigeria, Fellows argued that their capacity to make a significant contribution was often obstructed by logistical issues. Fellows working within less prioritised departments, such as health ministries, noted such a severe lack of funding and equipment that it was difficult to improve capacity in a meaningful way

Finally, political upheaval also plays a role in the effectiveness of host organisations and the role that Fellows can play. This is reflected in the survey, where 17% of Fellows cited this as a significant constraint. This is also reflected in the case studies and interviews related to the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had on the fellowship, and the potential for Fellows to remain in post.

Figure 18: What constrains Fellows the most?



Source: Survey of Fellows Q50: Please assess which of the following were constraints to delivering high-quality work during your fellowship posting. N=255.

7.0 Sustainability

In this chapter, we analyse evidence of the likelihood of the impacts achieved by the fellowship scheme being sustained.

7.1 Sustainability of observed impacts

In this section we explore the existing evidence of the likelihood of the impacts achieved by the Fellows being sustained beyond their placement. It is implicit in the aim of the scheme that capacity developed should be sustained. There are several dimensions through which we can assess the extent to which results are sustained. First, we look at the likelihood of outcomes being sustained, and whether any types of outcomes are more likely to have a sustainable impact. Then, we look at the extent to which Fellows and the ODI management have supported the sustainability of the results achieved. Finally, we explore how external influencing factors affect the contribution made by Fellows and the likelihood of the results being sustained.

We found emerging evidence of the contributions made by Fellows having the potential to be sustained in all case study countries. In Myanmar, for example, supervisors highlighted that local economists are now 'fully capable' of supporting Citizens Budgets, including helping state and regional governments to prepare pre-budget statements, which are more 'technically sophisticated' than before and involve a wider range of budget analysis and revenue forecasting techniques. Fellows also set up systems to strengthen the sustainability of training provided. Colleagues translated training materials delivered, and Fellows 'tried to produce everything in a way that could be reused'.

In Guinea-Bissau, colleagues in the Ministry of Finance were confident that Fellows had contributed to improving existing processes and systems a lot, and that there was not much missing with regards to their macroeconomic forecasting model and their capacity to utilise it. Moreover, the policies that were influenced by the work of Fellows, such as reform of the Public Teacher's Act, will undoubtedly have a long-term impact. The data coordination between and improvement of data management systems in multiple ministries are also likely to remain in place and be sustainable for the future.

In terms of the role played by Fellows in promoting the sustainability of results, it is important to highlight that Fellows have helped to strengthen sustainability beyond their postings, but this has been due to their own choice, and in several cases due to them continuing to work in their placement country, rather than being actively encouraged or facilitated by the ODI.

There are multiple examples across fellowship countries of Fellows staying beyond their fellowships. In Thailand, a former Fellow was permanently employed by the host organisation at the end of her fellowship and is now deputy director at the same institution. Other examples were found in Rwanda and Ethiopia. Moreover, we have also found significant evidence of Fellows wanting to prolong their stay to ensure an effective handover with incoming fellows and to finish ongoing work. These have sometimes been funded by the host organisation or other donors (e.g. the UNDP, the FCDO). According to the Fellows' survey responses, 17% of respondents extended their postings[44]. Some of these Fellows extended their fellowships in a new location after being re-assigned or took on new placements in other locations due to their high performance.

"The main challenge was staff turnover and I wanted to leave a team that was well trained and could take over all responsibilities from me. So, with the commitment from the Ministry that the officers that I would train in my last year [would continue working] for at least the next 3 years, I and the ODI decided to extend my fellowship by a year. The goal of the extension was achieved, and the team is still in place." [Fellow survey response]

In some cases, Fellows have also stayed in touch with their host organisations, although this contact has been occasional according to both parties. According to survey responses, around 50% of Fellows maintained contact with work contacts within the Ministry (34% of respondents claimed to have maintained regular contact), while over 60% of respondents maintained regular contact with social contacts. According to supervisors, 60% of respondents maintained occasional contact with Fellows, 35% maintained regular contact and 5% maintained no contact.

When Fellows were asked in the survey about the ways in which their contributions had a lasting impact, over 70% claimed that it was through the improved capacity of colleagues, while over 50% argued it was

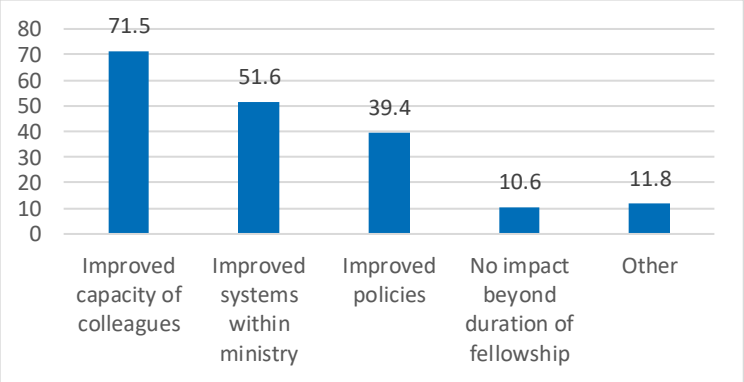
[44] The fellowship management team is committed to trying to extend fellowship postings when a strong case is made and this happens ocassionally.

improved systems within the ministry, and under 40% claimed it was through improved policies. As such, a distinction between individual capacity developed and institutional capacity developed remains and will likely continue to pose a challenge in terms of the sustainability of results. Concerns remain around institutional knowledge and how these skills are preserved within host organisations in cases of staff turnover. As such, given the issues around retention of staff, the results achieved through Fellowships would be more likely to have been sustained in the longer-term if the capacity of the organisation, rather than of individuals within it, was improved.

In terms of the external influencing factors affecting the likelihood of results being sustained, it is worth noting that ODI fellowship countries find themselves in a wide range of circumstances that affect the potential for results to be sustained. As noted in the Myanmar case study, one of them is how long ago the country joined the fellowship. As seen in Rwanda, the regularity with which they have received Fellows is also a factor. Finally, whether the host organisation sees the fellowship as a way to fill capacity gaps or as a capacity development opportunity, and whether it has a feasible handover plan for the Fellows' responsibilities, also play a role.

When describing what might make the results of the fellowship Scheme sustainable, some Fellows and their colleagues talked about the need to ensure that local staff could carry on using relevant tools, systems, and skills once the Fellow had left. This points to the importance of Fellows working collaboratively with local colleagues, rather than independently, to get tasks done, as well as to the need for Fellows to consider how they can ensure that local colleagues can continue in this way. Moreover, a clear and structured handover process is also considered key to ensuring sustainability. Fellows also highlighted the importance of continuity between postings to enable Fellows to achieve longer-term results where handover to local staff is not possible. One Fellow stated that while he was the first Fellow in the Liberia Revenue Authority, for example, another Fellow continuing his work could have achieved greater cumulative impacts, because his role was not finalised by the time he left.

Figure 19: What kind of support will have a lasting impact?



Source: Survey of Fellows, Q65: In which ways do you think these contributions will have a lasting impact on the ministry/agency? N=246, Percentage.

In terms of the role played by the ODI in promoting sustainability, there is limited evidence of the ODI playing a considerably positive role. The lack of a strategy to guide engagement with host organisations has resulted in a lack of a clear definition of sustainable capacity development and objectives to assess progress against. In addition to this, it has also resulted in many fellowship placements focusing on filling capacity gaps rather than fostering sustainable capacity building, which can be detrimental to the strengthening of local staff in the long-term. Moreover, the limited effort put into monitoring outcomes and whether outcomes achieved are sustained results in a limited understanding of the enablers and constraints to sustainability (see Section 8.2 for more detail). In the survey, Fellows suggested that stronger performance management and regular check-ins could contribute to the sustainability of results (see more detail in Section 5.3).

7.2 Monitoring long-term impact and beyond-placement impact

The aim of this section is to provide an overview of how the longer-term benefits of placements are assessed, how beyond-placement impact is monitored, how end of placement impact is measured and to what extent and depth debriefing and shared learning take place.

We found very limited evidence that there is any systematic effort to assess the longer-term benefits of placements. The ODI conducts end of fellowship surveys with Fellows and supervisors that aim to assess the effectiveness of the placement. These questionnaires are submitted shortly after the end of the placement and do not have any questions that assess the long-term benefits of the placements. The ODI produce Fellow country notes and Fellow reports at the end of their fellowships, but these sources of evidence are not synthesised, and a narrative of their achieved results is missing. The ODI does keep a record of ex-Fellows and has monitored the roles that Fellows go on to have and to what extent they stay within the international development space. However, any longer-term benefit to the host organisations or beyond-placement impact is only gathered anecdotally and assessed based on interactions with host organisations, not explicitly at the ODI's request. As such, it is difficult to assess the extent to which the contributions made by ODI Fellows are sustainable, as seen in Section 7.1.

In terms of the extent to which debriefs and lesson sharing takes places, this is up to the host organisation and the Fellow to agree and set up. Some host organisations have a more hands-on approach to line management and have sessions to discuss the effectiveness of the placement. In some cases, these sessions also take place informally between Fellows during the handover process and the induction of an incoming Fellow. In the survey, we found some evidence that Fellows had been encouraged by host organisations and were willing to extend their placements for a few months to support this process. However, we found no significant evidence of the ODI management team participating in these sessions or capturing the lessons learnt in a systematic way, even in cases where there was an early termination. One Fellow made a related point on learning in the management of the fellowship scheme. This Fellow reflected that the scheme does not do enough to learn from the experiences of Fellows and improve the scheme, nor maximise impact in the future. We consider this to be a missed opportunity to understand the objectives of host organisations in requesting Fellows, the results achieved, the potential for longer-term impact and what can be done to improve results.

> *"There has never been any platform for us to discuss these kinds of suggestions with the fellowship team themselves. There is a post-fellowship evaluation that we are expected to complete, and the team make it clear that they are always willing to listen to our suggestions, but I think there is quite a difference between being able to send an e-mail with an idea and actually having suggestions taken on board... At the end of the day, I feel we know more about our own posts than anyone and it would be better if the information we have to share could be taken on board."* Recent Fellow

When we explored similar issues and how to assess the sustainability of results with comparable programmes, there was an acknowledgement from programmes that assessing sustainability and monitoring beyond placement impact is difficult and costly. We found limited evidence that other schemes make a more systematic effort to assess longer-term benefits. Interviewees claimed that they had not found the right way to do this yet, but that they were keen to improve and incorporate sustainability-related questions into their Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) tools. However, we found that IGH and OPF management teams each have a member of staff dedicated to Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). Their approaches to monitoring long-term impact are discussed in the box below.

Figure 20: Comparator approaches to monitoring long-term impact[45]

How do other schemes learn?

IGH and OPF management teams each have a member of staff dedicated to Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). Part of this role includes working with individual Fellows to help them monitor their impact. To this end, M&E Leads discuss the programme theory of change, outputs, outcomes, goals and indicators (structured around sustainable development principles) with each Fellow at the start of their placements. Fellows then use this guidance to put together formal plans for M&E, establish relevant indicators, and collect baseline data. As discussed in section 4.3 (Objective setting and performance management) OPF fellows are obliged to provide management with bi-monthly reflection diaries and timesheets throughout the duration of their placements. This provides scheme management with rich qualitative and quantitative data which helps to draw out key learnings around the enablers and barriers to fellows providing effective capacity building. OPF management staff interviewed considered this information helpful to course-correct and intervene with additional support whilst fellows were in-post, but also considered it valuable for reflecting on the efficacy of the different components of their delivery model, understanding their final impact on, and contributing to the debates on technical assistance.

8.0 Efficiency

In this chapter, we analyse the existing evidence of whether the ODI Fellowship Scheme is efficient.

We aim to answer how well has the ODI Fellowship Scheme delivered its expected results to date, including in terms of budget allocations and cost efficiency of activities, compared to other similar schemes. We have answered this in three sections examining costs and budgets, drivers of efficiency and opportunities.

8.1 Costs and budgets

To assess the fellowship scheme's efficiency, we considered the degree to which inputs, financial or otherwise, translate to capacity building outputs and outcomes, and to long-term development impact, at the minimum possible cost. We therefore focus on examining how, and to what extent, the ODI have sought to minimise costs and provide value for money. To assess the efficiency of the scheme, we provide an overview of its budget and expenditure, the results delivered compared to budget and costs per Fellow, as well as benchmarking these against other schemes.

Programme budget (planned vs. actual)

We consider the overall expenditure of the scheme against budget, disaggregated by management and operational activity. We also look at the average cost of the fellowship per year, broken down by salary supplementation, rental costs, and other key drivers of cost variations between postings.

Over the course of the most recent phase of FCDO support (financial years 2015/16–2019/20), actual fellowship scheme spending aligned with budgetary provision, totalling £19.7 million. The table below sets out the fellowship scheme's planned budget and actual expenditure, year-by-year. Between 2015/16 and 2019/20, actual annual expenditure of the scheme sat within the range of £3.2 million to £3.5 million. In

[45] 'Revisiting technical assistance:Evidence-based learning', The Oxford Policy Fellowship (2019), link

2015/16 and 2016/17, expenditure ran marginally over budget. This was brought in line in 2017/18, and in 2018/19 and 2019/20 the scheme operated marginally below budget.

Table 2: Total expenditure vs. total budget (2015–2020)

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Total budget	£3,219,972	£3,297,868	£3,405,674	£3,481,735	£3,581,900
Total expenditure	£3,515,637	£3,529,940	£3,395,042	£3,242,100	£3,407,706
% of budget	109%	107%	100%	93%	95%

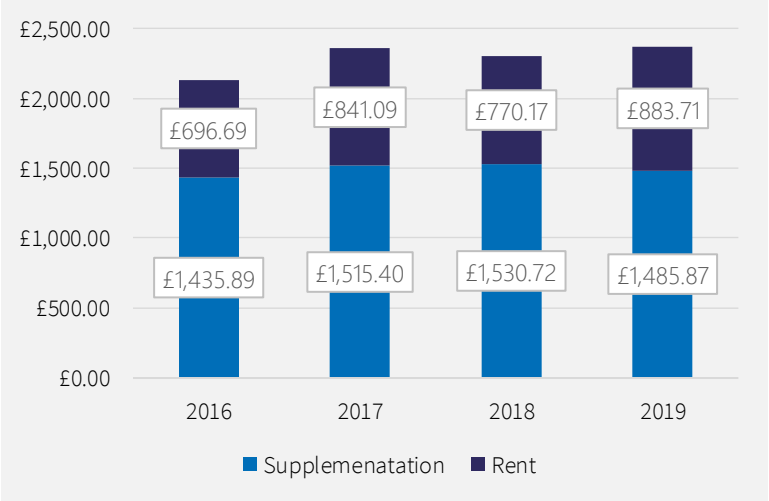
Source: ODI budgets and financial reports

Planned budgets indicated an expected 82:18 split between operational and management costs, and actual expenditure has fallen broadly in line with this split, although operational costs have been a marginally higher proportion of total costs (83%) in four out of the five financial years examined (operational costs were 81% in 2018/19). Against budget headings, the highest costs by a considerable margin were for Fellows' salary supplementation and rent (65–70% of total costs). The next highest costs were for staffing (7–8%) and office space and equipment (7–8%).

Average cost per Fellow

Given the relatively high operational expenditure of the scheme, the key metric to capture cost-efficiency identified during the inception phase was the average cost per fellowship per year. The cost per ODI fellowship varies primarily according to the level of local salaries and rent in the country of posting. In 2019, monthly salary supplementation for FCDO-funded fellows ranged from £489 (Swaziland) to £1,855 (Sri Lanka), and rent from £526 (Vanuatu) to £1,529 (Liberia). The chart below illustrates that average salary supplementation sits within the region of £1,500 per Fellow per month, with rent costing an additional £800 per Fellow per month. A key driver of the variability in salaries is the variability in the cost of living across fellowship countries, whilst a key driver of the cost of accommodation is the cost of security. In countries where it is necessary to house Fellows in secure compounds with guards on duty for 24-hours a day (e.g. Liberia), rent costs are significantly higher. The proportion of fellowship postings in Fragile and Conflict Affected States (FCAS), where security costs are likely to be higher, is relevant from this perspective.

Figure 21: Average monthly salary and rent supplement (2016–19)



Source: ODI financial reports, all ODI Fellows

The total average cost of each Fellow per year includes the full range of costs associated with each fellowship (including advances and bonuses, travel, insurance, medical cover, security, language training,

pre-departure briefing and selection), as well as a proportion of the overall management and administrative costs covering the entire scheme. The average cost of the fellowship per fellow per year in 2019/20 was £43,689. This is the highest it has been during the most recent phase of FCDO support, an increase that can be explained by a reduction in the overall number of Fellows from 87 to 78 in FY18/19, and an increase in the number of Fellows posted to FCAS countries.

Table 3: Average cost per Fellow (2015–20)

	FY15/16	FY16/17	FY17/18	FY18/19	FY19/20
Average number of fellows	87	88	87	78	78
Total expenditure	£3,515,638	£3,529,941	£3,395,042	£3,242,101	£3,407,706
Average cost per fellow	£40,410	£40,113	£39,023	£41,565	£43,689

Source: ODI financial reports, all ODI Fellows

Comparator programme costs

In order to assess whether this is a reasonable cost for supplying young professionals to work in overseas institutions that participate in the fellowship scheme, it is necessary to benchmark against similar resident adviser model TA schemes. There are no equivalent schemes that post junior economists and statisticians into governments for two years as civil servants. However, there are several other resident adviser schemes that are similar to the ODI fellowship to the degree that they have a focus on public service professionals posted into public institutions for periods ranging from six months to two years. The evaluation has selected two of these programmes considered to be the most comparable from a value for money perspective:

- The Oxford Policy Fellowship (OPF) selects early-career professionals with legal or public policy expertise and places them overseas for two years in host ministries where there is a need for additional legal or legislative capacity. OPF Fellows are similar to ODI Fellows in age (early-career professionals) and level of education (postgraduate degree level) and are also posted directly to government ministries. The main difference to note between the schemes is that the OPF focuses on providing and building additional legal capacity, rather than capacity to deliver economic and statistical analysis.
- The Improving Global Health (IGH) Fellowship selects early-career National Health Service (NHS) professionals with health systems expertise and places them overseas for six months to work in healthcare settings. IGH Fellows do not provide direct clinical care whilst overseas, their role is that of a project coordinator and their remit is to help build local healthcare capacity and capability through system development and strengthening work. In addition to having shorter placements and focusing explicitly on healthcare professionals, IGH fellowships differ from ODI fellowships because IGH Fellows are recruited directly from NHS roles that they are expected to return to upon completion of their placement.

It is also necessary to compare against replacement cost estimates, considering the perspective of the partner organisations who benefit from fellowship programmes, and estimate how much they would have to pay somebody to do the work provided by the Fellow in the absence of the scheme. There are many suppliers of TA in economic policy and management similar to that provided by ODI fellows. In many examples from our survey, interviews, desk review and case studies, people said that the only alternative to ODI Fellows providing TA would be from outside organisations. These include consultants from international institutions (e.g. the IMF, World Bank, UNDP and the EU), academics, representatives of non-profit initiatives (e.g. the International Growth Centre and other think-tanks) and various consultancies differing in their scale. The evaluation has selected a replacement cost it considers to be the most applicable:

- Technical Assistance provided by a consultancy charging a standard fee equivalent to £400 per day. Whilst we consider this a reasonable replacement cost, it is worth noting that Junior Consultants

available at this rate will not typically have more than two or three years of experience. As such, they may not be capable of substituting the work of more experienced ODI Fellows. More experienced consultants have higher day rates.

The table below demonstrates that the average cost of an ODI Fellow compares favourably with the cost of replacement TA that might be provided by a consultancy. Benchmarked against the most comparable resident adviser model programme identified by the evaluation (the OPF), the cost of an ODI fellow also compares favourably. However, it is important to note that the OPF invests greater resources in monitoring the development impact of placements, and in supporting fellows to deliver sustainable capacity building whilst in post. Such activities are resource intensive, but could be relevant from a value for money perspective given their potential to increase the development impact of each fellowship placement.

The cost of an ODI Fellow compares less favourably with the estimated cost of an IGH Fellow in-post for one year. Since postings last only six months and fellows are recruited directly from NHS roles, it should be noted that a more modest package of benefits than that offered by the ODI is sufficient to recruit IGH Fellows. Each IGH Fellow receives a supplementation that covers basic costs such as food, accommodation, internet/phone use and travel to and from work. It is unlikely that this supplementation would be sufficient to attract young economists and statisticians with the right mix of qualifications, skills and experience for the ODI fellowship and retain them for two years in often challenging working environments.

Table 4: Cost per Fellow or fellow replacement, ODI vs. comparators

Comparator	Cost per year	Notes on calculation
ODI Fellow	£40,000–£45,000	Total annual expenditure of the scheme divided by the average number of Fellows placed in host ministries over the course of a single financial year.
IGH Fellow	£25,000	A six-month IGH placement costing £12,500[46] extended over 12 months might cost £25,000 per year.
Oxford Policy Fellow	£75,000	Oxford Policy Fellowship project coordinators interviewed stated that it would cost £75,000 to place an OPF Fellow in a host ministry for one year.
Junior Consultant	£92,000	A Junior Consultant costing £400 per day working a full year (230 working days) might cost £92,000 per year.

Source: Interviews with comparator programmes – 2019 Annual Review

Considering the notable differences between ODI and IGH fellowships, these cost figures offer a broadly positive impression of the efficiency of the scheme, in line with the Annual Reviews conducted in 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018. These considered the scheme to represent good value for money for FCDO and host governments. We consider that £40,000–45,000 is a reasonable annual cost for supplying talented young professionals to work in a range of quite challenging environments.

Results delivered to budget

However, the most recent Annual Reviews conducted in 2019 and 2020 question whether these average cost figures represent true value for money in terms of the long-term development impact being delivered by the programme at the minimum possible cost. They note that making assessments around the scheme's value for money with a reasonable degree of confidence requires more evidence of impact.

[46] Improving Global Health through Leadership Development Programme Annual Report 19/20

There is strong evidence that many ODI Fellows deliver their intended outputs. These outputs are technical in the form of training for staff, high-quality data being collected, budget support and contribution to technical reports, policy papers and bills. They also undertake administrative tasks that are both generic and grouped around the principles of organisational management. Finally, they participate in networks and partnership building, as well as utilising their soft skills. There is strong evidence that in many cases these outputs lead to capacity outcomes in the form of improved staff capacities and implementation know-how; strengthened networks and coalitions; improved working culture in host organisations; and Fellows' own improved understanding of developing countries. There is also strong evidence that many ODI fellows contribute to intermediate outcomes. Together with their colleagues in host governments, many Fellows contribute to high-quality and implementable strategies, and most go on to work in development. It is harder to assess the extent to which host governments better understand economic analysis and social contexts (our third intermediate outcome), and difficult to assess the impact of fellows on longer-term outcomes. Namely, that donor organisations are more effective in delivering development results, better economic, financial and public sector management in country, and services that better reach poor people resulting in the eventual intended impact of the programme, reduced poverty.

The FCDO's Chief Economist encourages programmes to judge their success on a portfolio basis, explaining:

> *"We should judge our success on a portfolio basis. Not every project will be a success. We work in difficult places tackling intransigent issues. If every project worked we would not be taking enough risk. Much as venture capitalists do, we need to think of our investments as a portfolio. The wins when they come can be very big (for example when we manage to change national policy or help trigger economic transformation) and a few big wins can pay for all the less successful projects."*[47]

If this logic is applied to the fellowship, then individual Fellows contributing to highly impactful work may render the whole programme good value for money, even if some fellows have little or no impact. There are many examples within our evaluation of work that Fellows have contributed to which could have high impact. For example, since 2011 teachers in Guinea-Bissau had been demanding a reform to the Public Teacher's Act and were dissatisfied with inaction on the part of the government, repeatedly going on strike. An ODI Fellow led an assessment of the costs of a reform to teachers' working conditions, salaries and benefits, and presented it to a multi-disciplinary committee. This was considered sufficient evidence by the Council of Ministers, and they approved the reform in 2018, with teachers strikes in turn decreasing significantly. Although the Fellow played only a small part in the reform of the Public Teacher's Act, the result (a decrease in teacher strikes) could have a significant impact on child development, long-term human capital accumulation, and lifetime earnings.[48] Recent experimental evidence has shown that levels of learning are so low in Guinea-Bissau that interventions can bring 'transformative learning gains'.[49]

Developing countries are estimated to spend between 3.4% and 5% of GDP on infrastructure investments.[50] Influencing these investments from within the host government may have huge economic effects. In another example from our evaluation (see Figure 16: Building coalitions and influencing Energy Policy in Rwanda), one Fellow contributed to a revision of the Energy Policy of Rwanda, which revised the planned infrastructure investments in power plants in the country. Although we do not attempt to quantify the contribution of this Fellow to this policy, examples like these could justify the investment in the fellowship.

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[47] Interview with Rachel Glennerster (2019), *Lessons from a year at DFID*. Link

[48] Other researchers have tried to put an economic value on averting teacher strikes in an entirely different context (Argentina) and estimated that primary school children who lost 88 days of primary school due to teacher strikes lost between 2% and 3% of annual labour market earnings when they were between 30 and 40 years old. In Argentina this equated to $2.34bn34 billion of foregone earnings due to strikes.
Jaume, D. and Willén, A. (2018), *The Long-run Effects of Teacher Strikes: Evidence from Argentina*. *Link*

[49] Fazzio, I., Eble, A., Lumsdaine, R., Boone, P., et al (2020), *Achieving child literacy and numeracy in the world's poorest areas: Evidence from rural Guinea-Bissau, Link*

[50] World Bank (2019), *Price Tag for Sustainable Infrastructure Spending in Developing Countries is 4.5% of GDP, link*

8.2 Drivers of efficiency

The ODI's attention to containing costs in management and recruitment, placements, and in-post support to Fellows has been highlighted in previous internal reviews of the scheme. Evidence examined as part of this evaluation confirms that this is still the case. The impression from interviews with Fellows, programme management and comparators is that the ODI are concerned with ensuring efficiency and hence ultimately offering value for money. This has been achieved through:

- Ensuring economy in the purchase of the few inputs needed for the fellowship scheme: Salary supplementation paid to Fellows has not increased in recent years. Rent allowances are reviewed annually to provide modest but secure local accommodation, based on information provided by an external provider, Employment Conditions Abroad (ECA). Insurance and healthcare policies which cover Fellows are reviewed annually with the ODI's broker to ensure competitive rates. Flights (always economy class) are purchased through an external provider (Diversity Travel) to ensure competitive rates. All other fellowship expenses (e.g. language training, temporary accommodation, vaccinations) are reimbursable, rather than paid upfront.
- Operating with a small central management team: The fellowship scheme team consists of 3.2 full-time employees (FTE) - two FTE (the Head of the Scheme and one Programme Officer), one Programme Manager working four days a week and one Programme Officer working two days a week. We consider this to be a small team to expect to deliver management, administration, recruitment, safeguarding and support to 100 or so Fellows working in a range of challenging environments across the world. However, the longevity of the scheme and extensive network of former Fellows has been leveraged to good effect to reduce the burden for central management to deliver in-post professional and pastoral support. For example, the role of Safeguarding Officer, created in 2019, was taken on by one of the central management team, rather than a new member of staff. Also, the Scheme often draws from its networks to provide support to placements without hiring through the ODI.
- Containing onboarding and preparation costs: The induction briefing sessions are comprehensive and are well-managed and efficient in the sense that they adequately prepare Fellows for a range of postings together, over five days, thus minimising additional travel and accommodation expenses.

8.3 Opportunities for greater efficiency

Reassignment and termination rates indicate where fellowship placements are not working as expected, and high rates may pose a risk to the overall efficiency of the scheme. In this section, we examine the reasons for reassignments and early terminations, and discuss opportunities to promote greater efficiency by retaining more Fellows in-post. Whilst a small number of reassignments are expected and demonstrate that the Scheme can adapt to unforeseen circumstances, high turnover of Fellows is likely to be detrimental to effective capacity building. Fellows surveyed who completed their original postings were more likely to claim to have improved the capacity of colleagues than those who were reassigned by 10 percentage points (72% versus 63%). They were also more likely to have claimed to have improved systems within ministries (54% vs. 34%) and policies (41% vs. 25%). There were no significant differences compared with Fellows who extended their postings, however.

Using official monitoring data from the ODI, we detail the precise completion rates for the last three years. The table below demonstrates that 73 Fellows (60%) from the last three cohorts were retained in their original postings for the full two years. Of the 48 Fellows (40%) who did not complete their original postings, 22 (18%) were reassigned to a different posting and 26 (21%) terminated early.[51]

[51] The Fellowship scheme has a strict definition of early termination and we do not distinguish in these figures the difference between a Fellow that terminated after 6 months vs. after 1 year and 11 months.

Table 5: FCDO-funded fellowship completion rates

	2015-17	2016-18	2017-19	2018-20	2019-21	Total
Fellows posted	51	49	41	39	41	221
Fellows reassigned	8 (16%)	3 (6%)	8 (20%)	7 (18%)	7 (17%)	33 (15%)
Fellows terminated early	14 (27%)	12 (24%)	9 (22%)	8 (21%)	9 (22%)	52 (24%)
Original posting completed	29 (57%)	34 (69%)	24 (59%)	24 (62%)	25 (61%)	136 (62%)

Source: ODI management information

Our survey asked 47 Fellow respondents (19%) who had terminated early to describe, in their own words, the reasons they did not complete their postings[52]. Of these:

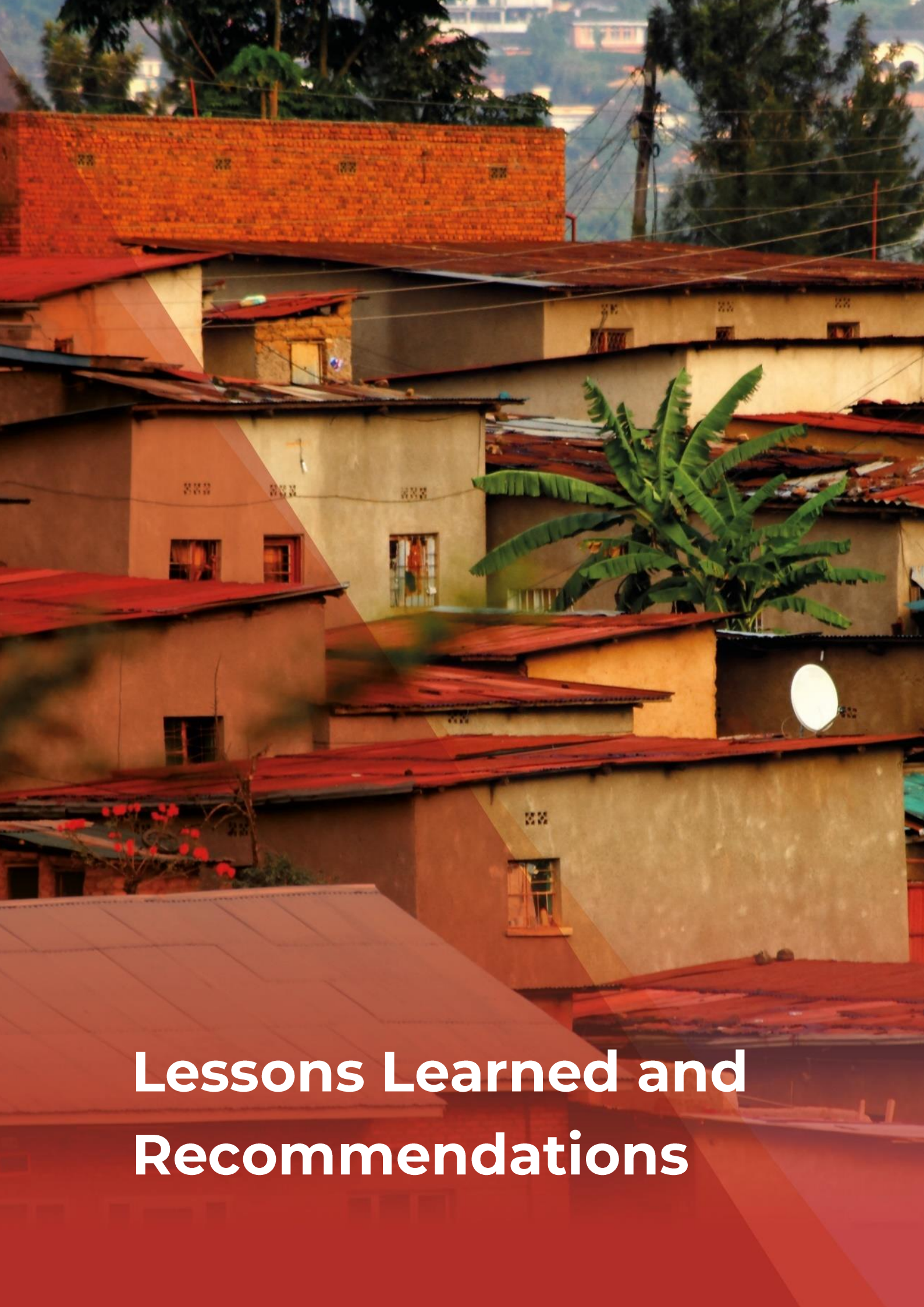
- 10 left primarily due to political upheaval or conflict;
- 8 left primarily to take up an alternative position elsewhere;
- 8 left primarily due to their role becoming untenable during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- 7 left primarily due to a lack of a defined role or a sufficient pipeline of meaningful work;
- 5 left primarily due to burn out, citing long working hours and stress;
- 4 left primarily for family or personal reasons;
- 4 left primarily for medical reasons;
- 1 left primarily due to co-financing issues.

The contexts that Fellows work in are sometimes very challenging environments and for this reason we consider that a certain number of terminations will inevitably occur due to political upheaval, conflict, or personal and medical reasons. Similarly, we are not concerned from an efficiency perspective by the terminations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Increasing the salary and benefits package, or the end of fellowship bonus, may reduce the number of Fellows terminating early to take up alternative job opportunities. However, this may not result in a net improvement in cost effectiveness, considering that relatively few Fellows terminate early for this reason.

Nevertheless, there are opportunities for the ODI to reduce the numbers of early terminations and promote efficiency by implementing some of the necessary changes discussed in the Effectiveness section (4) of this report. A more focused effort to ensure higher-quality postings would help to reduce the number of Fellows terminating early due to a lack of a defined role or an insufficient pipeline of meaningful work. Strengthening the processes in place to provide professional and pastoral support to Fellows in-post, as discussed in Sections 4.3 (Performance Management) and 4.4 (Support available to Fellows during placement), would also help in this regard, and may also reduce the number of those terminating early due to burn out.

These opportunities, and many of those discussed in Section 4 of this report, all have implications for the capacity of the ODI management team. Several comparator schemes examined as part of this evaluation have implemented changes similar to those discussed in this report, and these required a greater investment in management resource than the ODI team is currently able to provide. As also noted in recent Annual Reviews, we consider that the limited size of the central management team represents a risk to the efficiency of the scheme, and that it is vital moving forward that sufficient resources are devoted to each placement to ensure that the scheme can achieve results and be effective.

[52] The fellowship management team also collect monitoring data on the reasons for early termination and re-assignment.



Lessons Learned and Recommendations

9.0 Lessons learned

Below, we draw out the key lessons emerging from the evaluation findings, including how the delivery model can be made more effective and what makes a good-quality posting.

1. Embedded TA and capacity development support remains a need for many of the countries where the ODI Fellowship Scheme places Fellows. It is often seen as comparatively better positioned to develop capacity compared with short-term consultancies.
2. Having a clear definition of what capacity development means is important and must be communicated with the scheme's participants. We found that disagreement between what is considered capacity development has been detrimental to the scheme's relationship with its main donor, as well as in setting expectations for Fellows and host organisations. The definition must be broad enough to encompass the range of activities that Fellows conduct, but specific enough so that it is communicated as a key objective of the scheme.
3. Government demand for TA is essential to the scheme's success but can be defined more robustly. The scheme prides itself on being demand-driven and many stakeholders argue that the trusting relationship established between Fellow and host organisation stems from their embeddedness. However, there is an opportunity to strengthen the way demand is assessed to prioritise high-quality and impactful postings.
4. The ODI Fellowship Scheme, as one of the longest standing Fellowships, has had to adapt significantly over the years to remain relevant. The ODI team has been effective in adapting, as demonstrated by the creation of new strands and the addition of new geographical areas to the scheme. However, a new narrative and framing for the scheme appear to be required by many of its stakeholders and will likely be needed to stay relevant to emerging priorities going forward.
5. Fellowships should work to prioritise high-quality and impactful posts where Fellows have the necessary support and environment to excel in their roles. It is important to devote enough resources to ensure that each placement can achieve results and is effective. There are several key ingredients that make a good placement for a Fellow and their host organisation: i) The preparation and induction of Fellows and supervisors; ii) Strong line management and performance management of Fellows from supervisors and the fellowship team; iii) Allowing for flexibility and appreciating non-technical impact as a key contribution Fellows can make; iv) Sufficient support available, duty of care and due diligence to ensure that the scheme allows any candidate to be ready to accept a placement; v) Buy-in to receive a Fellow from senior management, supervisors, and colleagues is key for Fellows to have a successful placement, especially from direct supervisors responsible for the performance management of Fellows; vi) Foreign language skills for fellowships in certain countries where these are required to communicate effectively in the workplace.
6. Communicating impact achieved by Fellows is essential to demonstrate the effectiveness and impact of the scheme. As demonstrated by other Fellowships and by this evaluation, Fellows are often positive about the need for stronger performance management and would welcome clearer objectives for their Fellowships, as well as the need to report their impact more regularly. Fellowships should develop a MEL strategy that enables this type of reporting.
7. It is difficult to assess the sustainability of results achieved, but this is key to understanding if sustainable capacity has been developed. A longer-term engagement strategy with host organisations, as well as a clear MEL strategy that aims to report on beyond-placement impacts, would significantly contribute to understanding how sustainable results are, what the barriers to sustainable capacity development might be, and whether these can be addressed.
8. A knowledge-sharing platform for Fellows and a learning strategy for the ODI to guide learning and help disseminate lessons would benefit the long-term effectiveness of the scheme. Fellows argued that one of the biggest resources for the scheme is other Fellows, but that this is currently not capitalised on fully. Similarly, the experiences of Fellows and supervisors are a key resource that the ODI should draw from to extract lessons of what works well, what makes a good placement and what needs improving.

9. For a fellowship scheme to be effective and efficient, a thorough analysis and understanding of early terminations and reassignments is key. This evaluation found limited evidence of a systematic assessment of early terminations being conducted or leading to any significant change in how the fellowship is managed. Minimising early terminations and reassignments, where possible, would contribute to the scheme being more efficient.
10. The diversity of the Scheme is limited by the diversity of the eligible population and requires additional investment to be ensured. Fellowships such as the ODI scheme should aim to be aspirational in their aim to diversity the scheme and ensure its access is more equitable.

10.0 Recommendations

In this section, we present relevant recommendations for the ODI Fellowship Scheme management team and for the FCDO as the funder of the scheme. We organise the recommendations by Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria.

Relevance of the Scheme

1. The FCDO and ODI should work together to agree a definition of capacity development - encompassing institutional strengthening and individual capacity development - to communicate with host organisations and Fellows and to use as a basis for agreeing objectives for each fellowship placement. This, as an aim of the Scheme, should be reflected in the Terms of Reference for Fellows, linked to performance management, and communicated to Fellows during their induction.

2. The ODI should work with host organisations to develop engagement strategies that outline: the need for Fellows; the objectives of the engagement; the role Fellows can play in supporting the host organisation; how long the engagement between the scheme and the host organisation should be; how many Fellows will be required to fulfil these objectives; and what the exit strategy for the host is. The ODI could use existing country strategy notes incorporated as a reporting requirement in 2015 as a basis to build upon. To contribute to prioritising postings and ensuring that every fellowship placement is of high-quality, the strategies should:

    - Be tailored to the level of development of each country and each host organisation, the length of engagement with the country and host organisation, and the organisational needs and context they operate in;
    - Be developed collaboratively with stakeholders in-country such as Ambassadors, FCDO staff and external stakeholders in order to vet the strategy and its objectives.

3. The ODI should consider creating more specialised strands within the economics strand and in other relevant disciplines. Some suggestions from interviewees included digitalisation, climate change and organisational management. The approach has been effective in helping the scheme to stay relevant through the statistics strand and in other fellowships and could contribute to strengthening the matching of skills to needs in host organisations.

Effectiveness of the scheme

4. The ODI should prioritise the quality of postings over quantity. In doing so, the ODI needs to make a thorough assessment of demand vs. need, and whether the number of Fellows requested is reasonable. To do so, the ODI could use the engagement and exit strategy to help assess ongoing demand and need for Fellows, and the best type of support required to strengthen the effectiveness of placements and avoid doing harm.

5. The ODI should formally fill the existing post-selection criteria checklist that outlines necessary preconditions to post a Fellow to a specific placement, and conduct thorough due diligence of host organisations pre-departure, to ensure that host organisations are prepared to receive Fellows.

6. The ODI should make fluency in official languages a requirement for postings where this is essential to the success of the placement, and better match Fellows with those language skills to the postings.

Where this is not possible, the language learning allowance should be increased and made a placement requirement.

7. The ODI should incorporate recommendations made by Fellows to strengthen the usefulness of the induction week, as follows:

    - Add a session focused on capacity development, including expectations around capacity development objectives, how this will be monitored throughout placements, and speakers experienced in providing TA giving guidance on effective ways to develop capacity;
    - Extend the Q&A with former Fellows to a full day session;
    - Add break-out sessions by country, type of host organisation (ministry, agency or other) and/or thematic specialty (health, education, PFM etc.), to provide more tailored guidance and lessons and ensure the content of sessions is practical (e.g., practical budgeting and project management techniques).
    - Include a session on diversity and inclusion presenting the fellowship's strategy, available support and approaches.

8. The ODI should invest significant resources in ensuring that host organisations strengthen their onboarding process, including by:

    - Assessing the capacity of host organisations to onboard Fellows in the post-selection criteria checklist;
    - Outlining the responsibilities and expectations around onboarding and line management for supervisors and host organisations in the ODI Fellowship Scheme Terms and Conditions for Host Employers. We would recommend that: i) ODI Fellows have a clear role and performance management plan within the first three months; ii) ODI Fellows have had their first performance management review and reported progress to the ODI at their six-month milestone; iii) Placements and roles are reviewed after one year to assess grounds for early terminations and reassignments.
    - Ensuring sufficient support is provided to Fellows from supervisors and that clear line management responsibilities are in place through regular communication with supervisors and Fellows.
    - Making the handover process a part of Fellows' performance management and requiring a handover plan for outgoing Fellows. In countries with continuous Fellowships, two weeks of overlap should be considered to support this process. The ODI should provide clear guidelines of what an effective handover looks like to ensure that quality is consistent across postings. This process should be supported by both the ODI and the host organisation as a part of their wider engagement strategy.

9. The ODI should develop a plan for the performance management of Fellows. While performance management should remain the responsibility of supervisors, the ODI should require them to agree objectives for the two-year placement and provide regular reports to the ODI on progress. Where supervisors are unwilling to engage and provide the necessary supervision and support to Fellows, the ODI should consider terminating engagement to prioritise posts where Fellows can have a more significant impact. We would suggest that the ODI considers:

    - Developing a guidance note for supervisors to develop performance management plans including a competency matrix and pick and mix objectives for supervisors and Fellows to agree;
    - Requiring supervisors and Fellows to agree a set of objectives, including capacity development objectives based on the engagement strategy;
    - Requiring supervisors to provide regular updates on progress made by Fellows, especially during their probation period;
    - Monitoring whether objectives have been agreed, progress made on achieving them and reporting the findings to FCDO.

10. The ODI should provide more support to Fellows during their placements and have more regular check-ins with all Fellows during the first six months. In providing this support, the ODI should:

- Draw from networks in-country in a more systematic way, and build bridges with ODI researchers, high commissions and the FCDO to support Fellows. This has taken place in some cases but is not systematic.
- Ensure that enough time and resources are devoted to responding to safeguarding issues being raised by Fellows. The ODI should ensure that no issue raised by Fellows takes longer than a week to be responded to. All issues raised should be followed up to ensure that the problem has been resolved or further action should be taken. All safeguarding issues collected in the safeguarding log should be aggregated and analysed to understand which issues are most common, and within which contexts. This would help the ODI identify and address gaps in their safeguarding protocol.

11. The ODI should create a hub of resources for Fellows to draw from, including current and past Fellows. This platform could include: i) Training and technical resources for Fellows to use in their roles (e.g. standard Excel training materials; basic templates for reports; soft skills and project management reference materials); ii) Policy-specific Working Groups such as PFM, health economics or education; iii) The option for former Fellows, ODI researchers and other in-country stakeholders to share their contact details and volunteer to provide support; iv) A mentoring program for ODI researchers or past Fellows to support current Fellows; and v) A communication system for an Alumni network and Buddy Scheme.

Equity

12. The ODI should make a more concerted effort to diversify the scheme and recruit Fellows from a wider range of universities and from countries in the Global South. To achieve this, the ODI should:

    - Increase transparency regarding the selection criteria and provide more thorough application guidance. Not only would this encourage applicants from a wider range of backgrounds, it would also help to balance the advantages experienced by applicants associated with universities with stronger institutional knowledge of the scheme;
    - Ensure that all staff involved in interviewing candidates have taken part in relevant diversity and inequalities training;
    - Develop an inclusion and diversity strategy which outlines its aspirations and objectives. The strategy should be explicit about how the ODI aims to include people with disabilities and other protected characteristics into the fellowship, and should outline what support is available. This strategy should be public and available for prospective Fellows to access;
    - The ODI should consider producing an in-depth database of all the potential contexts and risks which might have an impact on a Fellow's decision – particularly those factors pertaining to protected characteristics;
    - Collect and monitor data on relevant demographics through its surveys of applicants, to generate an improved overview of the profiles of the Fellows it is reaching (income level, nationality, disability, sexuality etc.) and better understand its reach.

Impact of the Scheme and monitoring of results

13. The ODI should aim to strike a balance between ensuring Fellows have enough flexibility to create their own roles and ensuring that there are clear objectives set out for the fellowship. While flexibility remains important and has been effective in helping Fellows to think outside of the box, it has also left less entrepreneurial Fellows with limited support at a disadvantage. Further performance management will ensure that fellowships are more successful, and that Fellows have a clear understanding of their roles and the associated expectations.

14. The ODI should develop a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) strategy to help demonstrate the impact of the fellowship. The ODI should consider including a MEL Officer in the team, responsible for the relevant reporting. The strategy should:

    - Include clear guidance on what impact the fellowship aims to have, how it can be demonstrated, what reporting is required and what data should be made available;
    - Align monitoring plans with the FCDO logframe and reporting requirements;

- Include relevant reporting templates for supervisors and Fellows to use when reporting impact and the frequency of reporting;
- Include a strategy for assessing the sustainability of results achieved and beyond-placement monitoring to evidence the sustainability of impact;
- Include a learning framework that outlines priority areas for learning. This could include learning from early terminations and reassignments, learning about the sustainability of results achieved and relevant constraints and enablers.

Efficiency of the scheme

15. The ODI should devote sufficient resources to addressing the above-mentioned recommendations and prioritise high-quality posts. To achieve this, we recommend cutting the fellowship spots that have limited evidence of impact or to adequately manage remaining placements and the overall effectiveness of the scheme; and investing in hiring an additional team member that focuses on implementing a MEL strategy, supporting the performance management of Fellows, and providing additional support to Fellows during their placements.

Recommendations to the FCDO for the next Business Case

1. The FCDO should continue to fund the ODI Fellowship Scheme for the next Business Case. Not doing so would be a missed opportunity, given the extensive evidence of impact in this evaluation, in terms of capacity development, capacity support, the impact on Fellows' preparation for a career in development and the soft power that the scheme provides the UK in Fellowship countries. However, the FCDO should require the ODI to provide more rigorous and systematic evidence of its impact going forward and ensure actions are taken to improve its effectiveness.

2. The FCDO should seek internal alignment in defining the objectives of the fellowship scheme for the next Business Case. The FCDO should be realistic in what the fellowship can achieve in terms of capacity development, while acknowledging its dual objective. Based on the findings from this evaluation, the ODI should update the Theory of Change ahead of the next Business Case.

3. The FCDO should avoid making changes to the priorities of the scheme within funding cycles. Upcoming priorities for the scheme should be agreed in engagement and exit strategies developed by the ODI and host organisations. The ODI and FCDO should agree a timeline to develop these strategies for all priority postings for the new Business Case and ensure that all strategies are in place in the next two years.

4. The FCDO and other donors should sit in a Steering Committee whose approval is required for engagement strategies, and post criteria checklists for new placements. The Steering Committee should coordinate queries and responses to the ODI's quarterly reporting and coordinate support provided by the FCDO to Fellows during their placements (connecting to FCDO staff and ambassadors).

5. We recommend the following amendments are made to the ODI Fellowship Scheme logframe:

    - Incorporate a percentage of Fellows achieving their placement objectives as a logframe indicator. The FCDO and ODI could use performance management reports as a basis for quarterly and annual reporting to the logframe;
    - Ensure that diversity and equality are prioritised by including relevant indicators on steps needed for the ODI to diversify the scheme (e.g. wider outreach in recruitment and the development of a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy).

Annexes

Annex 1: Detailed methodology

1.1 Evaluation framework

Figure 22: Evaluation framework

OECD DAC Criteria	Overarching evaluation questions	Sub-questions	Data Collection Methods					Evaluation Objective
			Quant desk review	Qual desk review	Survey	Scheme-wide interviews	Case study interviews	
Relevance	How relevant is the ODI Fellowship Scheme model in supporting LMIC governments to build capacity that will contribute to improved policy-making decisions?	1.1 To what extent do developing country governments struggle to attract and retain technical staff of high calibre who can contribute towards better policy decisions?		✓		✓	✓	1, 2
		1.2 What understanding do host organisations have of the capacity building aims of the Scheme and the distinction between building and providing capacity?		✓		✓	✓	1, 2
Effectiveness	How effective is ODI's delivery model in delivering the Scheme's intended results?	2.1 How robust is the process of identifying placements from existing and new hosts, and matching candidates to placements?		✓	✓	✓	✓	4
		2.2 How are placements of successful candidates managed? How is induction and onboarding managed? How well are fellows prepared for their roles and personal responsibilities during the Scheme, including the provision of pastoral care?		✓	✓	✓	✓	4
		2.3 How robust is placement management, including performance management of fellows by placement managers and line managers, objective setting and performance monitoring?		✓	✓	✓	✓	4
		2.4 What support is available to fellows during placements (e.g. through peer networks, alumni networks, technical support from ODI staff, any informal or formal mentoring)?		✓	✓	✓	✓	4
		2.5 To what extent does the Scheme consider the safeguarding and duty of care of Fellows, conduct necessary due diligence and communicate roles and responsibilities regarding safeguarding?		✓	✓	✓	✓	5
Impact	How effective has the Fellowship Scheme been in contributing to sustainable capacity building?	3.1 What kind of inputs/skills/capability (technical and non-technical) do fellows provide to their host ministries?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1, 2
		3.2 To what extent is the programme successfully delivering contributions to sustainable capacity development in its host organisations? Is this an appropriate goal for the Scheme?		✓	✓	✓	✓	1, 2
		3.3 To what extent is the programme's Theory of Change realistic, relevant and achievable? To what extent does reporting against the current Logframe and indicators give a true picture of project delivery? How can they be improved?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2
Equity	How well does the ODI Fellowship ensure diversity and inclusion, throughout the different phases of its lifecycle?	4.1 How does the ODI Fellowship Scheme recruitment process aim to broaden access for harder to reach groups (e.g. lower household income levels, people living with disabilities, sexual orientation, gender and race)? Is this in line with best practice standards?		✓	✓	✓	✓	4
		4.2 To what extent diversity and inclusion issues are taken into account in matching fellows?		✓	✓	✓	✓	4
		4.3 When Fellows are in place, to what extent is support provided in line with protected characteristics?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	4
Sustainability	Is the capacity developed by Fellows sustainable?	5.1 What evidence is there of the likelihood of the impacts being sustained beyond the placement of the Fellow?		✓	✓	✓	✓	1, 2
		5.2 How are longer-term benefits of placements (including sustainable capacity building) assessed? How is end of placement impact measured and to what extent and depth does debriefing and shared learning take place and with which stakeholders? To what extent is beyond placement impact monitored?	✓	✓		✓		1
Efficiency	How does the ODI Scheme compare with other similar professional placement Schemes in terms of value for money, outputs, outcomes and cost effectiveness?	6.1 How well has the ODI Fellowship Scheme delivered its expected results to date, including in terms of budget allocaltions and cost efficiency of activities, compared to other similar Schemes?	✓	✓		✓		3

1.2 Evaluation methods and data

Our approach relies on triangulation between different methods and data sources, both qualitative and quantitative. In this section, we provide a detailed overview of the methods used.

1.2.1 Desk Review

Underpinning the evaluation, we conducted an extensive desk review of available documents which helped us to further refine the OCF framework and data collection tools. As part of this exercise we reviewed the following documents: 1) programme-related documents including results frameworks, project monitoring records and financial reports; 2) DFID business case and annual reviews; 3) existing feedback surveys from Fellows, supervisors and host ministries; 4) reviews and evaluations of the previous phases of the ODI Fellowship; 5) reports by other donors to the programme; and 6) published reviews and materials about other capacity building Schemes funded by FCDO and other Government departments, such as Commonwealth Fellowships, Oxford Policy Fellowships and Chevening Scholarships. A list of relevant documents reviewed has been included in Annex 3.

The desk review was conducted throughout the evaluation to fill in relevant gaps but was mainly conducted at inception and in early days of data collection to inform the tailoring of the remaining data collection tools. The process for conducting the desk review has two different components:

1. Scheme-wide analysis: using the evaluation framework as a basis, we developed a framework for document review. This includes the evaluation criteria and questions and outlines which documents are relevant to answer what question. The evaluation team split the documents to review and filled in the evaluation framework with relevant information for all research questions.

2. Contribution analysis: For the questions relevant to the Impact criteria in the evaluation framework, the information extracted from the document review was also included in the contribution analysis matrix where relevant. This contributes to our assessment of the strength of evidence for each causal pathway (see more detail in section 1.3.1.3).

Our desk review serves several purposes and helps us address all evaluation objectives. The desk review helped us evidence the results achieved by the Scheme to help us build our contribution Story (Objective 1) and review the Theory of Change and logframe through the completion of the Annual Review and the evaluation (Objective 2).

The desk review also provides us with information on approaches to diversity (Objective 4), safeguarding and duty of care (Objective 5). For comparison purposes, we looked at the same themes for other FCDO - funded capacity building programmes (Objective 3) and identified the key differences/lessons for ODI. This initial document review of comparator programmes was complemented by initial interviews with stakeholders in other capacity building programmes and discussions in the Theory of Change workshop.

Firstly, as recommended in the ToR, we conducted a light-touch stock take of previous evaluations and reviews, to refine our understanding of the ODI Fellowship programme and its history, inform the current evaluation and identify relevant comparators. This review was conducted during the inception phase and has helped inform the design of the Theory of Change (see Section 4.1.5) and the mapping of comparator programmes (see Annex 8).

After inception, we conducted a more detailed review of the available documentation provided by FCDO and the ODI. This was primarily analysed in the context of the Annual Review (Objective 2). This review helped us to identify evidence gaps, hypotheses, and areas to explore in primary research during the evaluation. We collected information on a number of key themes for the Scheme as well as comparator programmes including: programme manager understanding of 'capacity building', strategies in place to achieve results in this area, expected programme outcomes and impacts (and strategies to achieve these), the challenges and shortcomings of Fellowship programmes and progress against previous

recommendations. The information provided included programme documents, programme data from previous Fellows, self-reported surveys, policies, and guidelines used by ODI, documentation shared with Fellows and relevant DFID/FCDO policies.

Our quantitative desk review utilised existing research conducted on the 2015-2020 ODI Fellowship and retrieved: monitoring data (e.g. demographics of applicants, completion rates); impact data (e.g. perceptions of success) and cost data. Quantitative data provided us with a wealth of information on the Fellowship results and shortcomings (Objectives 1 and 2) and is particularly relevant to our assessment of the programme's value for money, compared to other FCDO-funded programmes (Objective 3).

As per ToR, we reviewed and expanded on the existing indicator set, to ensure that indicators are aligned with each component of the ToC. Following recommendations from the 2019 Annual Review, we provided recommendations to add indicators that are not only quantitative, but also capture the quality of the service that ODI provides to Fellows and the host organisations, and the quality of delivery that Fellows provide to host governments during placements. Using the OCF framework as a guide, we developed indicators that allow focus on the process, outputs and intermediate outcomes, as well as on the final results, to help identify whether the programme is on the right trajectory towards delivering its intended impact. We also recommended incorporating indicators on gender, diversity and safeguarding.

Finally, in developing our country case studies (see Section 6.4 for more detail), we also conducted a document review of relevant national policy document as well as internal documents provided by host organisations. These documents helped us assess the results achieved by Fellows and contextualised the effectiveness and relevance of the Scheme. It is worth noting that the documents provided by colleagues and line managers was uneven and slim in some cases, but very valuable when provided.

1.2.2 Self-Report Survey

As noted in recent DFID annual reviews, available documentation does not include detailed information on the types of capacity that Fellows have contributed to, and on the impact and sustainability of these efforts. To gather this information, we complemented the desk review with a self-report survey. Self-report surveys are the dominant method when evaluating scholarship and Fellowship programmes and almost all evaluation reports are informed by one or more surveys. They can reach large numbers in a relatively efficient way, generate an overview of what participants think about different aspects of a programme, and identify the most interesting positive and negative examples.

While we are aware that ODI conducts its own placement completion survey which is completed by Fellows and Supervisors, we believe that there is added value in conducting this survey independently, while tailoring the survey questions to the objectives of the evaluation to obtain a wider range of responses. We designed and rolled out an online survey administered to all current and recent Fellows, their colleagues and line managers from the 2015-20 cohort. This included Fellows who have not yet completed the Fellowship and Fellows who dropped out of the Scheme.

Design

We designed the survey after finalising the document review and conducting initial interviews with the ODI management team. Questions for Fellows and supervisors were combined into a single survey for the purpose of centralising data and facilitating triangulation, and logic settings were used to tailor questions to the roles of respondents in relation to the Fellowship Scheme.

The survey built upon our ToC, Ecorys OCF and existing surveys used by the Commonwealth Scholarship Scheme and Chevening Scholarships. It included closed questions for capturing discrete information (e.g. demographics), Likert-style answer tables to collect data on Fellows' and employers' perspectives and experiences, and open-ended questions to elicit additional details and suggestions for ways to improve the Scheme. This ensured we provided the ODI team with a survey structure that they can replicate in the future. We included the following sub-sections:

- Personal data: focused on the demographics and socio-economic background of the 2015-2020 cohort of Fellows, as well as on their current employment (including job description).
- Process: focused on important enablers of effectiveness, including: quality and accessibility of application, selection, matching, onboarding and support processes; the types of skills Fellows need and have used; the quality of Fellows' work and relationships with line managers and other colleagues; satisfaction with the nature and support received from ODI; and reasons for early termination.
- Outcomes and impact: by structuring questions around the Ecorys OCF and ToC, we are able to more clearly understand and categorise what kind of capacity outcomes and impacts Fellows (and host organisations) believe that they have contributed to or benefited from, over the medium and longer-term. This included gaining a better sense of the Fellows' contribution to the shaping of research and policy.
- Sustainability: We included questions that shed light on whether and how the skills and expertise acquired through the Fellowship are used once Fellows have left their posts, in any current roles. We explored Fellows' contribution to the continuing development of the host country, including business opportunities and sustained links with host country contacts, and the sustainability of any outcomes achieved during the Fellowship, such as the development of policies or programmes contributing to poverty reduction.

Piloting and distribution

A draft version of the survey was piloted by eleven Fellows and supervisors. Final amendments were made after piloting, incorporating feedback in relation to both the technical functionality of the online tool and questionnaire wording. We developed and piloted our survey in the month from 19th October – 15th November, before launching the survey and having it live for the month 20th November - 23rd December. We used ODI's Fellow mailing list to invite Fellows to respond to the survey, and a list of line managers to invite supervisors to respond. Email communications were used to encourage both Fellows and their supervisors to forward the survey on to relevant persons beyond ODI's mailing lists. Once a week whilst the survey was live we used a Mail merge to remind Fellows and supervisors who from the original mailing lists who had yet to respond. We also hosted versions of the survey in French and Portuguese, and sent translated email communications to supervisors listed as being from primarily French or Portuguese-speaking fellowship countries. These measures helped us achieve an overall response rate of 69% (423/615), of which 363 (85%) were complete. 281 Fellows responded to the survey, along with 142 of their supervisors or colleagues. The table below sets out the profile of survey respondents across key sampling criteria (gender, nationality, cohort and fellowship stream).

Table 6: Self-report survey respondent profile

	Fellows		Supervisors and colleagues	
Response status	**Total**	**Per cent**	**Total**	**Per cent**
Complete	249	89%	114	80%
Partial	32	11%	28	20%
Gender	**Total**	**Per cent**	**Total**	**Per cent**
Male	133	48%	105	75%
Female	140	50%	35	25%
Non-binary/other/prefer not to say	5	2%	0	0%
Nationality	**Total**	**Per cent**	**Total**	**Per cent**
UK	78	29%	1	1%
Non-UK	195	71%	139	99%
Cohort	**Total**	**Per cent**		
2013-15	31	11%		

2014-16	36	13%
2015-17	41	15%
2016-18	37	14%
2017-19	35	13%
2018-20	47	17%
2019-21	46	16%
Stream	**Total**	**Per cent**
Economics	243	88%
Statistics	25	10%
Financial Inclusion	3	1%
Anti-microbial Resistance	2	1%

Source: Self-report survey data

This provided comprehensive evidence of the demographics of Fellows, as well as perceptions from Fellows and supervisors/colleagues around:

- The quality and accessibility of the different components of the Scheme;
- The quality of Fellows' work and their relationships with colleagues and line managers;
- The main constraints to effective capacity building and reasons for early termination;
- The Impact of the Fellowship Scheme on capacity development within national systems

We attribute the high response rate and richness of data collected to prioritising a design that minimised the burden placed on respondents, and an effective use of digital tools and communications strategies. Rather than ask respondents openly what they thought about each component of the Scheme, we constructed answer tables with multiple statements designed to capture the key drivers of effectiveness of each component, identified during the document review and consultations with ODI management. This reduced the number of free text questions, and clustered multiple questions into single tables, reducing the length and average completion time of the survey. The survey took around 30 minutes to complete. The survey was scripted and hosted online using the digital survey tool Alchemer (formerly Survey Gizmo), which allowed respondents to access via a single link that was embedded directly into email communications. Alchemer's in-built functionality and reporting capabilities also enabled us to monitor the profile of respondents in real-time, and we used mail merge software to distribute targeted reminders. The high response rate is also an indication of the high levels of engagement with the Scheme amongst former Fellows and host organisations.

Analysis approach

Data was checked and cleaned prior to analysis. This involved ensuring that respondents answered the questions intended for them (according to the intended routing) and that responses were categorised where appropriate (for example, fellowship countries were coded according to income level). Two separate datasets were exported, filtered by respondent role, and analysis was first conducted on the overall sample. Sub-group analysis was conducted in the form of grouping responses to questions on demographics and placement details, for example by gender, placement country classification, or early termination. We used the statistical tool R to generate tables of responses to questions of interest, disaggregated by sub-group. We then examined these tables to look for patterns in the data relevant to the key evaluation questions. Whilst we took a purely descriptive approach to sub-group analysis for the purposes of this evaluation, there is scope for FCDO to use the data from this survey to conduct more rigorous forms of regression analysis to better understand the factors associated with greater perceived impact on capacity development within national systems.

Digital development

1. Below we explain how the development of our digital tool (online survey) clearly adhered to the following 9 Principles for Digital Development[53]:

1. Design with the User: We piloted our tool with the users of the survey in order to ensure the design was usable.
2. Understand the Existing Ecosystem: We understood the location of the fellows and host ministries, the IT limitations, and their previous engagement with ODI Fellowship Scheme questionnaires.
3. Design for Scale: Our survey was designed in order to be able to reach a large number of respondents across widespread geographic locations. It was designed to enable us to conduct useful descriptive analysis on the entire sample, with many closed answer style questions allowing for quantitative analysis.
4. Build for Sustainability: Our survey was designed so that the script may be shared with ODI at the end of the evaluation and be used in any future ODI end of fellowship questionnaires, as well as with FCDO for logging with evaluation documentation.
5. Be Data Driven: We used existing ODI Fellowship data to inform the design of our survey.
6. Use Open Standards, Open Data, Open Source, and Open Innovation: The survey platform used followed standard digital norms and reusing the script in the future should not be challenging. For confidentiality reasons we cannot make the data obtained freely available. Anonymised survey data will be shared with FCDO and ODI at the end of the evaluation.
7. Reuse and Improve: We have reviewed the existing ODI Fellowship end of Scheme questionnaire and incorporated useful questions and design features into our own survey.
8. Address Privacy and Security: As outlined above, we followed best practice in data security, informed consent and privacy.
9. Be Collaborative: Our survey tool was developed in collaboration with FCDO and ODI.

1.2.3 Semi-structured interviews

Key informant interviews took place during the data collection phase. These included a combination of UK-based and in-country interviews, targeting stakeholders in four case study countries, as well as across the full breadth of the Scheme. We split the interviews into different stages during data collection to ensure we take a sequential approach that can support a consistent construction of our contribution story.

We engaged a wide variety of stakeholders to provide us with a comprehensive view of the different aspects of the Fellowship programme and its wider influence. Stakeholders can be broadly categorised as:

- Programme management stakeholders: ODI and FCDO staff with management responsibilities, e.g. Fellowship Scheme Managers and Administrators, FCDO Senior Responsible Officer, FCDO Country Team Members.
- Programme participants: Current and recent Fellows from the 2015-2020 cohort (including those who terminated early). We identified these by working closely with the ODI team and through the survey responses.
- Host organisations: Current and recent line managers or supervisors and colleagues of Fellows from the 2015 – 2020 cohort. We identified these by working closely with the ODI team and through the survey responses.

[53] Foreign Commowealth and Development Office (2018) *Digital Strategy 2018 – 2020: Doing Development in a Digital World*. Link

- Comparator programmes: Programme management stakeholders from similar Schemes, e.g. Oxford Policy Management (OPM) Staff with Oxford Policy Fellowship management, World Bank staff with management responsibilities for the Early Years Fellowship Programme.
- External stakeholders: Past Fellows currently working in ODI, FCDO and the World Bank as well as stakeholders Fellows may have interacted with during their placement or after that are knowledgeable about the aim and potential of the ODI Fellowship Scheme. We aimed to identify these stakeholders by snowballing from interviews with current and past Fellows.

We consulted external stakeholders and management staff from ODI and FCDO central teams to inform our Scheme-wide analysis, whilst, to inform our country case studies, we had discussions with current and recent Fellows, as well as with line managers and colleagues from their host institutions. Discussions with current or recent Fellows who terminated early informed the Scheme-wide analysis. As such, the former were consulted before we start conducting the case study analysis.

We used purposive sampling to access a representative set of stakeholders and ensure that learning from the evaluation is transferable to a range of contexts and priority areas. When considering stakeholders, we took into account factors such as organisational background, level of expertise and seniority, level of engagement in the programme and gender balance. Where possible, we disaggregated data by these dimensions, with a specific focus on gender to help us isolate key capacity needs, impact and areas for programme improvement.

In order to ensure that we consult those suggested by FCDO and ODI as well as additional stakeholders, we have adopted a complementary snowball approach. This consists of asking partners and interviewees to provide the contact details of any other relevant stakeholders they believe we should consult. We also identified additional stakeholders working across the priority areas through our review of external documentation, prioritising those who may be less familiar with the Fellowship Scheme in order to assess the programme's influence beyond its immediate network.

The table below provides a summary of sample sizes per stakeholder type and country.

Table 7: Sample of interviewees by country stakeholder type

Country	Stakeholder type	Stakeholder	Profile / purpose	Sample size
Scheme wide	Programme management (donor)	FCDO Central Staff	Staff responsible for the management of the ODI Fellowship Scheme, relevant to the Scheme or in other country offices other than in the case study countries.	5
	FCDO stakeholders	FCDO Central Staff	Senior stakeholders in FCDO with interest and engagement in the work of the Scheme.	9
	Programme management (implementing partner)	ODI	Staff responsible for the management of the ODI Fellowship Scheme, including managing Fellow recruitment/selection, placement, onboarding, monitoring/support; as well as overall strategy and financial planning.	7
	Programme participants:	Past Fellows in ODI, FCDO, WB	Current ODI, FCDO and World Bank staff who participated in the Fellowship Scheme prior to 2015	6

		Unsuccessful applications	Recent applicants who were unsuccessful in their application.	3
	Programme participants:	Fellows supervisors	Supervisors of current and past Fellows in a range of countries	4
	External:	Other funders in DFAT, British High-Commissioners and in-country stakeholders	Stakeholders recommended by ODI to consult outside of the case study countries relevant to understand the Scheme	10
	External: Comparators	OPM, VSO, Chevening, World Bank	Staff responsible for the management of the Oxford Policy Fellowship, VSO, Chevening and Early Learning Partnership including managing Fellow recruitment/selection, placement, onboarding, monitoring/support; as well as overall strategy and financial planning.	9
	External	Stakeholders supporting Fellowship in different countries	Stakeholders recommended by ODI to consult outside of the case study countries relevant to understand the Scheme	5
Total				53
Case Study: Guinea-Bissau	FCDO Country Teams	FCDO Country Teams	Staff with exposure to the work of the ODI Fellowship Scheme in their country, including engagement with Fellows at level of country office.	0
	Programme participants (current and recent Fellows)	Current and recent Fellows 2015 – 2020	Individuals who participated or currently participate in the Fellowship Scheme and did not complete their 2-year placement before 2015.	10
	Programme participants	Line managers and colleages of Fellows 2015 – 2020	Staff responsible for the line management of Fellows from the 2015 – 2020 cohort, or those who worked jointly with Fellows during their 2-year placements.	10
	External	External	Stakeholders that are knowledgeable about the Fellowship and the role of Fellows in other organisations	2
Case Study: Myanmar	FCDO Country Teams	FCDO Country Teams	Staff with exposure to the work of the ODI Fellowship Scheme in their country, including engagement with Fellows at level of country office.	2
	Programme participants	Current and recent Fellows 2015 – 2020	Individuals who participated or currently participate in the Fellowship Scheme and	3

	(current and recent Fellows)		did not complete their 2-year placement before 2015.	
	Programme participants	Line managers and colleages of Fellows 2015 – 2020	Staff responsible for the line management of Fellows from the 2015 – 2020 cohort, or those who worked jointly with Fellows during their 2-year placements.	8
	External	External	Stakeholders that are knowledgeable about the Fellowship and the role of Fellows in other organisations	1
Case Study: Nigeria	FCDO Country Teams	FCDO Country Teams	Staff with exposure to the work of the ODI Fellowship Scheme in their country, including engagement with Fellows at level of country office.	2
	Programme participants (current and recent Fellows)	Current and recent Fellows 2015 – 2020	Individuals who participated or currently participate in the Fellowship Scheme and did not complete their 2-year placement before 2015.	6
	Programme participants	Line managers and colleages of Fellows 2015 – 2020	Staff responsible for the line management of Fellows from the 2015 – 2020 cohort, or those who worked jointly with Fellows during their 2-year placements.	4
	External	External	Stakeholders that are knowledgeable about the Fellowship and the role of Fellows in other organisations	0
Case Study: Rwanda	FCDO Country Teams	FCDO Country Teams	Staff with exposure to the work of the ODI Fellowship Scheme in their country, including engagement with Fellows at level of country office.	1
	Programme participants (current and recent Fellows)	Current and recent Fellows 2015 – 2020	Individuals who participated or currently participate in the Fellowship Scheme and did not complete their 2-year placement before 2015.	11
	Programme participants	Line managers and colleages of Fellows 2015 – 2020	Staff responsible for the line management of Fellows from the 2015 – 2020 cohort, or those who worked jointly with Fellows during their 2-year placements.	6
	External	External	Stakeholders that are knowledgeable about the Fellowship and the role of Fellows in other organisations	3
Total				67
Grand total				120

Interviews were semi-structured, providing a private space for researchers and interviewees to develop a rapport and explore specific, and potentially sensitive, issues in more depth. This approach enabled

researchers to follow a flexible guide but pursue relevant trajectories to the conversation where appropriate, while allowing informants the freedom to express their views and ultimately provide a more in-depth understanding of the topic at hand.

The evaluation team tailored discussion guides guided by stakeholder type and informed by findings from initial consultations with FCDO and ODI and the programme and policy document review. We covered a range of topics including: motivations and expectations; Fellowship lifecycle; Fellows' day-to-day work (including factors inhibiting and facilitating effective capacity building); impacts and sustainability; successes and challenges; comparison with other FCDO-funded capacity building programmes; and lessons learned and suggestions for improvement. More detail on what topics to cover with each stakeholder type is provided in the table below. Our discussion guides were tested during initial interviews immediately after the inception period. We then refined them and finalise before the majority of interviews take place. Further tailoring of guides for comparator programmes was developed after inception once we had analysed existing cost data for the Annual Review and for external stakeholders once we identified gaps in evidence.

Table 8: Range of topics to discuss by stakeholder type

Stakeholder type	Topics to cover
Programme management stakeholders	• Relevance of the programme, extent to which host countries face capacity challenges and understanding they have of the aim of the Scheme • Kind of support provided by Fellows and discussion of Fellows' contribution to capacity development • Sustainability of capacity development and challenges around the sustainability of the Scheme • Fellowship lifecycle and process of identifying host organisations, assessing capacity needs and differences in context and matching Fellows • Management of the Scheme (including promoting diversity, ensuring safeguarding and value for money) and support provided to Fellows during placement (especially Fellows of protected characteristics)
Comparator programmes	• Kind of support provided by Fellows and discussion of Fellows' contribution to capacity development exploring types of support provided and types of capacity developed • Sustainability of capacity development and challenges around the sustainability of the Scheme • How capacity development is documented and measured • Fellowship lifecycle and process of identifying host organisations, assessing capacity needs and differences in context and matching Fellows • Management of the Scheme (including diversity, safeguarding and value for money)
Programme participants (Fellows)	• Relevance of the programme, extent to which host countries face capacity challenges and understanding they have of the aim of the Scheme • Kind of support provided by Fellows and discussion of Fellows' contribution to capacity development exploring types of support provided and types of capacity developed • Sustainability of capacity development and challenges around the sustainability of the Scheme • Explore external influencing factors to capacity development and role that Fellows can play as recent graduates • Understand long-term effects that the Fellowship has on Fellows' careers. • Fellowship lifecycle and management of the Scheme (including diversity, safeguarding) and experiences of how placement went and type of support provided by ODI

Host organisations	• Relevance of the programme, extent to which host countries face capacity challenges and understanding they have of the aim of the Scheme • Understanding motivation to request support from a Fellow and how the need is assessed • Kind of support provided by Fellows and discussion of Fellows' contribution to capacity development exploring types of support provided (e.g. range of tasks conducted and quality of support) and types of capacity developed (explore if individual or organisational) • Sustainability of capacity development and challenges around the sustainability of the Scheme • Understand extent to which support from Fellow is discouraging host organisation from filling capacity gaps. • Explore external influencing factors to capacity development and role that Fellows can play as recent graduates
External stakeholders	• Relevance of the programme, extent to which host countries face capacity challenges and understanding they have of the aim of the Scheme • Explore external influencing factors to capacity development and role that Fellows can play as recent graduates • Understand long-term effects that the Fellowship has on Fellows' careers.

1.2.4 Country case studies

Methodology and objectives

The case study approach enables evaluators to conduct deeper research into complex problems through focusing on a small number of cases. The case study approach allows for comparative analysis between cases, as well as intensive study of a single case through multiple qualitative interviews. Due to variance between geographical areas and institutional capacities, the impact of programmes is often more easily investigated at the country or regional level.[54] We therefore conducted four country case studies.

Country case studies relied on desk review and semi-structured interviews. Each case study was conducted by one member of the evaluation team and a local researcher that have been identified during the inception phase. The evaluation team provided overall support to local researchers and supported them in conducting the research that could be done remotely. Local researchers focused on providing contextual analyses to feed into the assessment of external influencing factors and conducting in-person interviews with line managers and colleagues in host organisations or with external stakeholders. Moreover, local researchers contributed to contextualise the motivation of host organisations in requesting Fellows as well as the implicit power dynamics of the Fellowship.

The evaluation team conducted a training and briefing session with all local researchers in early November ahead of fieldwork to brief researchers on the objectives of the evaluation, their role and responsibilities and how research should be conducted ethically. Inputs provided were reviewed by the evaluation team and local researchers contributed to the quality assurance of the case study outputs.

In each country, we explored:

- Host organisations' and Fellows' understanding of the capacity building aims of the Scheme and the distinction between providing and building capacity.
- Examples of capacity built at the host organisation and country levels, against expectations, the OCF outcome dimensions, and the potential longer-term impacts hypothesised in the revised ToC.

[54] Commonwealth Scholarship Commission (2014). A study of research methodology used in evaluations of international scholarship Schemes for higher education.

- Success factors, both external and internal to the Fellowship. This includes anything about the Fellows' approach that facilitated or enhanced capacity building, and which differed from other organisations.
- Factors inhibiting effective capacity building (e.g. language barriers and cultural differences, challenges to the support and care of Fellows including safeguarding issues).

We asked host organisations (including government and partner agencies) and other donors how the situation was before each Fellow's intervention, against each of the OCF dimensions. Interviewees would then be asked to explain, through examples and other supporting evidence, how the support of Fellows and ODI programme staff affected each of these dimensions of capacity, and what capacity gains have been maintained. We also explored with host organisations other factors, external to the Fellowship, which may have resulted in increased capacity, and ask interviewees to compare these contributions with those of the Fellows. This includes capacity building efforts conducted by other organisations, partners or funders, especially in the period 2015-2020. Furthermore, we explored with host organisations the ways in which any enhanced capacity led to changes in the relationship with other actors, including other government bodies, partner agencies, other donors and communities, and then where possible triangulate this with interviews and focus groups with these other actors.

The country case studies are self-contained with an overview of the country's development status and summary of the history of the Fellowship Scheme in that country. Each case study focuses on the local context of each country and the how relevant external factors influenced the effectiveness of the Fellows in that country. There is a focus on building rich stories of the everyday work of the Fellows within the host organisation, the contributions they made, why they did or did not have impact and how they succeeded in having an impact. The aim is to provide a nuanced understanding of how Fellows can contribute to capacity development. These stories of impact and the contribution of Fellows demonstrate the value of the Scheme in each country and help illustrate how the Scheme operates in a variety of contexts, aiming to understand the challenges Fellows and host organisations face and how these are overcome across contexts.

Country selection

The case studies to be conducted during the evaluation were agreed with ODI and FCDO during the inception phase. We used the following selection criteria: region, level of economic prosperity, number of Fellows, recently added countries, number of early terminations/re-assignments.

5. Region: As per the terms of reference we restrict our sample of Fellowship countries to those in Africa and Asia. The Balkans, The Caribbean and the South Pacific have been excluded due to the large number of speciality Fellowships delivered through the ODI Scheme but not funded by FCDO. In our sample there are 24 countries: 4 in Asia and 20 in Africa. As per the terms of reference one of the countries should be in Asia, and three in Africa.

6. Level of economic prosperity: We included countries that are at different levels of economic prosperity and stability, including: Low-Income, lower-middle Income, Fragile and Conflict Affected (FCAS) countries[55]. As recommended by the 2018 Annual Review, this allowed us to build evidence on whether supporting LMICs for example can generate stronger results in terms of capacity building, and where and how Fellows are likely to have the greatest impact in technical capacity building, given the high levels of efforts and resources required to deliver good quality FCAS placements. Over the review period there have been 13 low-income countries, 8 lower-middle income countries and 3 upper middle-income countries.

Below we present the 24 FCDO funded Fellowship countries participating from 2015-2020 and their region and level of prosperity

[55] Fragile and conflict affected states as defined by DFID in 2017. link

Table 9: Fellowship participating countries by region and level of prosperity

Region	Low-income	Lower middle income	Upper middle income
	Level of prosperity		
Africa	Ethiopia Malawi Guinea-Bissau Mozambique Liberia Rwanda Madagascar Sierra Leone South Sudan Somaliland The Gambia Uganda Zanzibar	Djibouti Nigeria Zimbabwe eSwatini Ghana Lesotho	Namibia
Asia		Myanmar Timor-Leste	Sri Lanka Thailand

7. Number of Fellows posted in 2015-2020: Our review period covers five cohorts of Fellows (2015-17, 2016-2018,2017-2019,2018-2020,2019-2021). Over the five cohorts there have been 266 Fellows posted with a large variation in the number of Fellows per country ranging from 1 Fellow in Lesotho to 23 in Liberia. In order to gain an understanding of the workings of the Fellowship Scheme at the country level, rather than simply the effectiveness of a single individual, and in order to have a minimum number of Fellows and host partners to interview we exclude countries that have had four or fewer Fellows over the review period.

8. Recently added countries: We included at least one country that has been recently added to the list of receiving countries, where we expect the systems in place to host ODI Fellows to be newer and less well-established. This helps us to understand Fellows' work conditions, the additional challenges faced and support needed. As recommended by DFID, this helps us "*build evidence on the results of the move towards focussing on fewer well-managed postings, rather than branching out to a large number of new and untested postings*".[56] Of the 24 countries in our sample, 7 of them have started to receive Fellows only from 2015 onwards and are considered 'New'.

9. Economists and statisticians: All but two of the countries above have received both economists and statisticians (Uganda and Djibouti). By including countries with both this helps us to distinguish and compare between outcomes and impacts achieved by Economics and Statistics' streams.

10. Early terminations and re-assignments: Of the 266 Fellows posted over the review period, 35 were re-assigned postings, and 59 terminated their Fellowship early. The variation in these numbers by country are indicative of the effectiveness of the postings and we therefore aim to include countries with both high and low rates of early termination and re-assignment.

11. Proportional sampling: Given the large number of countries that are low-income in the Fellowship Scheme we sampled 2 countries that are low income in Africa, 1 that is lower-middle income in Africa and 1 in Asia.

We present the characteristics of each country in our sample in Table 10: Countries with more than four Fellows (2015-2020) below. The final list of case studies that was selected is as follows:

[56] DFID (2018) Annual Review

- Myanmar: Myanmar is a new country, started the Scheme in 2016-18, and has had 8 Fellows with 2 of them terminating their Fellowships early. It is a lower-middle income country. ODI highlighted how conducting fieldwork in Myanmar may prove challenging given the current political context and the upcoming elections. There is 1 Fellow on the ground who can assist with arrangements.
- Nigeria: 4 early leavers out of 9 Fellows hosted since 2015 (1 due to frustration with post), one reassigned (highest rate of non-completion of the four countries in its category). FCAS in West Africa and largest country in Africa. Has had both statisticians and economists in post, but no longer provides placements in ministries, but rather in other State government agencies due to challenges in getting salaries paid out. Long established programme. There are Fellows on the ground who can assist with arrangements.
- Guinea-Bissau: New programme started in 2015-17, with one re-assignment and one early termination (due to frustration with post). Small country in West Africa. 12 Fellows, both economists and statisticians. Fieldwork requires fluency in Portuguese, but there are Fellows on the ground who can assist with arrangements.
- Rwanda: An established Fellowship programme with a large number of Fellows (19) no re-assignments and only 3 early terminations. Medium sized country in East Africa. Both statisticians and economists have been posted. There are Fellows on the ground who can assist with arrangements.

This selection was agreed with FCDO following advice from ODI and FCDO.

Table 10: Countries with more than four Fellows (2015-2020)

Country	Prosperity	Continent	Region	Fragile	Year of first posting (new cohorts)	Population (million)	Economists and statisticians	No of Fellows (2015-2020)	No of early terminations / re-assignment
Liberia	Low-income	Africa	West	Yes		4.8	✓	23	4
Guinea-Bissau	Low-income	Africa	West	Yes	2015-17	1.8	✓	12	2
Sierra Leone	Low-income	Africa	West			7.6	✓	20	5
Malawi	Low-income	Africa	South/Central			18.1	✓	20	5
Zanzibar	Low-income	Africa	South			1.3	✓	9	1
Somaliland	Low-income	Africa	East		2015-17	3.5	✓	7	2
Ethiopia	Low-income	Africa	East	Yes		114.9	✓	17	5
Rwanda	Low-income	Africa	East			12.3	✓	19	4
Uganda	Low-income	Africa	East			42.7		10	3
Nigeria	Lower-middle income	Africa	West	Yes		195.9	✓	9	5
Ghana	Lower-middle income	Africa	West			29.7		12	1
eSwatini	Lower-middle income	Africa	South			1.1	✓	8	2
Djibouti	Lower-middle income	Africa	East	Yes		0.9	✓	7	3
Myanmar	Lower-middle income	Asia	South East		2016-18	53.7	✓	8	2

1.3 Analysis and reporting

This section details how we conducted the analysis to fulfil the five evaluation objectives aimed at assessing the effectiveness of the delivery model and the impact of the Scheme.

1.3.1 Analysis of specific objectives

Our analytical approach links to the evaluation objectives outlined in the Terms of Reference. These objectives are relevant to both the performance of the Scheme in achieving its results (Objective 1 and 2) and to the process followed to achieve these results (Objectives 3, 4 and 5).

To provide an assessment of both components, our analytical approach consists of two elements which allows us to build on and triangulate between evaluation objectives to develop a thorough understanding of the Fellowship. We undertook a Scheme-wide analysis to understand how the Scheme is delivered and how effective the model is and conducted contribution analysis to analyse the in-depth findings of the impact of the programme through country case studies.

As such, the Scheme-wide analysis assessed all evaluation objectives, while the impact objective were covered in detail in the contribution analysis. We structured the relevant objectives and evaluation questions around the OECD-DAC criteria and developed detailed assessment criteria which were presented in the inception report:

- Relevance: How relevant is the ODI Fellowship Scheme model in supporting LMIC governments to build capacity that will contribute to improved policy-making decisions? Answering the overarching relevance question helps assess the programme Theory of Change and contextualise the Impact of the Scheme.
- Effectiveness: Effectiveness of delivery model: assesses how effective is ODI's delivery model in delivering the Scheme's intended results. This effectiveness component helps us address the second and third evaluation objectives (Theory of Change and Delivery model).
- Impact: How effective has the Fellowship Scheme been in contributing to sustainable capacity building? This helps us address the first and second evaluation objectives in assessing the impact of the programme and revise the Theory of Change.
- Equity: How well does the ODI Fellowship ensure diversity and access, throughout the different phases of its lifecycle? We answer the overarching equity question and relevant sub-questions in order to address evaluation objective four around diversity and access and objective 3 to detail the ODI's delivery model.
- Sustainability: Is the capacity developed by Fellows sustainable? Assessing the sustainability of the capacity developed helps us address the first and second evaluation objectives in assessing the impact of the programme and revise the Theory of Change.
- Efficiency: How does the ODI Scheme compare with other similar professional placement Schemes in terms of value for money, outputs, outcomes and cost effectiveness? To assess the Scheme's efficiency helps us address the evaluation objective 3 around the effectiveness of the delivery model while comparing the Scheme to other capacity development programmes.

1.3.1.1 Scheme-wide analysis

We conducted a Scheme wide analysis of the ODI Fellowship that helped us address all five evaluation objectives to understand the Scheme's relevance, effectiveness, equity and efficiency. We analysed data collected at the Scheme level using qualitative and quantitative techniques to assess both the programme's effectiveness in achieving results and the effectiveness of the delivery model.

Effectiveness of the programme in achieving objectives

Quantitative data collected from the desk review and survey allowed us to create descriptive statistics where we disaggregated data by gender, country/region, strand of Fellowship and Department Fellows were working on. This allowed us to identify trends, including the stream (economics or statistics) which reports most impact; the typology of impacts; the countries and regions where most impact is reported; the tasks and OCF dimensions that most Fellows were involved in and the skills that were most used/appreciated by employers. We also reported on which sectors, types of organisations and locations Fellows work in post-Fellowship, and whether and how these employers/sectors are benefiting from their skills and knowledge.

Survey results also allowed us to conduct a systematic review of the early termination trends in recent years. We cross-referenced early termination cases and reasons, with additional information on candidates' personal information (e.g. protected characteristics), host country and organisation, and opinions about programme design and implementation (e.g. support received, safeguarding).

With the qualitative data collected, we constructed an analytical framework that allowed us to collate and compare information gathered through different sources and conduct thematic analysis (e.g. Fellows' daily work, Fellowship lifecycle, Impact on host organisations, Impact on countries, Lessons learned etc.). We drew out specific 'high impact'[57] and negative case studies[58]. That is, instances where the Fellows have failed to achieve either their objectives, or have dropped out of the Scheme, accompanied by an analysis of why this has happened. Some of these were explored through the country case studies described below.

Effectiveness of the programme delivery model

To assess the effectiveness of the delivery model (evaluation objectives 3, 4 and 5), we used a combination of quantitative and qualitative data where possible. We used programme documentation, a review of other similar programmes and consultations with the ODI delivery team and FCDO to assess the effectiveness of the delivery model overall, and with a specific focus on diversity and access (objective 4) and safeguarding (objective 5). In addition to this, we assessed the efficiency of the programme in terms of value for money.

We used the Fellowship lifecycle as a basis to analyse the delivery model, reviewing ODI's processes, policies and guidelines based on programme documents and interviews with programme management staff as well as Fellows. We then compared our findings with similar programmes to understand what good practice looks like, identify areas for improvement and provide recommendations. We specifically focused on policies and procedures around diversity and access and safeguarding. Where policies and procedures are not written down, we based our assessment on Fellows' experiences.

Our analysis assesses the following stages:

- Selection: ODI's processes programmes, in terms of identifying the needs in government, and matching Fellows to these, as well as indicators of diversity, vis a vis similar programmes.[59]

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[57] Mansukhani, V., Handa, N.L. (eds) (2013). *Opening Doors: Ten years of the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program in India.* Link
[58] Commonwealth Scholarship Commission (2014), *A study of research methodology used in evaluations of international scholarship Schemes for higher education*. Link
[59] E.g. 86% of applicants to the Oxford Policy Fellowship are from the 'global South'. Oxford Policy Fellowship. Become a Fellow. link

- Preparation: We assess the level of ODI Fellows' pre-departure induction and training and, where possible, compare with that of other programmes to identify ways to improve the ODI offer. For example, through an Annual meeting that happens every September, the Oxford Policy Fellowship gives new Fellows the opportunity to meet their future line managers beforehand, as well as policy specialists from academia, the UK Government, and the private sector with which to discuss issues relevant to the Fellowship postings.

- Posting/support: We assess the support provided by ODI during posting by examining existing policies and procedures and the experiences of Fellows, host organisations and types of support provided through the country case studies and survey. This analysis, in turn, help us assess the effectiveness of this support in enabling Fellows to succeed during their placement, in comparison to other Schemes if data is available. We also assess the extent of mentorship, coaching and ongoing training and support to Fellows.

- Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL). We assess the Scheme's effectiveness in conducting impact assessment and monitoring of results and how this assessment contributes to fostering impact. Where possible, we compare ODI with other Schemes, such as the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission, which conducts a number of ongoing MEL tasks including: frequent reports intended to flag concerns and monitor progress; regular analysis of anonymous feedback, assessments of the long-term impact of the awards through an alumni survey and qualitative case studies that look at professional trajectories upon completion of awards.[60] The Oxford Policy Fellowship, in turn, benefits from a dedicated team composed of an Impact and Learning Coordinator, and Qualitative and Quantitative Leads who, amongst other things, collect time entries, Fellows' reflection diaries, tailored workplans, and conduct key informant interviews which in turn are then analysed and used to draft practical guidance for future Fellows[61].

- Post-Fellowship: We review the support and follow up provided by the ODI Fellowship Scheme and the strategies that other Schemes are implementing to encourage collaboration and networking between alumni and improve their career opportunities. Chevening Alumni, for example, are provided with alumni groups, social media accounts, a quarterly e-newsletter, and a Connect online platform[62].

In order to assess the efficiency of the Scheme, we also assessed the claim in the business case that the Scheme provides strong value for money for FCDO. The focus in the 2015-20 period, was to continue to ensure value for money through: ensuring economy in the purchase of the inputs needed, including procurement procedures and benchmarking of costs; delivering efficiency, especially in minimising the necessary management and administrative costs, in delivering pastoral care of current Fellows, the selection and induction process; and maximising effectiveness, with the key drivers being the quality posts identified, the quality of Fellows selected and placed, and the capacity building provided by Fellows to maximise the development impact from the placement.

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[60] Commonwealth Scholarship Commission (2011), *Evaluating Commonwealth Scholarships in the United Kingdom: Assessing impact on key priority areas.* Link
[61] The Oxford Policy Fellowship (2017) *Negotiating with foreign investors Tips from the Oxford Policy Fellowship's experience; and Learning from the Oxford Policy Fellowship: emerging policy messages from a year of data*. Link
[62] Chevening Connect Guide. Link

Our comparisons are cognisant of the differences between Schemes, while drawing on these to identify areas of strong practice and potential areas where the ODI Fellowship Scheme can further maximise cost-effectiveness. We set out indicative value for money indicators below, drawing on the value for money proposition set out in the business case and the logframe.

To assess the value for money of the Scheme, we reviewed processes in place and unit costs, as well as benchmark these against other Schemes:

1. For efficiency we looked at the average cost of the Fellowship per year broken down by supplementation and rent, other costs, contingency, and management and administrative costs. We also looked the efficiency of management and administrative processes.

2. For effectiveness we looked at the quality of processes to maximise effectiveness, in the matching of quality Fellows to placements and emphasis on capacity building by Fellows. Indicators are a combination of monetary, quantitative and qualitative and analyses are mainly comparisons over time and with other Schemes. Sources of information are financial budgets and reports, as well as policy and process documents and interviews.

Diversity and access

Based on the primary and secondary data collected, we assessed how successful the Scheme's approach to diversity and broadening access has been through the different phases of the ODI lifecycle, detail the existing barriers to equality, and compare this with other Schemes and existing good practice. To do this, we conducted a desk-based review of programme policies and procedures, quantitative data such as a review of recruitment pools by available protected characteristic, and interviews with Fellows and ODI management staff. We look at:

- Selection and recruitment, including an assessment of the requirements to fulfil, the accessibility of the application process, whether the Scheme is advertised in such a way that it is attractive to candidates from protected characteristics and adverse backgrounds, whether applicants from outside the UK are encouraged to apply and how, and the composition of the selection panel.

- Placement, including policies and processes for sensitive matching and support provided to Fellows with protected characteristics. For example, we assess what is taken into consideration for the matching, such as whether candidates' gender, medical conditions and sexual orientation are considered when assigning them to specific countries, to ensure they experience favourable conditions and do not face unnecessary risks. We also look at processes in place to provide support. For example, pre-departure medical screening and sensitive matching.

- Preparation and Support, including remuneration, whether Fellows with specific needs (e.g. medical conditions), as well as the organisations that are going to host them, receive adequate and even additional training and support, at the beginning and throughout the placement. We also assess bullying and harassment claims and early termination from protected characteristic perspective, and subsequent responses taken, challenges faced and degree to which Fellows agree support has been provided as requested/in response to protected characteristics.

- Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning, including whether existing monitoring systems are able to detect emerging needs, and orient towards a prompt and effective response.

For each phase, we developed standards for assessment, to determine whether ODI's approach to diversity classifies as: excellent, good, fair or poor. To develop these standards, we considered: groups that are

currently underrepresented; ODI targets and strategy regarding diversity and access; practical barriers related to the Fellowship; and the progress the Fellowship has made over time to foster diversity and broaden access. We considered best practices to widen access and sector-wide data or benchmarks[63]. On this basis, we further refined the log frame indicators and provide recommendations on activities and support measures to improve access.

Safeguarding

As per safeguarding and duty of care, we see this as a part of broader systems of risk management and policy and processes, and hence we look at this throughout the Fellowship lifecycle to assess broader risk management, monitoring, feedback and learning systems.

Our approach to analyse the collected data to meet this objective, is, firstly, to examine the policies and procedures in place for the Scheme, compare to other similar programmes and, then, develop standards to assess the Fellowship Scheme drawing upon: the latest DFID/FCDO guidance[64] and international good practice[65]. For example, the Oxford Policy Fellowship has dedicated helplines and online services to report concerns on issues such as criminal activity, health and safety, environmental damage, safeguarding, as well as fraud and aid diversion[66].

With these standards we assess the policy and practice of the Scheme's approach across seven domains: Due Diligence (policy and process); Safeguarding (including policy, roles and responsibilities, training during induction, support, investigation process and disciplinary process, for both Fellows and local communities); Whistleblowing (policy, training); Risk (management and structures); Code of conduct (including the ODI Fellowship Scheme *Statement of ODI Ethics and Professional Conduct*, and training provided); Staffing (HR and training); and Governance (Monitoring, feedback mechanisms and accountability).

1.3.1.2 Country case studies and contribution analysis

In order to understand how effectively the Fellowship Scheme contributes to sustainable capacity building in participating developing country institutions and where appropriate, at a country level, we conducted four country case studies (see Section 6.4 for more detail on the country selection). Our country case studies are useful to explore the capacity building process in detail, the pathways followed by the Scheme to develop capacity and its sustainability. As such, these case studies help us review and test the theory of change with a view to revising by providing more detailed information of how the Scheme contributes to capacity development.

Given the evaluation's theory-based approach, we conducted contribution analysis to examine the findings emerging from the country case studies, to interrogate the programme Theory of Change, pathways to outcomes and impacts, and Fellows' contribution against other external factors[67]. Contribution analysis is a particularly useful approach when 'change' results from a combination of causes, when counterfactual analysis is neither feasible nor practical, and when a more fine-grained analysis of the processes leading from causal pathways to observed effects is needed.[68]

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[63] Office for students (2018). Good practice advice on the preparation of access and participation plans for 2019-20 link; and Gateways to the Professions collaborative Forum (nd) Common best practice code for high-quality internships link

[64] DFID (2020), *Enhanced Due Dilligence: Safeguarding for external partners*. link

[65] OCHA (2016) *Inter-Agency Standing Committee Minimum Operating Standards on PSEA*. link

[66] Oxford Policy Fellowship. *Our policies*. link

[67] Mayne, J. (2008) *Contribution analysis: An approach to exploring cause and effect.* ILAC Brief 16 p.4

[68] Useful overviews of the literature and best practice in use of contribution analysis are Riley et al. (2017), *Using contribution analysis to evaluate the impacts of research on policy*, link; and Ton et al. (2019), *Estimating the size of effects: Can we reconcile the possible with the impossible?* link

By developing a revised Theory of Change at the inception of the evaluation (see Section 4.1.5 for more detail), we are able to set out hypotheses to test during the evaluation through the case studies and contribution analysis. We also are able to identify aspects of the ToC that did not hold true and whether this was because of theory failure, implementation failure of contextual factors.

The ODI Fellowship Scheme and the Fellows' placements are only a small factor influencing capacity development in host organisations and countries. External influences, such as governmental attitudes, the political climate and activity of other donors, can positively or negatively influence the level of results attained.[69] Contribution analysis permits a comprehensive overview of the Scheme and its organisational outcome and impact channels, enabling us to judge the extent to which the programme's ToC represents what has actually occurred and the extent to which, and *how*, the Scheme has contributed to this.

From this, we can build a credible and well-evidenced 'contribution story' for each of the four case study countries. Case studies also generate evidence against our OCF framework, shedding light on which OCF dimensions were most affected by the Fellows' work, how, what type of capacity their contribution helped developed and to what results. This helps clarify what a successful Fellowship looks like, what to expect of Fellows and what factors may facilitate results. Case study findings can not necessarily be generalisable but help to distil common themes and lessons learned on effective Fellowships. The findings helped us triangulate with the Scheme-wide analysis to distil findings across all evaluation questions and objectives to produce recommendations for programme managers, practical advice to future Fellows, and lessons learned on policy change that might be helpful for donors, technical advisers, and governments alike.

1.3.1.3 Assessing the contribution of the ODI Fellowship Scheme to capacity development

The inputs and activities of the ODI Fellowship Scheme, together with various contextual factors, should all combine to strengthen the organisational capacity of the host organisations (presented as intermediate capacity outcomes in the ToC) and improve policy, practice or service provision in each of the three priority areas (presented as long-term outcomes in the ToC) as detailed in Section 4.1.5.

Through secondary and primary data collection (see Section 6 for more detail on data collection methods), the evaluation sought evidence of the Scheme on:

- Improving staff capacities, including skills and implementation know-how
- Facilitating the strengthening of networks and coalitions that focus on the three areas
- Contributing to improving the context, working culture and operating environment.
- Fellows contributing to the design and implementation of policies, programmes, strategies or action plans within a Ministry.

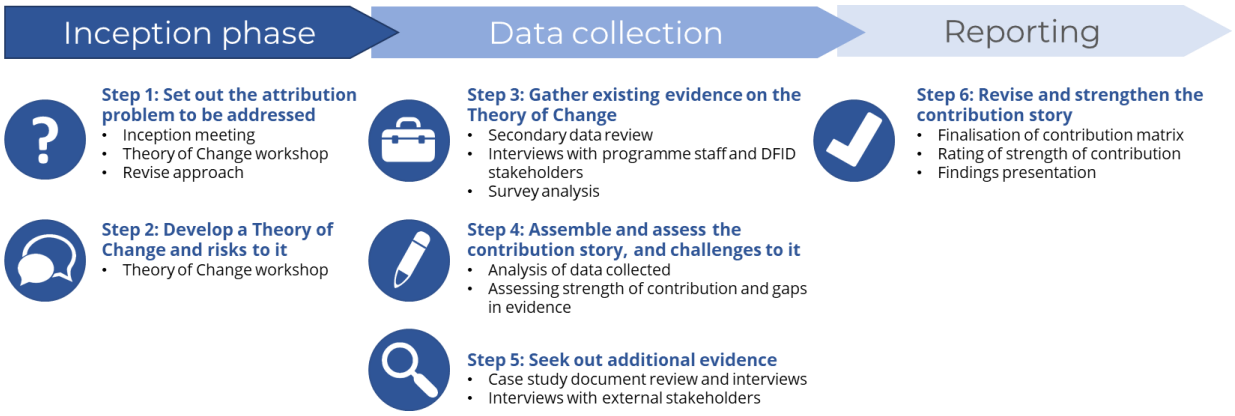
At the same time, we sought evidence of external factors that might have contributed to a certain outcome, for example by influencing relevant dimensions of the OCF framework (see Section 3.3).

We detail the practical steps we took in carrying out contribution analysis below, following Mayne's six-step model.[70] These steps were followed throughout the evaluation and structure our timings for data collection, reporting of findings and development of recommendations for the next funding phase (see

[69] Mayne, J, (2017) *Theory of Change Analysis: Building Robust Theories of Change. Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation*
[70] Mayne, J. (2008) *Contribution analysis: An approach to exploring cause and effect.* ILAC Brief 16 p.4

diagram). Steps 1 and 2 were taken during the inception phase. Steps 3, 4 and 5 were undertaken during the data collection phase. Finally, Step 6 was undertaken in the final reporting and dissemination phase and in consultation with FCDO and ODI.

Figure 23: Steps to contribution analysis for the evaluation



Step 1: Set out the attribution problem to be addressed

This step involves identifying the key outcomes and impact that the ODI Fellowship Scheme intends to improve or change, with a clear accompanying rationale. This was discussed in the Theory of Change workshop and is captured in supporting narrative in Section 4.1.5.

Step 2: Develop a Theory of Change and risks to it

The second step outlines the logic of the programme and how it expects to realise the outcomes identified in Step 1. This should identify the main factors that are supposed to account for observed outcomes in a systematic way, including barriers to implementation, prominent risks, external factors and causal pathway assumptions. Our capacity-focused Theory of Change developed with relevant stakeholders in the Theory of Change workshop sets out causal pathway and assumptions that, if not verified, could undermine the intervention's ability to realise desired outcomes.[71]

Step 3: Gather existing evidence on the Theory of Change

For some causal pathways of the ToC, there is a strong and accepted evidence base and in other cases, it is much less clear and the attribution challenge becomes apparent. Step 3 involves the systematic mapping of existing evidence against various components of the ToC. We collated relevant evidence from the desk-based review, the survey results and interviews with programme staff, and use these to identify evidence of outcomes, test the validity of assumptions and highlight other significant factors that have had an influence on results.

We developed a draft Contribution Analysis matrix that helps us to incorporate all of the empirical evidence about how the ODI Fellowship activities have contributed to observed outcomes and impact (see table 11). The matrix collected evidence from all data sources to triangulate links between inputs/activities and main outcomes identified in the ToC as well as external influencing factors affecting each causal pathway. We developed a code to structure our data sources clearly, numbering documents, case studies and interviewees to easily identify where evidence comes from. This helps us assess the strength of the evidence. For each output cell, we collected information on how the output contributed to the intermediary

[71] Mayne, J, (2017) *Theory of Change Analysis: Building Robust Theories of Change. Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation*

outcome. For each outcome, we have included entries focusing on gender and equality outcomes, in addition to unintended outcomes. The matrices and entries may be updated throughout the evaluation, in light of further information arising from the desk-based review and interviews with different stakeholders.

The matrix enables us to assess the strength of evidence to conduct Steps 4 and 5. Not all evidence sources were completed in Step 3 as we aimed to take stock of the contribution story in Step 4 and seek out additional evidence in Step 5. We refrained from assessing the strength of the evidence until the end of Step 4.

The table below provides an example of what the matrix looks like for a specific outcome. We developed full matrices once we had validated the Theory of Change and started data collection.

Table 11: Contribution Analysis matrix example

Outcome: Enhanced knowledge and skills observed as better understanding and skills to collect and use quality data and/or economic analysis and assess policy options and relative merits of each					
	Evidence of programme contributing factors				**Summary assessment on strength of contribution (0 to 3)**
Activities/ outputs	Documentary evidence	Evidence from survey with Fellows	Evidence from survey with host org	Evidence from interviews	
Technical reports & evidence produced	Medium evidence in document review (PD1, PD2)	70% of Fellows surveyed stated that technical reports were used by host organisations to inform decision-making	60% of host organisations surveyed claimed that technical reports supported the organisations technical know-how.	Strong evidence of contribution to technical reports being taken up by host organisations (Interviews case study 1)	3 Strong evidence of programme output contributing to outcome supported by strong external enabling factors.
High-quality data collected					
Policy papers and bills produced					
Overall day-to-day support					
Budget support					
External influencing factors				Enabling political environment (Interview 1 case study 1) Government champions (Interviews 3,4, 7 case study 2)	

Step 4: Assemble and assess the contribution story, and challenges to it

Once we have gathered and mapped evidence for each intended outcome in the ToC, we assemble and assess the contribution story of how the Scheme has contributed to the observed outcomes. This is guided by the following questions:[72]

- Which of the ToC causal pathways are strong (good evidence available, strong logic, or wide acceptance) and which are weak (little evidence available, weak logic, or little agreement among stakeholders)? How credible is the story illustrated by the ToC?
- Where are the main weaknesses in the story? *For example: Is it clear which results have been achieved? Are key assumptions validated? Are the impacts of other influencing factors clearly evidenced and understood?* Do any weaknesses reveal gaps in the contribution story that additional data or information could be used to address.
- To what extent does the contribution story and evidence propose and/or support answers to the overarching Evaluation Questions? What are the main weaknesses? What additional evidence may be required to strengthen the answers?

Our matrix has been developed to enable triangulation of data across sources and the assessment of the relative contribution of the Scheme at two levels:

- The contribution of specific inputs or activities implemented under each strand of thematic work to the achievement of observed capacity, long-term, gender and unintended outcomes. This helps us to assess which input or activity has been the most effective and should be maximised in term of future programme adaptation.
- The collective contribution of all inputs and activities to the achievement of specific capacity outcomes to better understand the full story of how each outcome is achieved, including what external influencing factors contribute to it.

On this basis, the evaluation team made judgements on the relative contribution of the Scheme to capacity outcomes. To support a consistent and objective preliminary assessment of evidence, we have developed a set of judgement criteria. These facilitated the generation of 'scores', which help to identify the strength of evidence that demonstrates whether the Scheme is contributing to outcomes and meeting its objectives.

Table 12 Judgement criteria for strength of evidence

Score	Descriptor	Judgement criteria
3	Strong evidence	▶ Clear, direct causal association between specific ODI Fellowship Scheme inputs/activities and outcomes (whether positive or negative), with detailed examples provided as to *how* the programme has supported change. Corroborated by multiple sources and stakeholders, including relevant

[72] Mayne, J. (2008) *Contribution analysis: An approach to exploring cause and effect.* ILAC Brief 16 p.4

Score	Descriptor	Judgement criteria
		documentation (e.g. policy, strategy or programme documentation) and at least five stakeholder interviews
2	Moderate evidence	▶ Some indication of direct causal association between specific inputs/activities and outcomes, although link is inferred rather than concrete, whether positive or negative. Corroborated by more than one source (e.g. documentation and two-three stakeholder interviews), but with limited examples as to *how* the programme has supported change
1	Weak evidence	▶ Indication of direct causal association between specific inputs/activities and outcomes, but no detailed examples of provided as to *how* the programme has supported change. Only cited by one-two sources (e.g. one stakeholder or unofficial documentation)
0	No evidence	▶ Very limited/no information to form judgements about the pathway between inputs, activities and outcomes

Where we do not have sufficient information to make a judgement, we recorded and signalled these gaps and sought to fill them through additional data (see Step 5 below).

Step 5: Seek out additional evidence

After we identified weaknesses in the contribution story, we sought further evidence to strengthen its robustness. The consecutive completion of research facilitates this process which allows us to adapt our discussion guides to address evidence gaps. As such, we used a phased approach to the review of evidence as ordered below:

- Review of secondary evidence through a desk-based review reviewed in Step 3.
- Interviews with UK-based stakeholders within the Scheme management team and FCDO reviewed in Step 3.
- Evidence from survey results from Fellows and host organisations reviewed in Step 3.
- Evidence from case study documentation and interviews with host organisations, Fellows and other relevant in-country stakeholders collected and reviewed in Step 5.
- Evidence from interviews with a wider group of external stakeholders collected and reviewed in Step 5.

The research conducted for the case studies themselves, including a document review and interviews with relevant stakeholders tailored to help us fill the gaps in the contribution story with specific evidence and examples of capacity development in the case study countries that allow us to better understand how outcomes are achieved.

Step 6: Revise and strengthen the contribution story

We mapped new findings generated by this evaluation onto the programme ToC, and then undertook further analysis of the data to test, revise and strengthen the contribution narrative and the ToC to inform the design of the ToC and logframe for the next funding period of the Scheme (see Recommendations in

Section 11). A more substantive and convincing story was produced and analysed against overall Evaluation Questions through high-level analysis, synthesis and triangulation. The revised contribution story is a key feature of the evaluation report summarising key lessons learned in relation to the programme ToC and ODI Fellowship Scheme contribution to observed outcomes. The final revision of the ToC can be found in Annex

Annex 2: Bibliography

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Annex 3: Conducting ethical research

In this section, we describe our commitment to ethical research and anti-bribery, our use of informed consent, our approach to gender and inclusion, safeguarding, and duty of care, and bribery.

A commitment to ethical research

Ensuring high ethical standards in evaluations is a core value of Ecorys. This evaluation was based on a person-centred approach, emphasising the cross-cutting principles of respect, accountability, fairness, and transparency. Our methodology and data collection processes adhered fully to DFID's Ethical Guidance for Research, Evaluation and Monitoring Activities, Social Research Association Ethical Guidelines and OECD-DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation.

In particular, for this evaluation, we adhered to DFID's Ethical Guidance for Research, Evaluation and Monitoring Activities as follows:

- Ensuring that the evaluation was useful by aligning the timeline to the requirements outlined by FCDO to ensure the evaluation findings can feed into the next Business Case and provide implementable recommendations on how to review the Theory of Change and Logframe.
- Ensuring the research design and conduct of research was culturally sensitive and to the political context by conducting an initial desk review of the country context and including local researchers to conduct the primary research in-country.
- Ensuring risks to individuals involved in the evaluation were minimised and managed and that people's rights and dignity were respected by keeping a live risk register and including relevant equity and cross-cutting issues in the evaluation framework.
- Ensuring research participants were informed that the research was confidential and how data was protected as per Annex 9.
- Ensuring research findings were disseminated as per influence and use plan in Annex 7.

We ensured staff remained up to date on leading guidance in this area, including UNEG Ethical Guidelines (2008), UN Evaluation Group Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation (2012) and Ethical Research Involving Children (ERIC). In addition, we ensured informed consent from all research participants, approval of our approach, research tools and ethical protocols by the Ecorys UK Ethics Review Committee and that we complied with Aid Transparency Standards.

Ecorys accepts full responsibility for security and duty of care throughout the evaluation, including the safety and wellbeing of all personnel and research participants. Our commitment to the ethical design and delivery of evaluations is further detailed below. We guarantee the provision of high-quality duty of care and commitment to ethical research in all our partnerships. We can provide a copy of our Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, Children and Young People Policy if required. Potential research participants were given suitable information to ensure informed consent (e.g. purpose of the research in an appropriate format, planned dissemination, etc.) and we ensured that they understood participation was voluntary and could be withdraw at any time. Confidentiality and anonymity are paramount. All data was stored and managed securely and only for research purposes. The exception to this is where a researcher has cause to suspect abuse. We were mindful of avoiding research fatigue and were cautious of participant bias. Data was triangulated to mitigate this risk, and we ensured probing questions were included in our data collection

instruments to interrogate claims of positive outcomes. Our in-country experts also incorporated a strong understanding of in-country ethical standards and cultural sensitivities.

Informed consent

We emphasised that participation in all our research was voluntary, free from external pressure and could be withdrawn at any time. We provided participants, key stakeholders and interested parties with suitable information to ensure informed consent and enable them to opt into research (including a summary of the evaluation purpose and scope in an accessible format, participant requirement terms, and information on whether data is to be recorded or observed and how it is used). Written or verbal consent was obtained for all participants. We strongly believe that research findings should be shared with participants and worked with FCDO to identify the most suitable methods for dissemination, emphasising a focus on utility and avoiding being extractive. Given that most fieldwork was conducted remotely, private spaces were ensured while conducting interviews. We also included this guidance when training our local researchers ahead of fieldwork. Where relevant, we facilitated gender-separate discussion groups to ensure respondents feel safe and to draw the greatest benefit.

Gender and inclusion

Ecorys brings a demonstrable understanding of gender issues and experience of undertaking gender-sensitive evaluations. This includes global reviews of specific, high-profile women and girls' programmes such as DFID's support for marginalised girls' education, maternal health and commitment to tackling violence against women and girls on behalf of the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI). Most recently, Ecorys undertook a review of HMG's response to preventing sexual violence in conflict and sexual exploitation and abuse by international peacekeepers for ICAI. We operated firmly in line with the UK government's commitment to embed gender considerations into every aspect of development assistance, and to ensure consistent and long-term monitoring of how UK aid affects gender inequality, as reflected in the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014.

We operated with a gender-balanced team, with specific expertise in conducting research with the most vulnerable in society. Do No Harm underpinned our approach throughout, and we regularly assessed the interaction of research activities within specific contexts and environments, taking steps to pre-empt and mitigate any potentially negative consequences or harmful effects (particularly on vulnerable groups). We also adopted a conflict-sensitive approach, which is particularly key when engaging with respondents in FCAS, such as Myanmar. We ensured that data collection tools were gender sensitive and that our methods addressed the specific needs of women and girls (for example, through selecting appropriate locations for interviews and responding to barriers that may impede participation). We ensured this by testing out tools before conducting all data collection as outlined in Annex 1.

When fieldwork was conducted remotely, we used the technological platforms more relevant and accessible to Fellows and supervisors. Access to online software contributes to addressing barriers that may otherwise impede participation in research (provides time flexibility and avoids overburdening) and can help increase the quality of responses from participants who may not be confident in a face-to-face setting. Where technological platforms posed a challenge, we worked alongside our local researchers to conduct the interviews in person or over the phone.

We ensured a representative sample of male and female research participants both in interviews and in the survey and, in order to mitigate potential bias or power dynamics, we also triangulated a range of perspectives and sources to mitigate bias and further validate findings. We also identified lessons related to promoting more inclusive participation drawing from our findings from the Equity section. We linked these to goals outlined in DFID policies such as the Strategic Vision for Gender Equality and Disability Inclusion Strategy (2018-2023).

Safeguarding

We recognise that we have a fundamental duty of care towards the vulnerable populations that we interact with through our research and can provide a copy of our Safeguarding Policy which outlines assurances regarding protection from exploitation. In summary, we are committed to:

- Assessing safeguarding risks where it is likely that we will interact with vulnerable people or communities, and putting in place proportionate safeguarding measures
- Valuing and respecting children and vulnerable adults, listening to their views and integrating their feedback where applicable to our work
- Ensuring compliance with ethics regulations and processes in the countries where we operate
- Only permitting employees to have contact with children if they have obtained clearance via an Enhanced DBS and approval from Ecorys' Ethics Committee
- Ensuring that all employees encountering vulnerable adults or children attend regular compulsory safeguarding training, including on how to handle disclosures and report allegations, confidentiality requirements and codes of practice and behaviour. Our designated Safeguarding Officer records information on any allegations of abuse and takes further action.

For this evaluation, the project manager was responsible for ensuring the highest ethical standards and associated safeguarding implications. Where issues with safeguarding were raised, these have been reflected in the report findings and reported to FCDO in regular catch ups. The evaluation has been designed to be compliant with and will be conducted in accordance with DFID's Ethical Guidance for Research, Evaluation and Monitoring Activities .

Bribery

We do not tolerate any bribery or corruption and all our practices are designed to uphold all laws relevant to countering bribery and corruption in all the jurisdictions in which we operate. We remain bound by the laws of the UK, including the Bribery Act 2010, in respect of our conduct both at home and abroad. We keep financial records and have appropriate internal controls in place which evidence the business reason for making payments to third parties. All concerns are reported by following the procedure set out in our Whistleblowing policy which allows for direct reporting of concerns to the Compliance Officer. Our zero-tolerance approach to bribery and corruption, as delineated in our Due Diligence Policy and Procedures, is communicated to all suppliers, contractors and business partners through our sub-contractor due diligence process.

Annex 4: Building and revising a Theory of Change

This section explains the programme objectives and expected results based on the Scheme's current Theory of Change, the rationale for revising it and how this will support the overall evaluation. It then outlines the limitations of the initial Theory of Change before presenting the approach used to develop a revised, capacity-focused Theory of Change that will be tested during this evaluation.

A key principle of theory-based evaluation is to identify the causal pathways between inputs and outputs, outputs and outcomes, and outcomes and impact, helping to identify the processes that need to occur for changes to take place.[73] This is usually represented in a visual Theory of Change (ToC) and accompanying narrative, with a Logical Framework (log frame) providing a more practical tool for implementers to manage progress through specific objectives and indicators of success.

During the inception phase of the evaluation, we refined the existing ToC for the ODI Fellowship Scheme. This process enabled us to set out hypotheses, agreed with FCDO, of how we anticipate change to have taken place under the Scheme. We strengthened this as evidence of change is gathered throughout the evaluation lifetime, helping us to understand what the programme is achieving and why, the degree to which key aspects of ToCs do or do not hold true, and whether this was because of: a) false beliefs about causal pathways in the programme design (known as 'theory failure'); b) aspects of programme implementation which were difficult in practice ('implementation failure'); or c) the influence of contextual factors underpinning causal pathways, such as political-economic factors and power structures.[74]

Refining the ToCs was also a critical first step in our contribution analysis approach, enabling us to form and evidence a 'contribution story' of how change happens and the Scheme's specific contribution to this. ToCs vary widely and although there is general agreement on their usefulness as models depicting how interventions should work, there is little consensus on what a ToC entails, how it should be represented or how it can be used. However, as a minimum a ToC should encompass the following:[75]

- The context for the initiative, including social, political and environmental challenges, barriers, necessary pre-conditions and other actors that may influence change
- The long-term change the initiative seeks to support, and who will benefit from it
- The causal pathways that connect inputs to outputs and outputs to outcomes, thus creating the required conditions for desired long-term change
- Assumptions describing salient events or conditions necessary for a particular causal pathway to be realised. If an assumption does not hold true, then an expected effect may not occur.[76]

10.1 The existing Theory of Change

In this section, we review the existing programme ToC. This is based on the visual representation and narrative provided in the ODI Fellowship Scheme Business Case, alongside relevant aspects of the

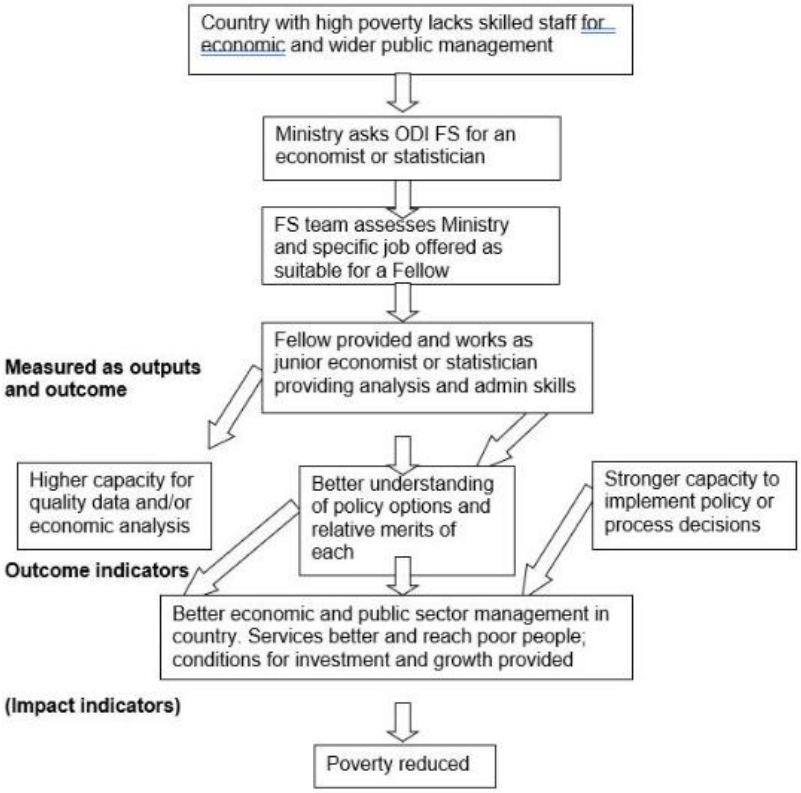
[73] White, H. (2009), *Theory-based Impact Evaluation: Principles and Practice,* International Initiative for Impact Evaluation Working Paper 3.
[74] Ibid
[75] Vogel, I. (2012) *Review of the use of 'Theory of Change' in International Development*. *Link*
[76] Mayne, J, (2017) *Theory of Change Analysis: Building Robust Theories of Change.* Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation

logframe. This was a useful exercise in explicitly mapping out the implicit causal pathways and assumptions present in the ToC and helping to identify the subsequent shortcomings that exist at each level.

The ODI Fellowship Scheme is a programme that seeks to address the need for staff with technical skills in developing countries by recruiting and posting early career economists and statisticians of different nationalities to work as civil servants in developing country institutions for two-year placements.

A visual ToC for the ODI Fellowship Scheme is included in the 2015 Business Case (Figure 24), with an accompanying narrative of the expected results and some implicit assumptions. The 2019 Annual Review recommended revising this ToC and testing the validity of these assumptions.[77] Alongside this, DFID produced a logframe for the Scheme, relying primarily on quantitative measures extracted from a self-reported end of Fellowship survey as evidence of capacity development.

Figure 24: ODI Original Theory of Change (July 2020)



Source: ODI Fellowship Scheme Business Case

Challenge being addressed

The current ToC states that countries with high poverty levels lack skilled staff for economic and wider public management. According to the Scheme's business case, 'developing countries face multiple and complex decisions over the assessment of needs, policy and programme effectiveness and resource allocation, which economists and statisticians can contribute to through the technical skills they bring'.

Risks for the intervention are not stated explicitly in the ToC, but are explored in the Business Case as follows:

[77] DFID (2019) *ODI Fellowship Scheme Annual Review*. Link

- Being under-ambitious and so not meeting the highest priority needs: The Business Case states that given the reputation of the Scheme, ministries may continue to ask for Fellows, even when their internal staff capacity has developed sufficiently to not really need them. DFID states that the Scheme aims to mitigate this by expanding to new geographies.
- Being over-ambitious and losing its reputation for quality posts and people: The Business Case states that that there is a risk that the technical skillset required by host organisations is beyond what early-career educated but inexperienced economists can provide and statisticians or beyond economics and statistics skills.

Inputs

There is a limited description of inputs or activities within the current ToC or logframe that reflect the inputs provided by ODI in delivering the Scheme or that describe the inputs provided by Fellows beyond their placement. The ToC reflects the process of ministries asking for a Fellow, the ODI team assessing the Ministry, job offer and suitability for a Fellow. If successful, the Fellow is placed to provide analysis and administrative skills.

The ToC and Business Case provide very limited detail on the inputs provided by ODI to deliver the Scheme. From the Business Case we know that ODI employs the core staff who manage the Fellowship, provides office space and the supporting services needed throughout the Fellowship lifecycle: selection, placement, preparation, posting and monitoring and learning (see Section 2.3).

Moreover, the Business Case provides illustrative examples of the range of activities undertaken by Fellows including 'policy papers on the exchange rate regime, exchange controls, and monetary policy options; Fiscal Framework Paper for the budget; econometric inflation modelling; economic and financial appraisal for investments in HIV, TB and Malaria; input to a Petroleum Revenue Management Bill; and advice on the financing of infrastructure projects and Public Private Partnership Agreements.'

Outputs

There is a limited description of outputs in the current ToC. The main output reflected in the ToC are Fellows being provided and working as junior economists or statistician providing analysis and administrative skills. The logframe provides further detail on the outputs being weighted that contribute to the Scheme achieving its intended outcomes:

Output 1: Governments in low income, high poverty or FCAS countries are provided with high calibre junior professional economists and statisticians where gaps in local capacity exist (70% weighting).

Output 2: Postgraduate economist and statisticians gain and share practical experience through their Fellowship programme (20% weighting).

Output 3: The Fellowships Scheme is managed efficiently and effectively and offers good value for money. The Fellowship Scheme provides high-quality Duty of Care and medical and other emergencies are well managed (10% weighting).

Outcomes

According to the ToC, the overall intended outcomes of the ODI Fellowship Scheme are:

- Better economic and public sector management in country
- Services are improved and better reach poor people
- Conditions for investment and growth are provided

To achieve these outcomes, intermediate outcomes linked to the capacity developed are provided including:

- Higher capacity for quality data and/or economic analysis
- Better understanding of policy options and relevant merits of each
- Stronger capacity to implement policy or process decisions.

As such, the ToC logic in the above diagram is that a junior economist or a statistician providing analysis or administrative skills will be able to influence higher capacity for quality data and/or economic analysis, stronger capacity to implement policy or process decisions, and better understanding of policy options leading to better economic and public sector management in country.

The link between outputs and outcomes rest on the following assumptions holding true, which are explicitly stated by DFID in the programme's Business Case:[78]

- The public sector in developing countries struggle to recruit and retain good economists and statisticians as the career offer, terms and conditions are not competitive.'
- Real choices about where and how best to focus effort and resources to remove a country's obstacles to development need to be informed by timely and relevant evidence.

Impact

According to the ODI Fellowship Scheme Business Case, the strategic case provides the rationale for providing technical assistance in economic management and statistics to result in better policy decisions and economic growth, ultimately reducing poverty. As such, and as illustrated in the ToC, the intended impact of the Fellowship is reduced poverty.

The inferred assumption needed for this impact pathway to hold true is provided in the Business Case: 'Economic Development is central to each society and country lifting its people out of poverty, and economic analysis and advice contribute to much of the economic management needed for that. The production and use of good quality and timely data is vital to good public decision-making across all spheres of policy, and statisticians recruited through the Fellowship can contribute.'

10.2 Limitations of the existing Theory of Change

Given the considerations outlined above, the existing ODI Fellowship Scheme ToC was of limited value for our evaluation purposes. Its limitations can be summarised as follows:

The ToC does not provide detailed and clear challenges and barriers that the intervention aims to address, necessary to reflect the broader contextual factors under which the programme takes place, and possibly to mitigate the risks that these factors carry. The current problem statement poses three challenges:

1. The problem statement is not context specific enough to reflect the variety of challenges faced by the countries where Fellows do their placements.
2. The problem statement does not reflect the barriers to implementation and fails to acknowledge that there are other contributing factors influencing the likelihood of the Scheme achieving its objectives.

[78] DFID (2015), Business Case for ODI Fellowship Scheme. Link

3. The challenge to be addressed is not evidenced sufficiently in the Business Case and, as highlighted in the DFID 2019 Annual Review, needs further examination to understand whether it is still relevant to the intervention or needs updating.

There is a lack of clarity when differentiating between outputs and outcomes:

- Outputs are defined as tangible products or services that are produced as a result of an intervention's activities, and are directly within an organisation's control.[79] However, the outputs in the logframe reflect long-term changes that would be more appropriately placed at the longer-term outcome level.
- Outcomes are defined as intermediary and long-term changes, including behavioural changes, resulting from outputs.[80] However, the outcomes included in the ToC do not follow logically from the previously stated outputs and are best described as impact-level changes.[81]

Moreover, the outputs reflected in the ToC and the outputs included for scoring in the logframe are inconsistent which makes the intervention logic unclear. Outputs 2 and 3 in the logframe, relevant to the experience gained by Fellows and the quality of the management of the Scheme are not reflected in the ToC, making it unclear how these contribute to outcomes being achieved. Intermediary steps are needed to strengthen the plausible sequencing between outputs and outcomes.[82]

The causal pathways, i.e. *how* outputs will lead to outcomes and *how* outcomes will lead to impact, and *what* needs to happen for change to take place, are not currently identified. The ToC would benefit from breaking down outcomes into the specific areas the Scheme and DFID's support are targeting, helping to draw a line between what is within the programme's reach and what is outside of it. This is evident in two ways:

1. Outcome statements are all reflected within one box in the ToC, not providing clarity on whether different pathways are needed to achieve all outcomes.
2. Capacity focused outcomes do not provide clear pathways as to how capacity is developed. A more explicit framework for identifying capacity gaps and capacity provided is needed to clearly understand the casual pathways that contribute to change.

In addition to this, the role that ODI plays and how they add value to ensuring that the Scheme achieves its results is not captured as a relevant component of the intervention logic. Moreover, there is a missing pathway to reflect the benefit that the Scheme has to the Fellows themselves and how they often go on and continue working in development, which also contributes to the impact of the Scheme.

Assumptions are not explicit in the ToC narrative. Assumptions are defined as salient events or conditions that are necessary (or likely necessary) for a particular causal pathway in a ToC to be realised. If an assumption does not hold true, then the expected effect from will likely not occur.[83] Causal assumptions are required to demonstrate the conditions that need to be in place for desired pathways between outputs and outcomes to take effect.[84]

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[79] Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), (2017) *Theory of Change. Link*
[80] Ibid
[81] Ibid
[82] Mayne, J, (2017) *Theory of Change Analysis: Building Robust Theories of Change.* Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation
[83] Mayne, J, (2017) *Theory of Change Analysis: Building Robust Theories of Change.* Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation
[84] Ibid

Further, the ToC would benefit from identifying external influencing factors which could contribute to changes at outcome and impact level. This evaluation aims to build on the evidence of existing and relevant external influencing factors to refine the ToC for the next funding period.

10.3 Developing a capacity-focused Theory of Change

Based on the considerations above, we revised the current ToC and produced a ToC tailored to the needs of this evaluation. The evaluation contributes to testing the validity of the ToC and was revised at the end of the evaluative process. We identify and specify the hypotheses for how we expect to see organisational change happen in the Scheme to test in the evaluation.

We have developed a capacity-focused ToC, while also reflecting other relevant parts of the intervention such as the benefits experienced by the Fellows and the impact of the management of the Scheme. When developing the ToC, we worked with FCDO and ODI to identify all the conditions necessary for changes to take place, enabling us to achieve a higher level of detail and ensure that the ToC is both manageable and evaluable.[85]

The revised ToC was developed through an inductive process, drawing on the following steps:

1. Review of frameworks to assess capacity development: A review of existing frameworks to assess capacity development was conducted which informed the conceptualisation of the outcomes achieved by the ODI Scheme, informing the ToC design.
2. Document review: A review of available programme documentation, wider literature relevant to capacity development and a review of other programmes helped us to identify in greater detail the activities, outputs and anticipated outcomes and to specify clearer links between these. The programme documents were provided by FCDO and ODI and included the logframes, Business Case, quarterly reports and annual programme reviews.
3. Breaking down outcomes: Outputs and outcomes were broken down into more tangible, intermediary steps. We achieved this by incorporating intermediate capacity outcomes (ICOs).
4. Theory of change workshop: To ensure that the ToC is robust and agreed upon, we adopted a participatory approach by conducting a theory of change workshop with implementing partner ODI and FCDO during a three-hour workshop on 9 September 2020. This enabled us to understand the intervention logic, the challenge the programme aims to address and barriers to this. The workshop also allowed the team to benefit from the technical expertise and contextual knowledge of those who are directly involved in the intervention, and the ToC was further refined to reflect this.
5. Review of existing evidence: At the end of the evaluation, in the reporting phase, the evaluation team revised the ToC developed at inception phase to assess whether the ToC holds based on the evidence collected during the evaluation.

Box 2: High-level insights from Theory of Change workshop

On September 9th, Ecorys held a Theory of Change workshop which was well attended by FCDO and ODI colleagues. The workshop was split into three sessions that covered a

[85] Taplin, D.H., Clarck, H. Collins, E., Colby, D.C. (2013) *Theory of Change. Technical papers. A series of papers to support development of theories of change based on practice in the field.* Link

strategic discussion of the aim of the Scheme, challenges it aims to address and the suitability of the intervention to address this challenge; Capacity development outcomes, outputs and causal pathways and a final discussion filling the gaps.

This box summarises the high-level insights that were raised during the workshop relevant to the strategic direction of the Scheme:

1. Take a holistic approach to understanding capacity development, not only focusing on technical skills, but acknowledging the important of Fellows contributing to developing soft skills, both at individual and organisational level.

2. A need for the intervention logic to capture Fellows' capacity being developed through their participation in the Scheme as one of the key benefits of the programme and how it may contribute to having development professionals with a better understanding of local contexts.

3. Consider the difference between Fellows' supporting capacity gaps and developing sustainable capacity and how both pathways may not be present in all cases. Stakeholders highlighted how Fellows supporting on preparing budgets filled an immediate capacity gap that had an immediate impact on policy development where sustainable capacity may not have been developed.

4. Reflect on how Fellows contribute to strengthening networks and partnerships not at the expense of local civil servants building these networks. There were relevant reflections on the cultural contexts in which Fellows operate and how these may affect the type of work they can do while in post.

Stakeholders highlighted relevant revisions that could be done to the Scheme to maximise its effectiveness going forward:

1. Considering ODI's added value in managing the Scheme going beyond management and being capitalised further by building stronger links between ODI technical assistance programmes, their reputation and leverage which could help support Fellows while in post, especially in more fragile contexts.

2. The potential to fragment Fellowship into different country profiles based on fragility, level of development of civil service and wider capacity needs to better tailor support and funding, linked to the need to understand how different countries receiving support are at different stages of development.

10.4 Revised Theory of Change

This section includes a narrative and visual representation of the revised Theory of Change of the ODI Fellowship Scheme. This ToC was first developed at inception phase and revised at the end of the evaluation.

Challenges and barriers

The ODI Fellowship aims to fill gaps in capacity in developing countries with varying levels of development. It is understood that there are a wide range of contexts where public institutions face capacity constraints in economic and wider public management. The Business Case and relevant sources argue that the lack of capacity for economic and wider public management can be caused and result in poor economic

performance[86], limited fiscal resources and disruptions of infrastructure and public services. [878889] The Fellowship aims to contribute to narrowing this gap in capacity by placing early career economists and statisticians in civil service roles in a range of countries.

The literature identified additional related challenges in conflict-affected contexts which are relevant to some of the context where the Scheme operates. These include organisational fragmentation and weak linkages, and a lack of data and poor information management resulting from weak institutions.[90]

Discussions during the ToC Workshop highlighted the limitation of the existing Theory of Change by pointing out how the Scheme operates in a wide range of contexts. This highlighted a need to reflect that the size and type of challenges faced in different countries varies depending on their degree of development. This framing was confirmed by the evaluation findings as reflected in the relevance section where we find that Fellowship countries do have capacity and retention constraints but that these have more nuance depending on the individual country contexts of each Fellowship country.

As such, we proposed to phrase the challenge statement in the ToC as: 'Countries at different stages of development face challenges to recruit and retain civil servants for economic and wider public management'.

The barriers that could hinder implementation and the success of the Scheme include:

- Potential of shrinking political influence of the host organisation as well as the ODI.
- The host organisation or host country's priority areas are not/do not remain priorities for the Scheme's donors, leading to a lack of political will or poor engagement
- Organisational fragmentation and weak linkages between organisations in the host countries lead to poor engagement and limited opportunities for developing high-quality strategies and policies.
- The host organisations lack sufficient capacity or interest to fully integrate Fellows provided under the Scheme into relevant policy-making processes
- Institutional challenges related to funding, staff, technical and operational capacity may undermine the success of the programme

We found considerable evidence in the evaluation for the last three barriers as reflected in the Impact section examining external influencing factors.

In addition to this, there are associated risks implicit in the implementation of the Scheme not captured in the business case which this evaluation will aim to explore. These include the risk that the Scheme is substituting capacity by providing a Fellow's support which hinders capacity being developed by local staff. For instance, Fellows' superior ability to innovate may distort the incentive structure for innovation in developing country: Fellows are likely to innovate and be rewarded for this more than others, meaning that secondary innovators go un-rewarded for their efforts. There is also a risk that the continuous use of

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[86] Ricciuti, R., Savoia, A. and Sen, K. (2019) *What determines administrative capacity in developing countries?* International Tax and Public Finance 26. Link
[87] Dollar, D. and Kraay, A. (2002) *Growth is good for the poor.* Journal of Economic Growth. Link
[87] Commission on Growth and Development (2008) *The Growth Report*. World Bank. Link
[88] DFID (2015) ODI Fellowship Business Case. Page 4. Link
[89] Harris, D., Massa, I., Foresti, M., Wild, L. (2012) *The impact of the global financial crisis: What does this tell us about state capacity and political incentives to respond to shocks and manage risks?* ODI. Link
[90] United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (not dated) *Analysis of the challenges and capacity gaps in the area of comprehensive development planning in post-conflict context*. Link

Fellows hinders host organisations from filling relevant gaps in their staffing and contributes to perpetuating the challenge that the Scheme aims to address, fostering donor dependency.[91]

Inputs, activities and outputs

Inputs, activities and outputs were developed further in the revised Theory of Change to better understand how they interact and their contribution to achieving outcomes. Inputs mostly related to *staff time and resources provided by the implementing partner*, ODI, and by the Fellows themselves. As such, we have split out inputs into:

- Support provided by Fellows: Fellows posted and working as junior economist or statistician providing analysis and administrative support.
- ODI's management, support and leveraging: ODI as the implementing partner is responsible for the management of the Scheme, including employing core staff, providing office space and providing supporting services. They also provide support to Fellows during their placements which contributes to the success of the Scheme. Finally, ODI leverages its reputation and influence to add value to the Scheme and maximise its success.

These inputs contribute to Fellows conducting several activities during their placement and ODI delivering activities in the management of the Scheme. We identified three types of support provided by ODI Fellows which contribute to their delivery of multiple outputs: technical and policy support, implementation support and administrative support.[92] These are relevant to the different dimensions of capacity provision identified in the Organisational Capacity Framework (see Section 3.3 for more detail).

Secondly, in terms of the activities conducted by the ODI to deliver the Scheme, which contribute to the likelihood of Fellows being able to delivery outputs during their placement, we have reflected the different phases of the ODI lifecycle: selection, matching, induction, posting and support during placement and monitoring and evaluation.

We found mixed evidence in the evaluation of the effectiveness of ODI's management of the Scheme in terms of how different elements of this management contributes to the potential for Fellows to achieve their objectives and reach their full potential. For instance, we found limited evidence of ODI leveraging its expertise to provide technical support to Fellows, limited performance management and limited support for learning to build on best practice. We found some evidence of ODI effectively leveraging networks with external stakeholders and between Fellows, being effective in matching, in the induction process, in providing duty of care and safeguarding of Fellows. ODI was most effective in selecting Fellows.

Finally, in terms of the outputs produced by ODI Fellows during the placement, there was an agreement amongst participants in the ToC workshop that these outputs range significantly between Fellows' experiences. Both ODI's role in managing the Scheme and the support provided by Fellows contribute to outputs being produced. The outputs identified in the inception phase were refined during the evaluation and have been split into three types of outputs:

- Technical outputs including technical papers, budget support, high-quality data collected and provision of training (formal and informal).
- Day-to-day implementation support including management, soft skills and leveraging networks

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[91] Andres, M., Pritchett, L. and Wollcock, M. (2017) *Looking like a state. The seduction of isomorphic mimicry. In Building State Capability: Evidence, Analysis, Action.* Published to Oxford Scholarship Online. Link

[92] Drawn from Grindle (1996), reproduced by Harris, D., Massa, I., Foresti, M., Wild, L. (2012) *The impact of the global financial crisis: What does this tell us about state capacity and political incentives to respond to shocks and manage risks?* ODI. Link

- Administrative support including organisation tasks and more generic tasks.

We found significant evidence of Fellows producing outputs and contributing to the overall running of their host organisations through, mainly their technical outputs and implementation support, with less evidence on the effectiveness of Fellows' administrative support.

Intermediate capacity outcomes

To effectively measure the contribution of the ODI Fellowship Scheme to capacity development, we drew on the Intermediate Capacity Outcomes (ICOs) developed by the World Bank (see Section 3.3 for more detail). Defined as being 'an improvement in the ability or disposition of agents of change to take actions to effect institutional or organisational changes toward the goal of a capacity development program,' ICOs enabld us to understand whether the Scheme, through support to key change agents has increased the capacity of host organisations and Fellows to deliver on development objectives.

The ToC Workshop highlighted the need to reflect the two-fold approach that the Scheme has to capacity development to reflect that 'agents of change' affected by the Scheme include host organisations, staff within these organisations and Fellows themselves. As such, the Theory of Change aims to reflect the capacity development dimensions that the Scheme contributes to developing for all agents.

In the workshop, we identified four relevant OCF dimensions that the Scheme contributes to:

1. Contextual and institutional environment by contributing to soft skill development
2. Strategies and policies
3. Partnerships and networks
4. Staff capacities by increasing implementation know how and knowledge and skills.

These dimensions are both relevant to the capacity outcomes of host organisations and Fellows. The ToC captures these capacity outcomes as follows:

- Improved working culture, professionalism and operating environment for host organisations and their staff
- Improved know how to implement policy or process decision for host organisations and their staff
- Strengthened networks and improved consensus & cooperation around priority policies for host organisations and their staff
- Enhanced knowledge and skills for host organisation staff that contribute to i) a better understanding of policy options and relative merits of each; and ii) a better understanding and skills to collect and use quality data and/or economic analysis
- Fellows' improved understanding of developing contexts and are better prepared for a career in development by supporting their implementation know how, networks, knowledge and skills and soft skills.[93]

Intermediate outcomes

In the ODI Fellowship Scheme Theory of Change, we identified three relevant intermediate outcomes:

1. Host governments' better understanding of economic analysis and social contexts
2. High-quality and implementable strategies/policies produced by host governments
3. Fellows go on to work in development

[93] For practical reasons, we have chosen to make the latter capacity outcome explicit and separate of those of host organisations to be able to better evidence and test the pathway to change during the evaluation.

In capacity-focused ToCs, the achievement of capacity development objectives is a prerequisite for the achievement of longer-term outcomes and impacts. However, in this case, through discussion in the ToC Workshop, there was agreement that Fellows' outputs may contribute to producing high-quality and implementable strategies and policies which may have a long-lasting impact, without significantly contributing to sustainable development capacity. This evaluation aimed to explore both pathways.

Overall, we found considerable evidence of Fellows contributing to the development of high-quality and implementable strategies and policies, as well as of Fellows going on to work in development, as reflected in the impact section. However, we found less evidence of Fellows contributing to host governments understanding of economic analysis and social contexts. There was some evidence of this emerging from the case studies in Myanmar and Rwanda. Generally, the lack of evidence may result from the lack of assessment of sustainable impacts of the Fellowship and the limited institutional memory within host organisations given high turnover.

Long-term outcomes, impact and assumptions

We identified three relevant long-term outcomes, which all contribute to the impact of the Scheme in reducing poverty:

1. Better economic, financial and public sector management in country
2. Services better reach poor people
3. Donor organisations are more effective in delivering development results

We found some anecdotal evidence of strategies and policies contributing to better economic, financial, and public management in the Fellowship countries which Fellows have contributed to through their capacity support and of Fellows having a career in development contributing to donor organisations being more effective. However, given the scope and timeframe of the evaluation, we were not able to gather evidence of Fellows' contributions, either through contributing to better policies or through their careers in development, leading to services better reaching poor people.

For these outcomes and impact to materialise and certain casual pathways to hold, based on the evaluation findings, the following assumptions must hold true:

- Host governments are constrained in their human resource capacity.
- ODI Fellows' skills are relevant to the capacity gaps faced by host organisations.
- Host country context remains stable enough for Fellows to contribute / host organisation priorities remain the same
- There is an institutional buy in (from senior management, supervisors and colleagues) and real need for the skills Fellows can provide that contributes to the institutional ownership and control of the support provided by the Fellows.
- Host organisations and their staff have sufficient time, capacity and motivation and the necessary infrastructure to absorb the responsibility of taking on a Fellow and support them in their role.
- The skills of ODI Fellows are appropriately matched with the needs and capacity gaps of host organisations and can contribute to filling the capacity gap identified by the host organisation.
- Fellows, supervisors and colleagues develop a constructive relationship with Fellows that enables them to work collaboratively.
- ODI Fellows and host organisations are aware of the capacity development objectives of the Scheme and agree to work towards these.
- ODI Fellows are embedded into host organisations and in a position to strengthen individual and institutional capacity.

- ODI Fellows produce high-quality outputs that are useful and relevant to the host government's wider political priorities.
- ODI management team has sufficient resources to effectively manage the Scheme.
- ODI provides valuable support to Fellows and an effective management of the Scheme across its dimensions that enables Fellows to contribute in a significant way.
- Host organisations benefit from the skills provided by ODI Fellows and the support provided contributes to develop capacity.
- Host organisations' leadership buy into the dimensions of capacity being developed and a) facilitate a good learning culture and identify work where Fellows can have a meaningful impact; and b) absorb/scale up the capacity gained through Fellows.
- Host organisations have sufficient motivation and capabilities to retain capacity developed by Fellows to develop sustainable capacity and adopt changes in behaviour and organisational culture.
- Host organisations have sufficient motivation and capabilities to use the capacity developed to implement new strategies and Policies as a result of the contribution made by Fellows.
- Staff turnover within host organisations does not negatively contribute to the sustainability of capacity development that Fellows have helped develop.
- The placement of a Fellow does not have a detrimental effect on the capacity development of local staff by prohibiting home candidates from being hired. This resonates with concerns flagged in a recent report on emerging findings from the Oxford Policy Fellowship[94].
- The ODI Fellowship Scheme provides Fellows with skills that support them to gain new jobs in which Fellows excel which contributes to more effective delivery of aid through improved contextual understanding, skills and organisational culture.
- There is a social demand for improved policies and strategies and better services.
- Improved capacity at institutional level in host countries is used by ministries to deliver services to those who need them most.
- Policies and strategies developed by host organisations, either with Fellows contributions or in the longer-term due to increased capacity, contribute to poverty reduction.

Causal pathways

During the inception phase and through the development of a draft ToC in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, we identified relevant causal pathways that have informed our hypotheses setting. This evaluation focused on testing the following causal pathways. Below we provide a narrative of where evidence was the strongest, as illustrated in the ToC below:

1. ODI's management, support and leverage contributes to the likelihood of Fellows having a productive and useful experience that can influence the extent to which they can produce relevant outputs that, in turn, can influence host organisations. The evaluation provided mixed evidence of the strength of the ODI management, but strongly confirmed the influence that effective matching, performance management, learning and leveraging of networks have on the effectiveness of Fellowship posts.
2. ODI Fellows' support to host organisations, whether technical, implementation or administrative ensures Fellows contribute to certain outputs. These may contribute to capacity development of

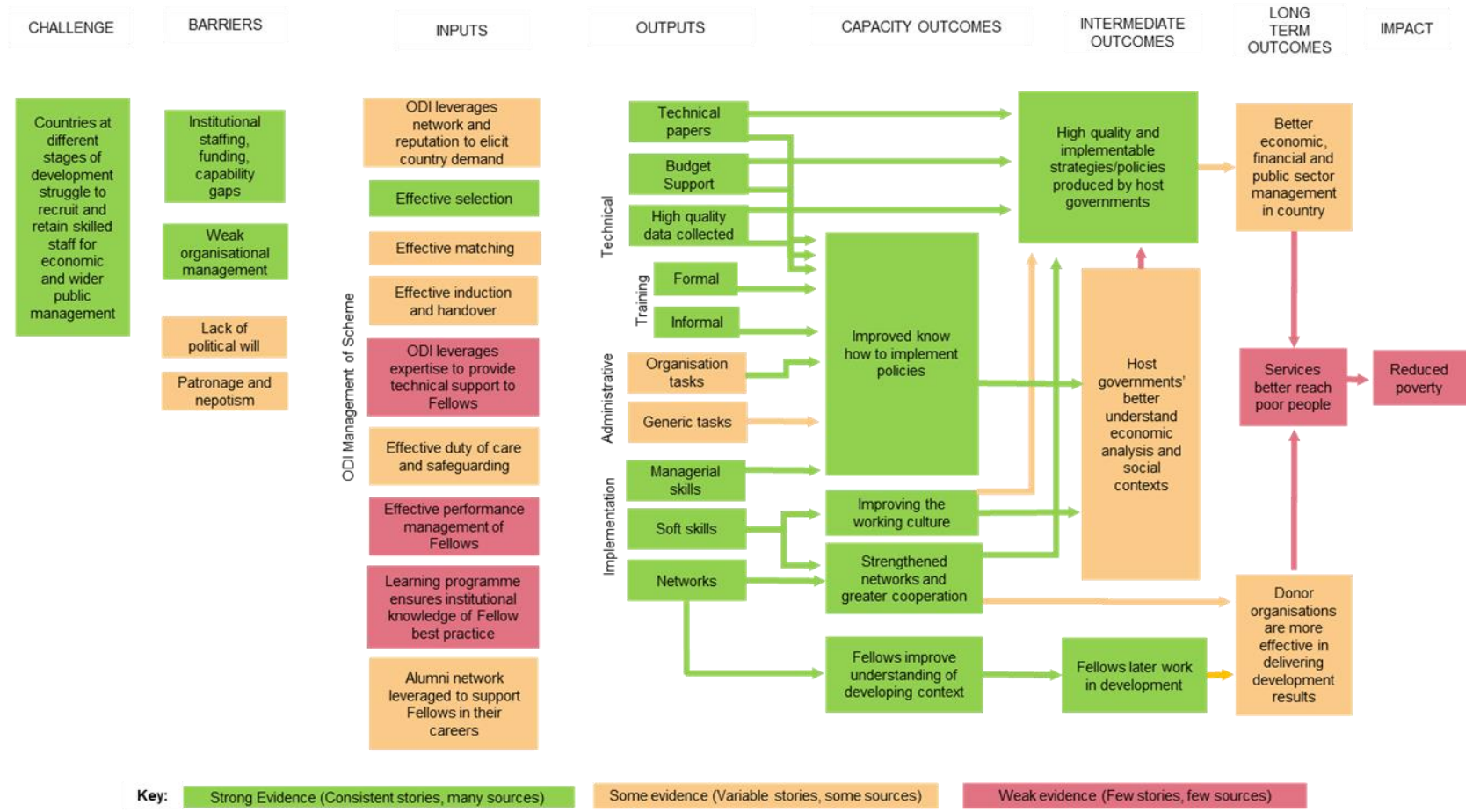
[94] The Oxford Policy Fellowship (2017) *Learning from the Oxford Policy Fellowship: emerging policy messages from a year of data.* Link

host organisations and staff within them or not. When they contribute to capacity development, we anticipate it can contribute to three types of capacity: i) Improved know how to implement policy or process decision; ii) Strengthened networks and improved consensus & cooperation around priority policies; iii) Enhanced knowledge and skills. We found considerable evidence of technical and implementation support contributing to the improved know how to implement policies and implementation support contributing to improving the working culture and strengthened networks.

3. Capacity development of host organisations and their staff can contribute to their understanding of economic analysis and social contexts and/or contribute to the production of high-quality and implementable strategies and policies, which can contribute to a better economic, financial and public sector management in country and support service provision for the poor.
4. There is evidence in the case studies of this evaluation of Fellows contributing to improving host organisation's capacity and understanding of economic analysis to develop strategies and policies. This was mainly achieved through Fellows' contributions to strengthening systems and the capacity to implement changes within host organisations, which contributes to the institutional capacity of host governments to improve policies and services. In terms of the training provided by Fellows, we found that the causal pathway of these trainings contributing to a better understanding of economic analysis and social contexts is strong for colleagues, especially through informal training and working alongside colleagues in delivering technical outputs. However, given high turnover in host organisations, this causal pathway is not always sustainable.
5. ODI Fellows' support to host organisations may not be technical, but rather provide day-to-day management support which can contribute to changing the context and institutional environment of the host organisation by improving the working culture, professionalism and operating environment. There was considerable qualitative evidence from Fellows and supervisors that Fellows' soft skills and managerial skills contribute to these intermediate outcomes.
6. ODI Fellows' support to host organisations can contribute to the production of high-quality and implementable strategies and policies by host governments without having a significant influence on capacity development. We found that through Fellows' direct contributions to developing high-quality policies and strategies, Fellows can have a long-lasting impact without directly contributing to sustainable capacity. Evidence of Fellows contributing to policies influencing long-term sustainable capacity is less evidenced and not a clear pathway in the ToC.
7. The production of different outputs by Fellows, in turn, also contributes to their capacity development by improving their understanding of developing contexts and are better prepared for a career in development.
8. The capacity development of Fellows contributes to preparing them for a career in development and making them better development professionals which in turn contributes to donor organisations being more effective in developing results.
   There was extensive evidence of all work done by Fellows contributing to strengthening their own capacity and having a long-lasting impact on their careers.

A visual depiction of the revised overarching ToC is provided below, illustrating the strength in evidence.

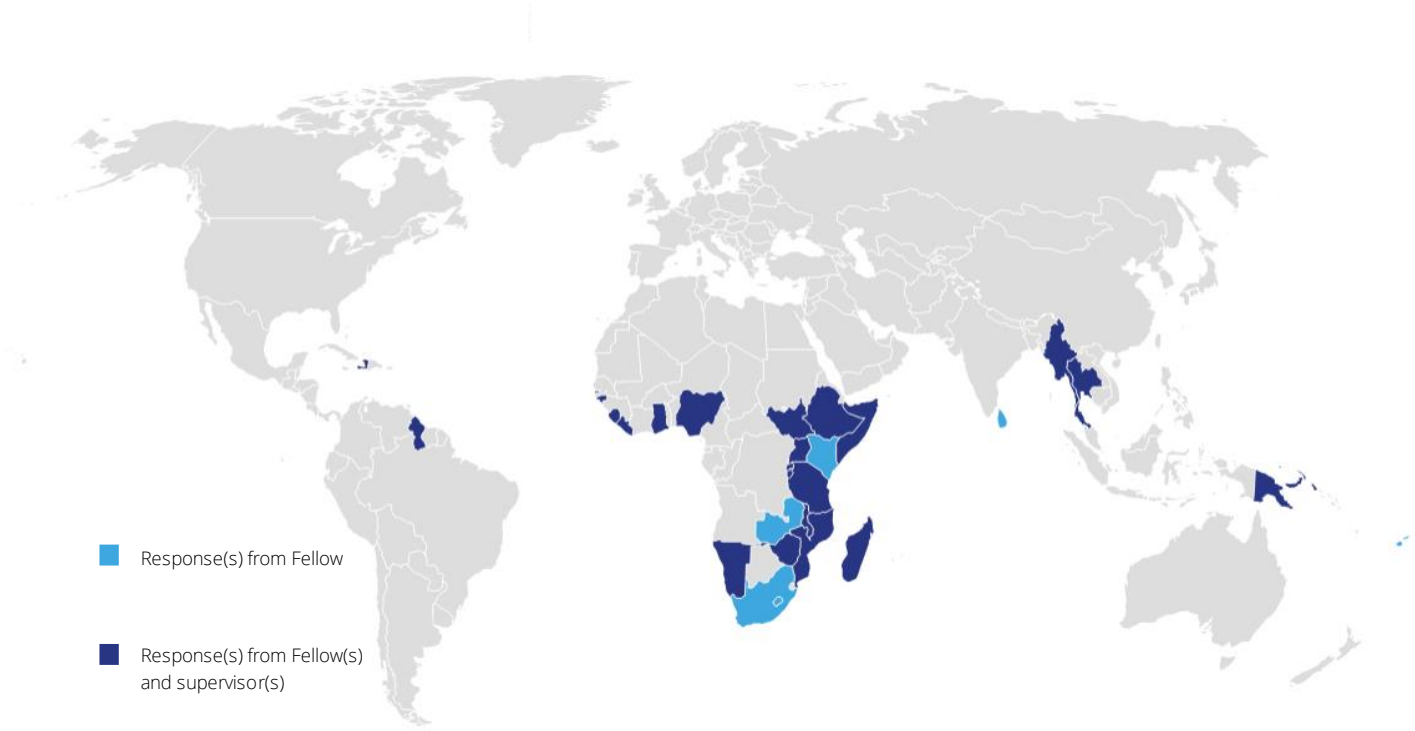
Figure 25 Revised Theory of Change (with strength of evidence)



Annex 5: Survey responses

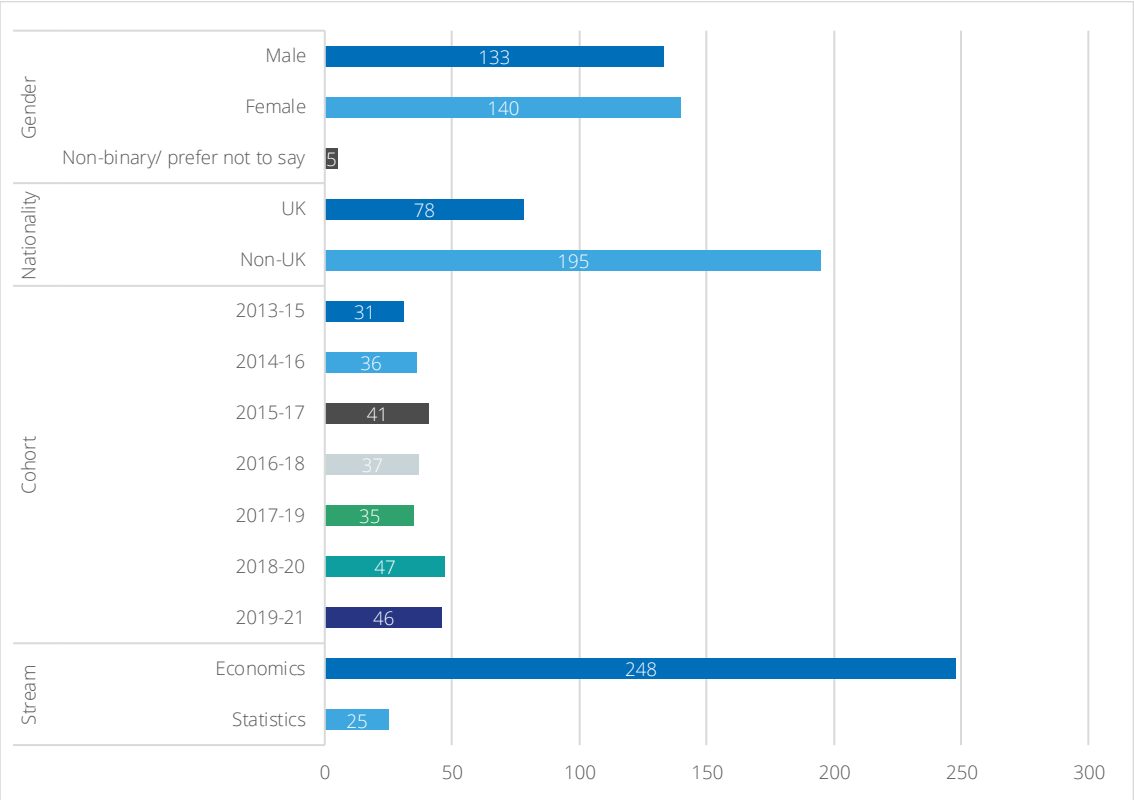
In this annex we present an overview of the demographics of our survey respondents for the fellows survey and the supervisor and colleague survey.

Figure 26: Worldwide survey responses



Note: Countries not shown – Albania and India (no responses), Bangladesh (only supervisor response)

Figure 27: Characteristics of Fellows surveyed



Notes: streams not shown: financial inclusion (3), antimicrobial resistance (2).

Annex 6: Best practices for recruitment and how the fellowship compares

Table 12: Best practice for recruitment and how the fellowship compares[95]

Best practice	Description	Extent to which the Fellowship achieves this
Blind sifting[96]	Remove unconscious biases from recruitment by reviewing applications with any information that could reveal demographic information removed.	The online application form contains an equal opportunities form, but it is not necessary to complete it and it is not used when assessing applicants. Also, the ODI does not remove other information such as the candidate's name and their educational institute.
Ensuring job adverts reach diverse audiences[97]	Posting adverts on a variety of mediums, in a variety of countries, and visiting career fairs at universities other than just target 'highly ranked' institutions. The FCDO's Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2017/18 recommends targeted outreach towards under-represented groups through methods such as creative communication materials and setting measurable targets.[98]	The fellowship does not have a dedicated budget for advertising and outreach and a large proportion of Fellows (59%)[99] hear about the scheme from former Fellows, friends and colleagues. Additionally, there are differences between postgraduate institutions in how likely it is to advertise the scheme on their careers service[100]. It was noted by some Fellows from the Global South that there was no advertising of the scheme in their country[101], and the online application window is open for a relatively short timeframe (approximately one month) and that can be a challenge for those in countries with internet connectivity issues.
Creating policies that appeal to diverse candidates[102]	The organisation should have easily accessible policy documents which include topics such as sexual harassment,	The ODI's gender and ethnicity information is easily accessible on the website including its pay gap statement, diversity figures and targets relating to diversity. However, information specific to the

[95] For a rigorous overview of best practice in designing systems to overcome bias in organisations see Bohnet, I. (2016) *What Works: Gender equality by design*. link
[96] Stewart, C (2016) '*How diverse is your pipeline?*' *Link*
[97] Tipper, J (2004) *'How to increase diversity through your recruitment practices' Link*
[98] DFID, *diversity and inclusion annual report (2017-18)* link
[99] 38% of Fellows heard about the scheme from a past Fellow, and 21% from a friend or colleague, but only 15% from the ODI website. With such a large number of Fellows hearing about the Scheme from a past Fellow, the problem of large numbers of Fellows coming from a few select institutions is perpetuated.
[100] Fellow's feedback revealed that they commonly found out about the Fellowship from their university careers' website, yet there were significant discrepancies based upon the institution attended. Fellows who studied a postgraduate degree at Oxford, LSE or SOAS were far more likely (40%) to find out about the Fellowship from their careers' website than those from other UK universities (21%). Only 6% of Fellows stated that they found out about the Fellowship from an ODI event, but the figure was 15% from those who attended Oxford, LSE or SOAS.
[101] This is in contrast to the Oxford Policy Fellowship that advertises on a variety of job sites in the legal/development space that target Africans and Indians specifically.
[102] Casper, W (2012), *'Why does firm reputation in human resource policies influence college students?' Link*

	discrimination, bullying and inclusion.	fellowship is not posted and there is not a diversity and inclusion or disability policy.[103]
Staff involved in recruitment are aware of best practices[104]	Staff should have training in diversity and inequality, and the team involved in recruitment should (where possible) be diverse.	The level of diversity and inequality training of ODI staff is unclear, and host institutions are not involved in the interview process.
Job adverts contain a clear commitment to diversity	Job advertisements, as well as related promotion materials, make the organisation's commitment to ensuring a diverse workforce clear and explicit.	The annual brochure published by the ODI with details of the fellowship makes very little reference to diversity – simply stating that 'The ODI Fellowship Scheme is open to candidates of all nationalities and generally recruits equal numbers of men and women'. The brochure lists current Fellows alongside the institute in which they studied their master's degree which could deter those from less prestigious or well-known universities from applying.[105]
Genuine commitments to diversity have been made[106]	Real gestures should be made beyond 'empty claims' such as signing up to the Disability Confident Employer Scheme which supports changing attitudes and cultures towards disability within and across organisations[107] and subsidising the costs of attending recruitment days.	Although the ODI does cover costs associated with attending the interview day, there is limited evidence of further commitments to diversity. In contrast, Health Education England (which operates the Improving Global Health Fellowship) has received a Disability Confident accreditation. The failure to collect diversity data on applicants also prevents the ODI from understanding where in the application process barriers to inclusion might exist. If it was collected, they could better understand successes and challenges, and also create benchmarks. Similar schemes show greater initiative in collecting data – such as VSO which collects diversity data for all applicants.
Salary is transparent within job adverts and provides a liveable wage[108]	Postings with salaries noted as 'competitive' or 'dependent on experience' will be less likely to attract those from disadvantaged backgrounds.	The salary is £21,000 (progressing to £23,000) along with an accommodation allowance which is updated annually. It is not clear whether this relatively[109] low salary discourages applicants from low-income backgrounds.

[103] ODI's Gender and Ethnicity pay gap statements (2020) Link
[104] Stewart, C (2016) '*How diverse is your pipeline?*' *Link* and *BeApplied* link
[105] ODI Fellowship Scheme (2020) brochure link
[106] Groeneveld, S and Verbeek, S (2011*), Diversity Policies in Public and Private Sector Organizations: An Empirical Comparison of Incidence and Effectiveness* Link
[107] HM Government Disability Confident Link
[108] Casper, W (2012), '*Why does firm reputation in human resource policies influence college students?*' *Link*
[109] The salary is lower than the average for postgraduate economics graduates from highly ranked institutions (the average first year salary for UK graduates with an economics undergraduate degree across all institutions is estimated to be over £28,000) Link. However the cost of living is significantly lower in the host countries and orders of magnitude higher than the salaries received by the colleagues and supervisors of most Fellows.

Annex 7: Use and influence plan

In this annex, we present our plan for ensuring our results are used by relevant stakeholders. We follow principles learned from previous evaluations on how to best influence.

We understood that the true value of our evaluation lies in its potential influence on programme learning, adaptation and course correction, and informing FCDO and ODI decision making in a timely manner. On this basis, we approached the dissemination of our results and research outputs according to best practice on influencing, and with the needs of ODI and other stakeholders in mind, working collaboratively with ODI and FCDO programme management teams. During the evaluation, the evaluation team engaged with FCDO and ODI as follows:

- The evaluation team held a Theory of Change workshop with FCDO and ODI stakeholders during the inception phase.
- A kick-off meeting was held with FCDO and ODI separately to discuss the objectives and expectations of the evaluation.
- The evaluation team worked alongside the ODI management team in organising the data collection, including conducting the desk-based review, launching a survey with fellows and supervisors, agreeing the case study countries and organising remote field work.
- ODI fellows in the case studies supported the evaluation team in organising remote fieldwork in the relevant countries and supported the outreach to relevant stakeholders.
- FCDO attended the briefing session for country researchers supporting the country case studies.
- A preliminary findings presentation was held with FCDO to support the timely drafting of the next Business Case for the ODI Fellowship Scheme.

An initial stakeholder analysis was set out at inception stage. This mapping helped us identify relevant stakeholders to consult as a part of the evaluation and relevant internal stakeholders within FCDO and the ODI who we will share our findings with.

In line with the Paris Principles, in order to ensure the ownership and mutual accountability of this evaluation, we worked with the FCDO and ODI teams in the UK and in the case study countries throughout the evaluation to deliver an evaluation that generates learning that is useful to donors as well as participating governments.

1) Inception phase

We held a Theory of Change workshop on 9th September with FCDO senior stakeholders, FCDO programme management and ODI programme management staff. This was designed to make relevant stakeholders aware of the study and engage them with the aims and objectives of the evaluation. We will work closely with FCDO on a case-by-case basis to determine how published items will be branded, and anticipate that the case studies and final report will be branded, as well as the formal Webinar to the wider donor community, and blog.

2) Data collection

We collected data across a range of participating countries and stakeholders involved. The document review enabled us to analyse the political and socio-economic factors shaping the design and implementation of the programme and enable us to identify key stakeholders.

We took an inclusive and participatory approach throughout our data collection activities. Due to the global pandemic and continued travel restrictions, we used a range of innovative tools such as Webinars, MS Teams and Visions Live to engage with stakeholders in dispersed geographical locations. With the support from local researchers, we conducted four remote case studies. We shared our emerging findings and recommendations with FCDO to ensure that our findings were shared in a timely way and enable them to inform the next Business Case for the ODI Fellowship Scheme.

3) Reporting

We held a preliminary findings meeting involving stakeholders from FCDO. The online format enabled all stakeholders in dispersed geographical locations to participate, which would not be possible face-to-face. Our research team curated the discussions and asked willing contributors to elaborate orally where relevant. Participants were able to submit written comments via the chat functionality.

4) Dissemination

Dissemination is an essential component of the evaluation, particularly in terms of research uptake. The dissemination plan included:

- Presentation workshop, Theory of Change workshop and discussion of the priorities for evaluation and research question and available resources with the FCDO and ODI team over Microsoft Teams.
- Consultation with ODI Fellowship Scheme management, FCDO SRO and Programme Management Team key informants for the evaluation to take place between September 2020 and March 2021.
- One presentation of findings with FCDO (in addition to any tele-conferences, as necessary)
- A separate presentation to ODI, to draw together lessons learned and facilitate improved delivery, after the submission of Draft 1.
- Production of a stand-alone Executive Summary of the findings, an evaluation learning brief, and stand-alone case study documents (which may not be made public).

Furthermore, the evaluation team shared the draft evaluation report with the ODI after the first draft submission for fact check. After the final draft is finalised, the evaluation team intends to:

- hold a final presentation of the findings with the FCDO and ODI, upon agreement with FCDO;
- facilitate a discussion for the ODI and FCDO to discuss the recommendations and next steps;
- develop a briefing document summarising key findings and lessons learnt to disseminate with Fellows, supervisors and other relevant external stakeholders interested in the evaluation.

5) In country stakeholder engagement

In addition to the above we aim to explicitly engage in country stakeholders. After final approval of the report in early February, the evaluation team shared the executive summary of the final report and evaluation learning brief with both our in-country experts and those host governments that participated in the country case studies of the evaluation.

Annex 8: Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for this contract are embedded in the pdf image below. Double click to access.

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Call Down Section 4 appendix A

Annex A Terms of Reference

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