



Alumni



**Breaking barriers, building bridges.
The climate crisis issue.**



Gift shop

New items available

Check out the LSHTM gift shop's offerings, including hoodies, coffee cups, rucksacks, and our new beanies and baseball caps. Annual profits are donated to the LSHTM Scholarship Fund supporting scholarships for the next generation of global health leaders. → giftstore.lshtm.ac.uk

From the editor



Welcome to the latest edition of your Alumni News! It has been a while since the last issue but I promise you, we have been very busy!

This issue we wanted to focus on the climate crisis, and in particular, how LSHTM is addressing the public health issues that are exacerbated by global warming and pollution. You won't be surprised to hear that your alma mater is very much leading the conversation in this critical area, and has long argued for more focus on the links between our climate emergency and its impact on health across all settings.

In case you don't recognise my face, I am your new Head of Alumni Relations & Regular Giving. I joined LSHTM in May 2023 and have had a fantastic time getting to know our alumni community, working with my wonderful colleagues and being inspired by our amazing students. I have worked in alumni relations in a variety of educational settings and can wholeheartedly say that the LSHTM community is one of the most humble, friendly and supportive groups of people I've ever had the pleasure of working with... and I've been in this field for well over 20 years!

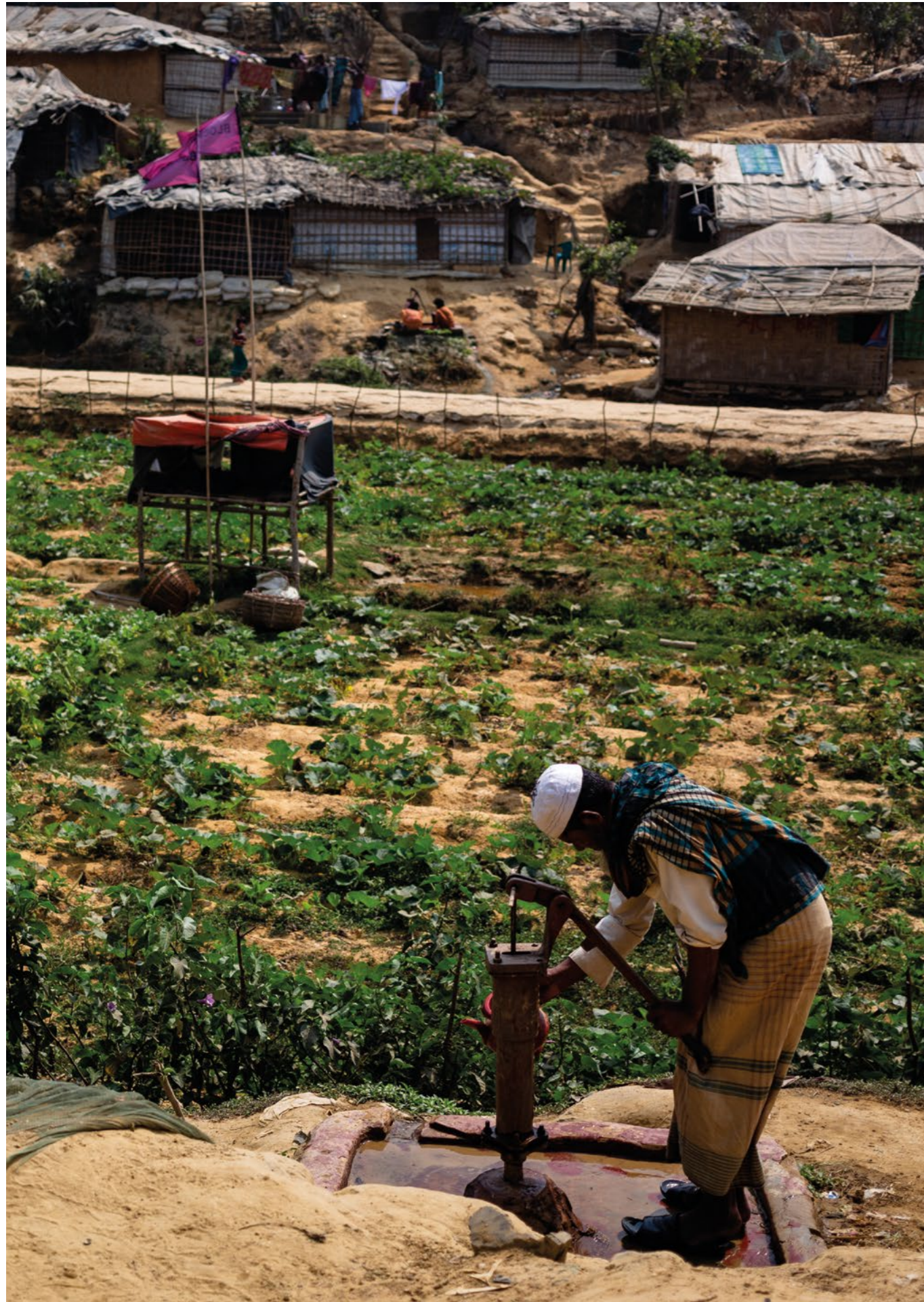
In addition to our regular programme of communications and events, we also recently sent out an electronic survey to over 20,000 alumni and we were delighted to hear from so many of you. The information and feedback provided will help us to ensure that your alumni programme better meets your needs and interests and that your views on various aspects of LSHTM activity are taken into account in future planning. Please bear with us as we absorb and analyse the survey responses.

Lastly, as well as thanking Meron Berhanu, Alumni Engagement Officer, for her excellent work in producing and collating much of the content in this magazine, I would like to thank my colleagues Valerie Boulet and Sarah Enderby Coles who are sadly leaving LSHTM to pursue exciting new adventures. As our Development Director, many of you will have met Valerie at events in the UK or around the world, whilst Sarah, our Regular Giving Officer, has been a great friend to our wonderful community of alumni donors and fundraisers and has done an excellent job of raising much needed funds for scholarships as well as smaller, niche projects at LSHTM. I know you'll join me in wishing them well in their future endeavours.

Please do let us know what you think of this magazine and continue sharing your views and personal updates so that we can meet your needs and celebrate your achievements.

Chris Conneely
Head of Alumni Relations and Regular Giving

Cover image: © Louis Leeson / LSHTM



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Opposite: A man pumps water above a field in the centre of the Kutupalong Rohingya refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Chittagong, Bangladesh. © Louis Leeson / LSHTM

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Professor Liam Smeeth, Director of London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, himself an alumnus (MSc Epidemiology, 1998), shares some of his highlights and challenges in his first couple of years in post, and why his fellow alumni are crucial to the School's continued growth and success.

Director's update



What does it mean to you to be an alumnus of LSHTM?

I remember arriving on my first day as a student at Keppel Street in the old Goldsmiths lecture theatre. I sat down, and next to me, there was a woman from Mali who'd been studying medicine in Russia and was interested in the spread of HIV. The woman sitting on the other side had come from Bolivia and was interested in parasites. My classmates were all committed to improving health. I remember feeling this strong sense that I had come home.

My experience of studying at LSHTM, something I never thought I would have the privilege to do, gives me an added impetus to ensure the next generations have the same opportunities and that education at LSHTM is accessible to everyone and that our education offer can evolve and thrive in these challenging times, which is a major focus going forward.

What do you think makes LSHTM so unique?

The LSHTM community. That includes people currently working and studying at LSHTM and everyone worldwide who feels a strong connection to our School, including our alumni and partners. This community of people are committed to our mission: to improve health and health equity in the UK and worldwide; working in partnership to achieve excellence in public and global health research, education and translation of knowledge into policy and practice. The whole LSHTM community unites around this, and the shared sense of purpose is definitely what makes us special.

What have been your key achievements in the past two years? What were the high points for you?

A major focus when I took on the role was the development of an ambitious new vision for a more healthy, sustainable and equitable world for everyone – a five-year Strategy, and our Values, launched in 2022. The Strategy has three core themes – research, innovation and impact, education to improve health worldwide, and thriving people and culture, which underpins both.

In 2021, I was delighted to see the strength and depth of our world-leading research recognised by the UK government in the Research Excellence Framework (REF), with LSHTM ranked first for the key measure of impact and joint 10th overall of all universities in the UK, in tables published by the Times



“One of LSHTM's most significant assets is our alumni network. We're very proud of the vast numbers of our alumni making substantial contributions to health all around the UK and across the globe.”

Higher Education. A true team effort from everyone who contributes to our research activities.

The LSHTM Independent Review to address discrimination and advance anti-racism was published in 2021, soon after I took up the post of Director. This led to a huge, ambitious programme of work around the recommendations in the review, all of which we have acted on. Much of this work is long-term and ongoing, but we are already beginning to see positive results, for example in the patterns of ethnicity in our promotions data. Allied to these efforts has been ongoing work focused on facing up to our colonial past, with many people contributing to efforts to decolonise our education programme, and to strive towards greater equity in our international partnerships.

Another highlight has been our work to widen access to, and participation in, our education. We have a thriving scholarship programme that helps support people from disadvantaged backgrounds access our courses through financial support, both in the UK and globally.

What are the priorities for the coming year?

Overall, of course for LSHTM to continue to thrive: doing great research that impacts on human health and training the next generation of health scientists.

We want LSHTM to be a community that is truly inclusive and where everyone feels they belong. As mentioned above, we have undertaken wide-ranging work to make improvements following the publication of the Independent Review. A key priority for the coming year will be ensuring these improvements are embedded within our day-to-day activities and become business as usual. Continued work to address the ongoing negative impact of our colonial past will remain a priority: with a focus being finding better, more equitable and inclusive ways forward.

Looking ahead, education will continue to be critical to our mission. Our teaching portfolio has a worldwide reach, a reputation for excellence and is delivered and supported by outstanding colleagues. There is much to celebrate, but in a changing external environment it has become clear that we need to accelerate the pace of innovation and investment in our education offering. We need to ensure that our portfolio is thriving and caters to future demand, and that we can further expand our education contributions to improve health worldwide.

Can you update us on LSHTM's involvement in sustainability and planetary health?

Sustainability is at the centre of LSHTM's values. We have set the ambitious target of reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2030 with a 50% reduction on total emissions. One exciting initiative we launched last year is our Sustainable Climate Impact Fund (SCIF) which improves the wellbeing of local communities while improving the environment and ethical offsetting of carbon emissions.

Planetary health is also one of our research priorities, and we're seeing increasing interest in the impacts on human health from climate change – for example, this year's COP28 conference included a Health Day for the first time. Our Centre on Climate Change & Planetary Health works to prepare governments, academia, health systems and citizens for a new era of public health: one that can embrace and contend with the realities of the Anthropocene. This year we also welcomed the first cohort of students on our new MSc Climate Change & Planetary Health.

What is the importance of alumni as ambassadors and champions of LSHTM education?

One of LSHTM's most significant assets is our alumni network. We're very proud of the vast numbers of our alumni making substantial contributions to health all around the UK and across the globe.

Alumni are ambassadors for our education, using their influence and contacts to help spread the word about our provision and programmes. We welcome and greatly appreciate your help in supporting our student recruitment efforts and in strengthening the global community of health professionals.

Our alumni network is a critical stakeholder in helping us to shape our future education offer, with valuable insights to offer from current roles on the ground in public health policy and practice. If you have ideas about how we might innovate and modernise our education portfolio, we would love to hear from you.

I greatly appreciate everyone who maintains links with LSHTM and has fond memories of our School. I want to thank you for all your help and support over the years, and long may it continue.

In the past year, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) has been cited in countless news outlets for its significant contributions to global health research and practice. Here are some notable mentions.

In the news



Context

How is climate change spreading neglected tropical diseases?

Kris Murray, Professor of Environment and Health at London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, explains how climate change is impacting efforts to eradicate neglected tropical diseases, causing mosquito-borne diseases like dengue and chikungunya to spread.

HOW NG

2 Nigerian women who made Forbes 50 over 50 list

PhD student Kemi DaSilva-Ibru features in the Forbes 50 over 50: Europe, Middle East and Africa 2024 List

Mail Online

The fatal effect of fossil fuels: Air pollution accounts for 5.1 MILLION extra deaths a year worldwide, shocking study reveals

The Mail Online reports on a study by a team including Sir Andy Haines, which estimates that air pollution from burning fossil fuels accounts for five million potentially avoidable deaths a year.

WIRED

Extreme heat threatens the health of unborn babies

Dr Ana Bonell explains the effect of extreme heat on pregnancy and foetal heat stress, referencing LSHTM's 2022 study that followed 92 pregnant farmers working in The Gambia.



Times Higher Education Awards 2023: The Winners

Outstanding Library Team prize awarded to LSHTM for open access research and commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Worrying about pandemics is so 2020. Should it be?

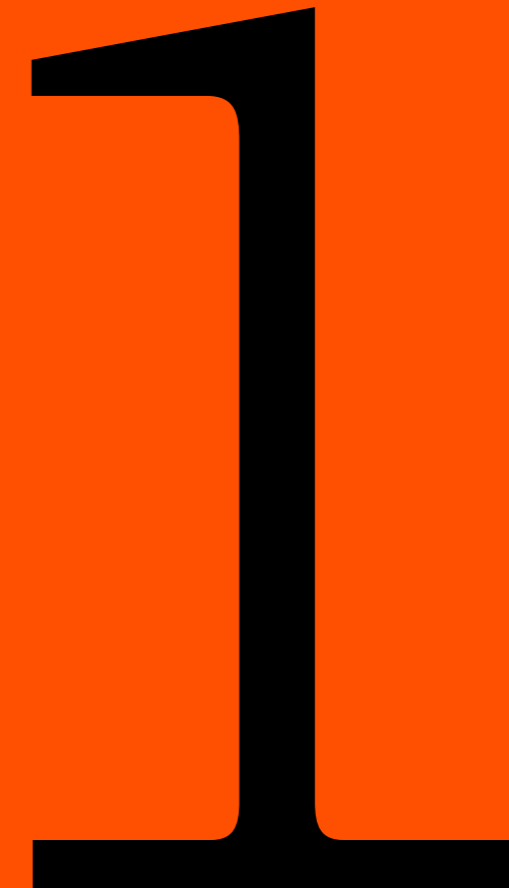
Dr Eduard Beck discusses the importance of investing in data collection for pandemic preparedness.

The Telegraph

'Super mosquito' driving malaria surge in Africa, study confirms

Dr Fitsum Tadesse explains the urgency for malaria elimination in light of a rise in invasive mosquitoes including Anopheles stephensi spreading across Africa.

Read the latest news from LSHTM on our website: lshtm.ac.uk/newsevents



Climate stories

Features and research updates highlighting the breadth of work LSHTM is undertaking to tackle the health impacts of the climate crisis.

Catalysing change

LSHTM experts were deeply immersed in a plethora of events during COP28, where the spotlight this year shone brightly on health. Our researchers passionately articulated the pressing necessity for a swift and fair phasing out of fossil fuels across all sectors. They emphasised the importance of implementing effective adaptation strategies to combat the climate crisis, paving the way for healthy, sustainable futures for both people and planet.

The 28th United Nations Climate Change Conference of the UNFCCC (COP28) held in Dubai last December provided a pivotal juncture for global leaders to steer towards a new trajectory, propelling progress towards climate objectives. Last year's conference represents a significant milestone as health was integrated as a thematic day at COP for the first time. This provided a crucial platform to underscore the indispensability of health considerations within the broader climate agenda.

LSHTM delegates fervently advocated for urgent action to address the latest scientific findings on the health implications of climate change. Our researchers passionately presented a myriad of topics, ranging from the health co-benefits of climate action to the impacts of heat on maternal and child health. They delved into discussions on building resilient net-zero health systems, the interplay between climate change and food systems, and the imperative of fostering healthy, sustainable cities.

The vibrant spirit of LSHTM was palpable at COP28, where our Director, Professor Liam Smeeth, and Head of Philanthropy, Mary-Alice McDevitt, hosted an engaging Alumni Gathering. Academics from LSHTM's Centre for Climate Change & Planetary Health shared their cutting-edge research and insights, sparking dynamic conversations and forging valuable connections with our global alumni community.



Dr Meghna Ranganathan at 'Interlinkages between violence against women and climate change: the importance of investment in prevention strategies' panel on 4 December 2023.



COP28 saw unprecedented progress for the health sector:

Historic assembly of health delegates (2.4% of total delegation)

2.4% health delegates

First ever health day

1st health day

50 Ministers of Health attending

50 Ministers of Health

First Inter-Ministerial Meeting on Climate & Health

1st meeting

143 parties endorsed COP28 health-climate declaration (thus far)

143 parties

\$1 billion finance announce for climate and health

\$1 billion



LSHTM at COP28 Summary:

Strong, coordinated presence at COP28 of 15 in-person delegates and 8 virtual

23 delegates

Making the health argument for climate action and impact at 24 events across 14 pavilions and arenas

24 events

Collaborated with at least 63 organisations, institutions, local and national governments

63 collaborations



MSc Climate Change & Planetary Health

LSHTM's brand new MSc programme, launching in the 2024/25 academic year, is designed to help students unravel the intricate relationship between the environment and human health, envisioning a habitable planet for generations to come.

Enhance your understanding of the diverse impacts of climate change on populations worldwide, while scrutinising the influence of human behaviour on the planet. Develop the confidence to assess connections, anticipate challenges, devise solutions, and intervene proactively. Gain specialised skills to become a catalyst for change. Whether pursuing full-time, part-time, or split-study over two years, embark on a journey of discovery with us. [Find out more on how to apply to our courses on p18.](#)

Our goal: Net zero by 2030

Sustainability is at the centre of LSHTM's values. In response to the UK Parliament declaring a climate change emergency in May 2019, we developed a comprehensive energy and carbon management plan with a commitment to achieve net-zero emissions by 2030.

Improving our buildings

We are improving our buildings in London to provide a high quality, flexible and sustainable environment for research and education.

Our new building at Tavistock Place – LSHTM's first completely new building on its London site since 1929 – was completed in 2023.

Carefully designed by architects to maximise the tightly constrained space, and shortlisted for the Architects' Journal Architecture Awards 2023 in the Higher Education category, it features:

- More than 2,500m² of high-quality, collaborative working space for research and office staff.
- Cascading terraces with rooftop gardens and a 'blue roof' for more sustainable use of rainwater.
- The building has been rated BREEAM Excellent for its sustainable design.
- Map patterns carved into brass screens around the building inspired by the 'father of

epidemiology' John Snow's 19th century cholera maps – a nod to the past as we build a more equitable and collaborative shared future with shared health at its heart.

- A bright and airy atrium running through the centre – a physical symbol of our vision of partnerships and open knowledge exchange, connecting different experiences and perspectives towards a common goal.

The MRC Units

The Medical Research Council Unit The Gambia (MRCG) and the MRC/ Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI) and LSHTM Uganda Research Unit are leading the way in the generation and use of greener energy sources.

A solar power generation system at MRC Unit The Gambia at LSHTM – the biggest of its kind in The Gambia – produces 920 megawatts per annum, reducing energy bills by 25% and cutting 1,250 tons of annual carbon emissions. The MRCG at LSHTM has committed to working closely with the Government of The Gambia and other development partners to deliver significant research outcomes, that will contribute to the global sustainable development agenda, and have lasting positive impacts on the local populations.

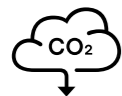
In Uganda, solar photovoltaic (PV) systems were installed and the MRC/

UVRI and LSHTM Research Unit currently produces 45% of its energy requirement. The Unit launched a 607KWP solar installation at its Entebbe research site in an inauguration event that marked the completion of Phase II of a solar energy project aimed at enhancing energy conservation and sustainability during the conduct of scientific research. The event was presided over by Ms Elizabeth Kaijuka Okwenje, Principal Energy Officer on behalf of Hon Ruth Nankabirwa, Minister of Energy and Mineral Development.

The new phase features 513 additional solar panels and cutting-edge energy storage systems, which are expected to significantly reduce the Unit's reliance on the power grid. According to the Unit Director Prof Pontiano Kaleebu, "The introduction of solar power contributes to an additional clean and affordable energy source. We expect to have a 50% reduction in grid consumption, which will free up more funds for research."

In line with the UN's global call to action to combat climate change, the Unit is committed to increasing the renewable fraction of power used for scientific research and operations to 70%. Our overarching aim is to contribute to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG7), which emphasizes adoption of affordable and clean energy.

Sustainability success to date



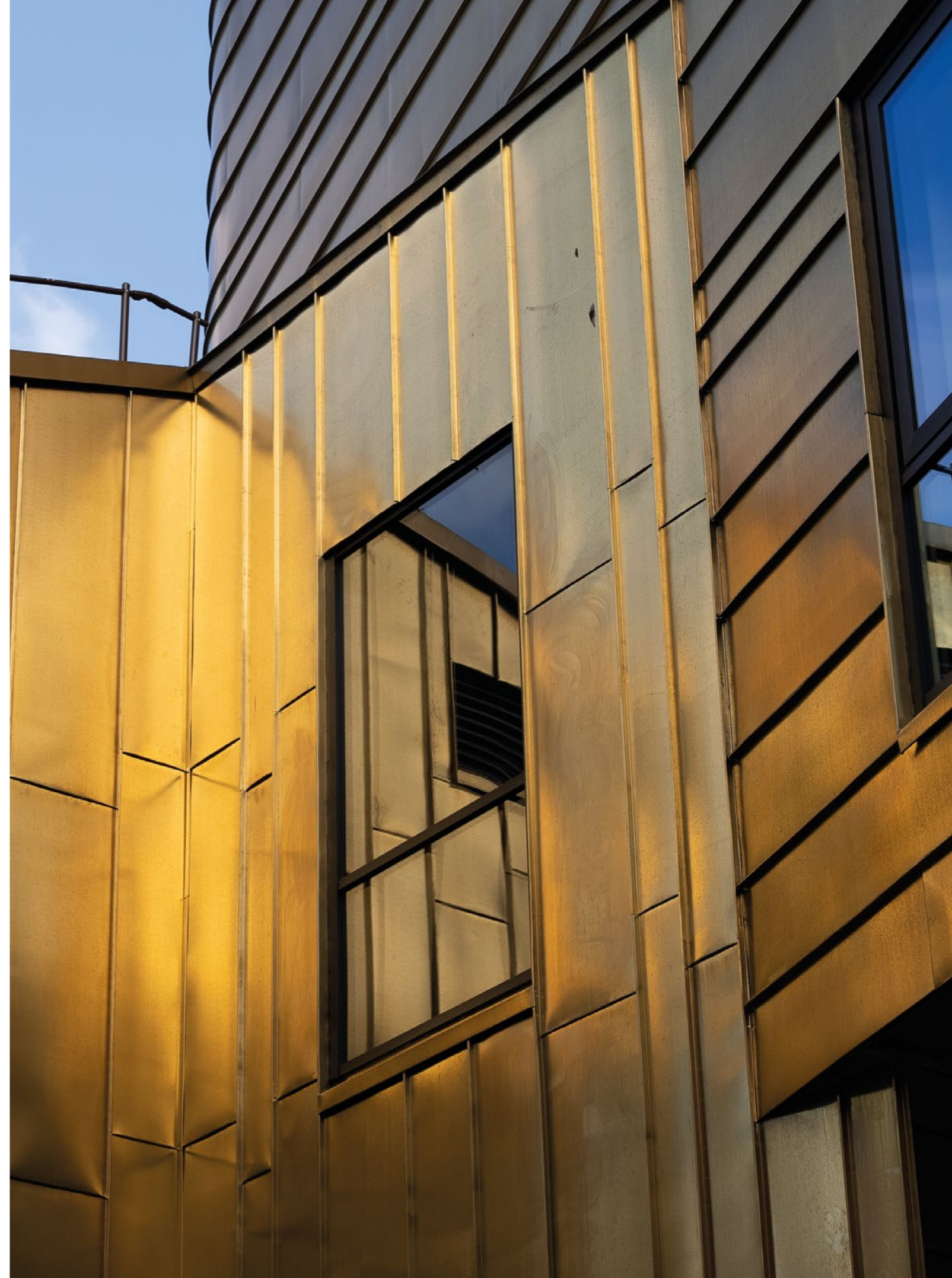
42% reductions in carbon emissions from 2012/13 to 2018/19



Water consumption reduced by > 6,500m³ in 2018/19



Increased recycling rate to 68% in 2018/19 from 61% in 2017/18



Unlocking hope

In a significant stride towards addressing the pressing issues of climate change and fostering community empowerment, the MRC/UVRI and LSHTM Uganda Research Unit is joining forces with the Sustainable Climate Impact Fund (SCIF).

Launched by Hon Aisha Sekindi, who serves as Uganda's State Minister for Water, the project aims to improve the health and well-being of communities, protect the environment, implement sustainable water solutions to reduce the prevalence of waterborne diseases, and empower local communities through education on water hygiene and sanitation in some of the most vulnerable communities across Lyantonde and Kalungu districts.

SCIF conducted an extensive project scoping exercise in select districts of Uganda to identify the most pressing challenges faced by communities and determine the most effective interventions. As a result, the Safe Water Project emerged as SCIF's first initiative. In partnership with its delivery partner WaterAid Uganda, SCIF has refurbished defunct boreholes and established new solar-powered motorised water points. These efforts have resulted in a total of 16 strategically located water points in Lyantonde and Kalungu districts. The project aligns with seven Sustainable Development Goals and contributes to Uganda's ambitious target of providing clean water and improved sanitation for all by 2030.

The project aims to repair and refurbish 16 broken-down hand pump boreholes located in selected central points in communities. It will also install solar motorized water pumps and build community capacity to use and protect safe water sources that seek to increase sustainable access to clean water for all.

The refurbishment and installation of boreholes will greatly enhance access to clean water, thereby reducing waterborne diseases and diarrhea, while improving air quality and related health outcomes. By eliminating the need for boiling water, the project also contributes to emissions reduction, mitigating the effects of climate change. The community hygiene education programs, led by experienced partners in Uganda, will accompany each installed borehole. SCIF is committed to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the water points through local capacity development for maintenance and providing external support when needed.

Engineer Joseph Oriono Eyatu, Commissioner for Rural Water Supply & Sanitation at Uganda's Ministry of Water and Environment, said:

"SCIF's initiative is a gesture of commitment by development partners to support government interventions. Rural areas in Uganda face a significant water challenge, with nearly 18,000 villages lacking safe water access. SCIF's timely support instills hope in mitigating the economic effects of climate change in water-stressed areas like Lyantonde, Kalungu, and Isingiro."

This collaborative venture symbolises a beacon of hope, as two impactful entities unite to create positive change in the face of climate challenges, bringing cleaner water and a healthier future to the people of southwestern Uganda.

Professor Moffat Nyirenda

New Director announced for MRC Unit in Uganda

Announced as the successor to Professor Pontiano Kaleebu, Professor Nyirenda embodies a vision of innovation, collaboration, and strategic growth. His appointment marks a pivotal moment for the unit, signaling a renewed commitment to cutting-edge research and transformative impact across Africa.



"We have the opportunity to shape the future of research and training in the region, forging new partnerships and maximising our capacity to translate research into tangible outcomes."

As COP marked its first dedicated Health Day, experts discussed how climate change is impacting human health and what can be done about it.

Leading the climate and health debate

From extreme heat to the spread of infectious disease, global food security to air pollution, LSHTM researchers explored how climate change is affecting our shared health. They also discussed measures to tackle the climate crisis which could lead to a healthier future for people around the world.

Rising temperatures due to climate change are already affecting the most vulnerable members of our global community, including foetuses carried by pregnant farmers working in extreme heat and homeless people living on our city streets. Research has also shown that our changing climate is

leading to the spread of mosquito-borne diseases beyond established areas. For example, we are now seeing outbreaks of dengue in parts of Europe. Burning fossil fuels is polluting the very air we breathe, leading to an estimated extra 5 million deaths worldwide every year.

Our experts have long argued that the climate crisis is a health crisis and that considerations of health impacts should be central to climate negotiations.

The addition of a Health Day brings hope of real progress, and that global leaders will focus on the health opportunities of climate mitigation action as well as the challenges.

Opposite top: Dubai skyline

Opposite: From the Art of Health Breathe In design competition in Zimbabwe in collaboration with the Children, Cities and Climate (CCC) Action Lab, as part of the Zimbabwe LSHTM Research Partnership. This initiative engaged young people with health and wellbeing issues through the creative arts. More information can be found on our Children, Cities and Climate webpage.

LSHTM to develop global observatory for vector-borne disease outbreaks

A partnership with the AXA Research Fund will include a forecasting system to measure climate change's impact on the risk of dengue outbreaks.

The new forecasting system will focus first on outbreaks in countries where dengue is most prevalent, then issue warnings to others, including in Europe and North America, where dengue is currently expanding its range. At present, there is no global database that tracks the current dengue situation and outbreaks.

Experts call on leaders to take action on emissions to reduce climate change risks

The call comes from the authors of the Lancet Pathfinder Commission report, the first comprehensive analysis of global evidence on the health benefits of climate action. Research for the report was led by researchers at LSHTM with oversight of an international group of Commissioners and in collaboration with partners of the wider Pathfinder Initiative. This enabled researchers, for the first time, to compare potential health benefits from different types of climate action, by harmonising data in studies from different populations that used a variety of methodologies and metrics.





Study with us

Looking to take your career in public health and global development to new heights? Look no further than your alma mater, where your journey continues with excellence and flexibility!

As proud alumni, you already know the value of our institution. Now, seize the opportunity to enhance your skills and stay abreast of the latest developments in your field with our short, specifically designed courses. Whether it's for a day or three months, immerse yourself in specialised topics and elevate your expertise!

Why reconnect with LSHTM?

- **Flexible Studies:** Accessible from anywhere in the world, many of our short courses seamlessly integrate into your busy schedule with online/hybrid delivery.
- **Expert Guidance:** Benefit from the wisdom of our esteemed faculty members and renowned experts in the field.
- **Tailored Programmes:** Explore a diverse range of courses, from Clinical Trials to Pandemics, to Adolescent Health or Eye Health, crafted to meet your evolving needs.
- **Unlock Exclusive Benefits:** Build upon your existing qualifications, apply your newfound knowledge directly to your career, and enjoy flexible payment options.

What's more, LSHTM alumni who graduated in the last three years can benefit from a 20% discount on all short courses taking place in person or online until end of July 2025. Exclusions apply – see our website for more details: lshtm.ac.uk/study

Have a look at some of our courses

- Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR): A multidisciplinary approach
- Global Health Primer for Doctors
- Infectious Disease 'Omics
- Introduction to Infectious Disease Modelling and its Applications
- Introduction to Spatial Analysis in R
- Introductory Course in Epidemiology & Medical Statistics
- Laboratory Diagnosis of Malaria
- Professional Certificate in Pharmacoepidemiology & Pharmacovigilance
- Professional Diploma in Tropical Nursing
- Professional Diploma in Tropical Medicine & Hygiene (DTM&H)
- Travel Medicine

Join us once again in our vibrant community of lifelong learners, where your experiences enrich our collective knowledge and impact: lshtm.ac.uk/study/courses/short-courses



Impact stories

Inspiring stories of LSHTM alumni, students, and research showcasing our global impact.

From medic to health minister



Karina Rando is the Minister of Public Health in Uruguay. She worked as a medical doctor in anaesthesiology and liver transplant surgery in her home country before coming to London to study the MSc Public Health – Health Economics stream in 2017. She describes how her time at LSHTM gave her practical professional tools, and friends for life.

Why did you pursue a career in public health?

When I was a little girl, I dreamed that everyone would have enough food. I was very worried about famine and the suffering of people, especially children. As a child I enjoyed playing with maps, and I would wonder if there was a way to feed the world. I thought that if every family in the world gave something to eat, and every government sent one aeroplane to the population that was hungry, there would no longer be hunger; the whole world could be fed.

When I grew up, I decided to study medicine but deep inside I knew I wanted to work with people all over the world, not only medical patients. I loved being a doctor but there came a time when I decided to do what I really wanted to do in life. My background is mainly clinical, and I wanted to expand my knowledge in other areas, thinking on a more global scale about the health of the general population. That's why I decided to explore public health - something bigger that made me see things from another point of view.

Why did you choose to study at LSHTM?

Uruguay doesn't have a public health university to do a Master's in public health so I was looking in other parts of the world. I searched the web for the best universities in public health, and everywhere I looked, I saw LSHTM come up. I also chose LSHTM because London is a wonderful city to study in. There are lovely cafes and places where you can interact with people from all over the world; it's very cosmopolitan.

How have your studies helped you in your work?

As Minister of Public Health in Uruguay, I have to decide the priorities for my country. LSHTM taught me that there is no health without mental health. I have applied that in government now and it is one of our priorities.

At LSHTM I learnt many skills that are useful for my current job, particularly economic evaluation and public health policy.

There are not enough resources for health anywhere – you always need more. We have economic constraints, so

we need to be rational about how we use state money for the health of the population. Through my studies on economic evaluation, I learnt how to decide which treatment is going to give more health benefits to the whole population and not to just one patient.

Decisions around policies in public health are always a challenge. You need to have an overview of all the topics from different points of view. It's important for me as a Minister of Public Health to know how to do that, and I learnt it at LSHTM.

Tell us about some of your happiest memories from your time at LSHTM?

Something I will hold in my heart for the rest of my life are the friendships I made at LSHTM, with people from all over the world – Iran, Pakistan, Japan, India, Spain, the UK. It's wonderful to have these friends for the rest of my life.

As I was older (some of the other students could have been my son or daughter), we had a special relationship. For example, they would talk to me about their parents, and ask me for advice. One of my favourite memories was when my friends held a leaving party for me. We went to a Spanish restaurant where we had a wonderful dinner. We danced until 2am and ate typical Galician dishes. It was fantastic.

I will always remember the first time I went to study in the library. It felt like I was in the middle of a movie – it was wonderful. The library is magical and has so much history. It's a very inspiring place to study in.

In LSHTM I always felt the staff were taking care of me. It was like a family. I never felt alone. For example, I fractured my hand and had to go to hospital for surgery. The staff at the School were very concerned about me. They contacted me every day and asked me how I was and gave me extra time for my assessments. They were always with me in my difficult moments, which was important.

What advice do you have for anyone considering studying at LSHTM?

LSHTM is so inspiring. It is excellent at an academic level but you have to make a huge effort. It's not going to be easy; it's going to be hard. But it's going to be good. It's probably going to be one of the best things you can do in your life.

My advice is you have to take the risk or lose the chance. I will always remember the time I spent at LSHTM as some of the best years of my life.



“LSHTM is so inspiring ... It's probably going to be one of the best things you can do in your life.”

Right & below: On board the Greg Mortimer ship which was evacuated in Uruguay during the Covid-19 pandemic



Integral role in the development of the RTS,S malaria vaccine



Researchers working in malaria labs in Fajara, The Gambia

A historic moment unfolded on 22 January 2024, as the world witnessed the commencement of the first-ever rollout of the World Health Organization (WHO)-recommended malaria vaccine, RTS,S, in Cameroon. With an estimated 6.6 million children slated to receive the vaccine across 20 African countries in the next two years, hopes are high for a significant reduction in malaria-related morbidity and mortality among children, bolstering global efforts to combat this deadly disease.

The journey towards this groundbreaking achievement traces back to the diligent efforts of the Medical Research Council Unit The Gambia at London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (MRCG at LSHTM). Since 1997, this institution has been at the forefront of malaria research, collaborating closely with local communities and volunteers to research, develop, and implement the RTS,S vaccine.

Commenting on the significance of this milestone, Professor Umberto DAlessandro, Director of MRCG at LSHTM, emphasised, "Making the RTS,S vaccine available as a routine vaccination is only possible thanks to decades of work by researchers in Africa working with international partners, with clinical trials at MRCG at LSHTM starting back in 1997."

Dr Kalifa Bojang, Senior Clinical Scientist at MRCG at LSHTM, reiterated the unit's commitment to eradicating malaria and highlighted its pivotal role in the early development of RTS,S. "From clinical trials in The Gambia to subsequent trials that demonstrated the impact of RTS,S on reducing severe malaria cases and child mortality, MRCG at LSHTM remains a beacon of hope in the global pursuit of a malaria-free future."

The successful trials coordinated by LSHTM, spanning Burkina Faso and Mali from 2017 onwards, demonstrated the effectiveness of RTS,S in reducing severe malaria cases and deaths among children. The results underscored the importance of vaccinating children with RTS,S prior to the rainy season, in conjunction with antimalarial drugs and bed nets, offering over 90% protection against malaria episodes during the study.

As the vaccine is recommended by WHO for children around five months of age, with a schedule of four doses and a potential fifth dose in high-risk areas, the milestone represents a significant step forward in the fight against malaria. The development of RTS,S, initially by GSK and PATH's Malaria Vaccine Initiative, alongside the recent approval of the R21 vaccine by Oxford University, offers renewed hope in the global battle against this deadly disease.

Damehood in the King's New Year Honours List



Jennifer Dixon, Chief Executive, The Health Foundation (an independent foundation) was awarded a damehood in the King's New Year Honours List for services to the NHS and public health.

Can you please tell us a bit about your current work/research?

The Health Foundation's work is extensive but focuses on three broad areas. The first is improving policy, in which we analyse current and possible future reforms to health and social care. We look at the main reform issues, and also international comparisons. The second is population health where our focus has been on tackling the wider determinants of health and reducing inequalities. And the third is a special focus on improvement and innovation in healthcare, where we are focusing on digital health, artificial intelligence and better evaluation of emerging technologies.

What course and year did you study at LSHTM?

1990/1 – I can't believe it is a third of a century ago!

How did it feel to be awarded a damehood in the King's New Year Honours List?

Literally an honour of course! But very much a collective effort also from all the teams I work with and individuals internal and external to the Health Foundation. I do hope it adds some spice and influence to all of our work. I also hope that it will encourage younger (and possibly shy, introverted) women to feel they can flourish.

Why did you choose to study with LSHTM?

At the time it was the only centre in London offering an MSc in Public Health, and was part of the NHS's excellent public health training programme. It was a fantastic experience.

Did you have to overcome any challenges to study with us?

Not really. Mainly to expand my cognitive wavelength into a wider range of subjects than clinical medicine. And the MSc did just that, and helped me realise that policy, economics and health services research were really the things that interested me.

Did you receive a scholarship or any financial support from the school to assist you with your studies?

Yes – the MSc course itself was paid for by the NHS, and my salary on the training scheme also. I am eternally grateful and want to give as much back to the NHS and public health as possible.

What were your favourite memories from your studies with us?

On subjects – I was most interested in NHS policy as taught then by Prof Howard Glennerster at LSE. On people – there are so many impressive, supportive and fun colleagues particularly in the Health Services Research Unit – students and staff. On the location – the fabulous food in the restaurant of course and the deep leather armchairs in the library by those huge windows.

How has your LSHTM degree helped you in your career?

I did the MSc at a transitional point and it helped me redirect my career to areas I was most suited to. The range of subjects on offer allowed me to 'sort', and this was a tremendous shortcut to a better path – in my case policy.

What would you like to achieve in future?

I'd just like to continue in some way trying to help shape the NHS onto a better path to serve the nation as best as it can now and in the future. That sounds very grandiose, but I try to do this really by influencing and doing research – clear dissection and thinking about issues is particularly powerful. There is some value in having been around for so long and being able to spot what work is most needed and when and how it might be the most impactful.

Do you have any advice for students/recent graduates?

It really is all about focus and graft! Knowing your stuff.

Any other comments?

Studying at the School is such a rich experience – make the very most of it! And take a listen to our monthly podcast – covering all the main topical health and care issues! Search 'The Health Foundation podcast' wherever you get your podcasts.

Maternal health in the face of climate change



Dr Ana Bonell

Researchers from the MRCG at LSHTM will continue to evaluate the mechanisms behind the acute and chronic effects of extreme heat on expectant mothers and their unborn children, as part of a £1.4m grant from the Wellcome Trust.

Environmental heat exposure during pregnancy can cause nausea, vomiting, headaches, dizziness and fatigue in expectant mothers, and increase the risk of multiple adverse birth outcomes, including a greater risk of stillbirth across affected populations globally.

As pregnancy progresses there is an increasing physiological demand on the mother, which for pregnant women working or living in extreme heat is additionally challenged by maintaining a stable temperature. Inability to keep the internal temperature within normal ranges is one of many pathways that could be implicated in the adverse birth outcomes recorded but further research is needed to determine which pathways may be responsible.

Dr Ana Bonell, an Assistant Professor based at MRCG, said: “Extreme heat from climate change is of growing global concern. Its effects disproportionately impact the Global South and pregnant women and their unborn children are particularly vulnerable.

“Our study aims to understand the biological and physiological pathways that may be affected by extreme heat exposure, in order to inform real-world safety guidance and develop evidence-based adaptation interventions.”

Over the course of the four-year project, the team will look to collate and analyse global evidence for maternal responses to heat exposure, to identify the specific biological pathways affected and to determine the thresholds for which heat stress results in physiological changes.

Utilising wearable devices, placental samples and neurological assessments, the team also plan to conduct a large-scale study of over 700 pregnant women working in two distinct environments affected by extreme heat across The Gambia. The study will expand on the team’s previous research, which found that the unborn children of women working in fields in extreme heat can show signs of strain before their mothers are affected.

Opposite: A field worker monitors the heartbeat of Binter’s child, Keneba, The Gambia. © Louis Leeson.

Right: The Gate Clinic, MRC Unit The Gambia compound in Fajara

“Our study aims to understand the biological and physiological pathways that may be affected by extreme heat exposure, in order to inform real-world safety guidance and develop evidence-based adaptation interventions.”



Study UK Alumni Awards 2024

Award winner Dr Murallitharan Munisamy: A cancer hero who leaves no one behind

With a passion for transforming healthcare systems and a heart dedicated to serving those in need, Dr Murallitharan Munisamy has been making waves in Malaysia and beyond. Recently named the winner of the Social Action Award in Malaysia and hailed as the World's Best Cancer CEO by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), his impact on cancer patients and their families is undeniable.

Upon completing his MSc in Health Policy Planning & Financing at LSHTM in 2016, Dr Munisamy returned to South-east Asia with a mission. His journey led him to helm the National Cancer Society of Malaysia, where he has since spearheaded numerous initiatives aimed at combating cancer on all fronts.

Reflecting on his journey, Dr Munisamy shared, "I took the position at the National Cancer Society of Malaysia as my own 'national service,' and I have continued to perform this duty with dedication."

One of Dr Munisamy's notable projects is the 'Leaving No One Behind' program, a collaboration with the Ministry of Health Malaysia to provide free HPV vaccination to 300,000 underprivileged

girls nationwide. This initiative reflects his belief in equitable healthcare access for all, regardless of socioeconomic status. Upon receiving the Social Action Award, Dr Munisamy expressed his gratitude, stating, "I am very honoured to have been considered for the award and excited to showcase the vital role of civil society in national development." He hopes to inspire younger colleagues to consider careers in civil society, highlighting the meaningful impact such roles can have on society.

Our other finalists

Cassandra Akinde, Winner of the Social Action Award, Nigeria

Cassandra's journey into global health began with a fervent desire to make a tangible difference in the lives of marginalised communities. As the Executive Director of The Neo Child Initiative for Africa (TNCI), she spearheads initiatives aimed at enhancing access to essential healthcare services and education for children in Nigeria. Through over 15 community health programmes, Cassandra and her team have tackled issues ranging from WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) to nutrition and infectious diseases, leaving a lasting impact on countless lives.

Cassandra (MSc in Tropical Medicine & International Health, 2021) emphasises

Right: Cassandra Akinde accepting her award.

Below: Dr Murallitharan administering a Covid-19 vaccine via an outreach programme to disabled chronically ill patients at home.



the invaluable role of mentorship from LSHTM alumni in her professional development, which not only enhanced her research capabilities but also reinforced the importance of giving back and supporting the next generation. "I particularly benefited from being mentored on the art of writing grant proposals which has helped me win multiple grants worth \$30,000."

As an Alumni Ambassador and Chevening Scholar, Cassandra is deeply committed to paying it forward through mentorship and capacity-building initiatives. Through workshops, webinars, and seminars, she shares her insights and experiences with aspiring public health professionals, empowering them to pursue their dreams and contribute meaningfully to the field. "This has also helped me to garner more self-confidence and boost my interpersonal communication and public speaking skills."

Kamrun Koly, winner of the Science Sustainability Award, Bangladesh

Currently, Dr Koly's research focuses on dementia, mental health, and gender-based violence among internal migrants in Bangladesh. Additionally, she

"I hope this will also inspire the next generation of women to work in STEM."

is pursuing her PhD at the University of Essex, where she aims to co-design a rights-based approach to support individuals with neglected tropical diseases in Bangladesh.

Reflecting on her decision to study at LSHTM, Dr Koly explains, "The mental health sector of Bangladesh has been one of the most neglected sectors with low evidence... Professor Vikram Patel's work inspired me to pursue my career endeavour in this stigmatised sector."

Professor Vikram Patel is a leading global mental health researcher and was the joint Director of the Centre for Global Mental Health at LSHTM. Attending the MSc in Global Mental Health at LSHTM enabled Dr Koly to learn innovative approaches to mental health services and apply them in resource-constrained countries like Bangladesh.

Urvashi Prasad, Finalist in the Social Action category, India

Urvashi's tenure at NITI Aayog, the Government of India's public policy think tank, provided her with a platform to influence policy at the highest levels. Collaborating closely with the Vice Chairman, Urvashi co-authored two national policy documents and played a pivotal role in the reform of medical education, a domain long overdue for transformation.

"When the pandemic broke out, I worked with the Chairman of the Indian Government's Taskforce on the Covid-19

management plan," Urvashi recalls. Her efforts extended beyond policymaking, as she drove collaborations between private entities and the government to develop innovative solutions like Swasth, a comprehensive e-hospital platform facilitating telemedicine consultations.

Urvashi's impact transcends borders, as evidenced by her contributions to global platforms such as the United Nations High-Level Political Forum and the Asia Berlin Summit. Her dedication to advocating for health for all is further underscored by her personal journey as a Stage 4 cancer and depression survivor.

As India continues its journey towards a healthier and more equitable future, Urvashi's legacy will endure as an inspiration for generations to come.

Study UK

In the past five years we've had five winners and seven finalists in the Study UK Awards which is a testament to the international reach of our School and the calibre of our students and alumni. For a small, specialist institution, we are punching above our weight and reaching new highs with our incredible LSHTM community.



A Friendship Bench Grandmother sitting with her client in Zimbabwe. © Friendship Bench.

Friendship Bench ‘grandmothers’ could help control HIV

Therapy delivered by community ‘grandmothers’ could help people living with HIV alongside common mental health disorders, a study in Zimbabwe suggests.

The Friendship Bench Zimbabwe project was founded by Professor Dixon Chibanda, Professor of Psychiatry and Global Mental Health, in response to low levels of access to mental health services in Zimbabwe. Wooden park benches placed in discreet areas near to health clinics allow attendees to receive up to six one-to-one counselling sessions delivered by older community volunteers, known as ‘grandmothers’, who receive training in problem-solving therapy through the initiative.

Sustaining a low viral load is a key goal in HIV care, as it can halt progression to AIDS, enable near-normal life expectancy and decrease the risk of onwards transmission to sexual partners, including that of drug-resistant strains.

The study led by researchers from LSHTM, King’s College London and the University of Zimbabwe, recruited 700 partici-

pants aged 18 and over across eight HIV care clinics in Harare. It found people living with HIV alongside common mental health disorders may be three times more likely to maintain a low level of virus through medication if supported with therapy through the Friendship Bench project. The results were published in PLOS Global Health.

Professor Chibanda said: “The world is in the grips of a mental health crisis. People living with common mental disorders, including those who also need support to manage a long-term condition, are desperately seeking help but don’t know where to turn.

“In an ideal situation, every patient needing psychiatric care would have access to one-on-one therapy with a trained doctor. Unfortunately, even wealthier health systems lack the capacity to offer such services as widely as is needed. The Friendship Bench offers an opportunity to fill this void and to reach patients within the heart of their own communities.”

The Friendship Bench programme has been running for over 10 years in Zimbabwe. In 2023, over 2000 community health workers helped deliver therapy for over 300,000 people living across the country.

Friendship Benches have also been replicated in other parts of the world including New York, Washington DC, Vietnam and Jordan. Professor Chibanda and team are also exploring a pilot Friendship Bench in London and testing an enhanced form of the Friendship Bench called TENDAI, in people with depression and poorly controlled HIV.

Leading the charge

We spoke to Dr Eduardo Banzon (MSc Health Policy, Planning and Financing, 1997), Asian Development Bank (ADB) Principal Health Specialist, after he won the Health and Pandemic Response Award from the Chevening Scholarship Ceremony in the Philippines.

Eduardo, or Dodo as he is commonly known, worked with the Philippine government to ensure enough vaccinations were reaching everyone in his country during the COVID-19 pandemic. The impact on vulnerable groups inspired Dodo to help draw up government measures and harness private sector support to control the outbreak.

“I believed that non-pharmaceutical interventions would only slow down the virus’s transmission, not stop it”

Dodo worked with Asian Development Bank (ADB) colleagues to eventually provide \$1.2 billion worth of ADB

financing and co-financing so that the COVID-19 vaccines could be rapidly procured and deployed in the Philippines. He also helped mobilise financing for other ADB developing member countries in Asia and the Pacific so that they too could procure and deploy vaccines.

When asked why he studied his course, Dodo reflects on his experiences during his university years, particularly during a period of political turmoil in the Philippines. He explains that his desire to bring about positive change led him to pursue a career in public health, emphasising the importance of navigating bureaucratic processes to implement impactful policies:

“That’s why I ended up there, because I needed to have a better understanding how we can design policies and how money will be used for helping implement these policies. It’s not just because

you have a great idea that you expect everybody to follow you or to implement that. That’s naive. You need to navigate the processes of the ministries of finance, other ministries, and other people outside the health sector.”

Eduardo’s remarkable commitment to leveraging finance from major corporations and adept navigation of governmental bureaucracy have been instrumental in effecting lasting health policy improvements within a low-resource setting.



The UK-Public Health Rapid Support Team is a key international partner in infectious disease outbreak detection, prevention, preparedness and response; operational research; and capacity strengthening.

The UK-Public Health Rapid Support Team

We are an innovative partnership between the UK Health Security Agency and the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, funded with UK aid by the UK Department of Health and Social Care. We partner with low- and-middle income countries (LMICs) to respond to infectious disease outbreaks before they develop into global health emergencies.

The UK-PHRST works closely with international organisations, partner country governments and non-governmental organisations to:

- Rapidly investigate and respond to disease outbreaks at their source in LMICs eligible for UK Official Development Assistance, with the aim of stopping a public health threat from becoming a broader health emergency.
- Conduct research to generate an evidence base for best practice in epidemic preparedness and response.
- Strengthen capacity for improved national response to disease outbreaks in LMICs.

The UK-PHRST responds to requests from national governments and multinational global health partners to deploy public health experts across multiple disciplines. The team is able to deploy rapidly and at short notice and support can be provided in epidemiology; public health microbiology; infection prevention and control; mental health and psychosocial support and social science. The team has deployed to outbreaks of multiple diseases including Yellow fever, Ebola virus disease, dengue and cholera.

The team has also established a global multi-disciplinary research programme that addresses collaboratively identified priorities, providing evidence to improve practice on a global scale. Focusing our efforts in low- and-middle income countries, our research includes in-the-field activities conducted during or in the wake of an infectious disease outbreak, and preparedness-oriented research that covers:

- epidemiology and population sciences.
- patient-centred research.
- microbiology and laboratory sciences.
- social science and community engagement.
- mental health and wellbeing.

Finally, through the UK-PHRST's capacity strengthening remit, the team works closely with global, regional and country partners, to strengthen policies, protocols, training and actions in outbreak detection, preparedness and response. Specifically, the UK-PHRST strengthens research capacity in partner countries so that they can undertake their own rapid operational research activities and provide targeted public health solutions during local disease outbreaks.



Above: Women in rural Chandpur have a community mobilisation meeting to discuss the health impacts of a planned Polio vaccination campaign that will target children in their village. Chandpur, Bangladesh.

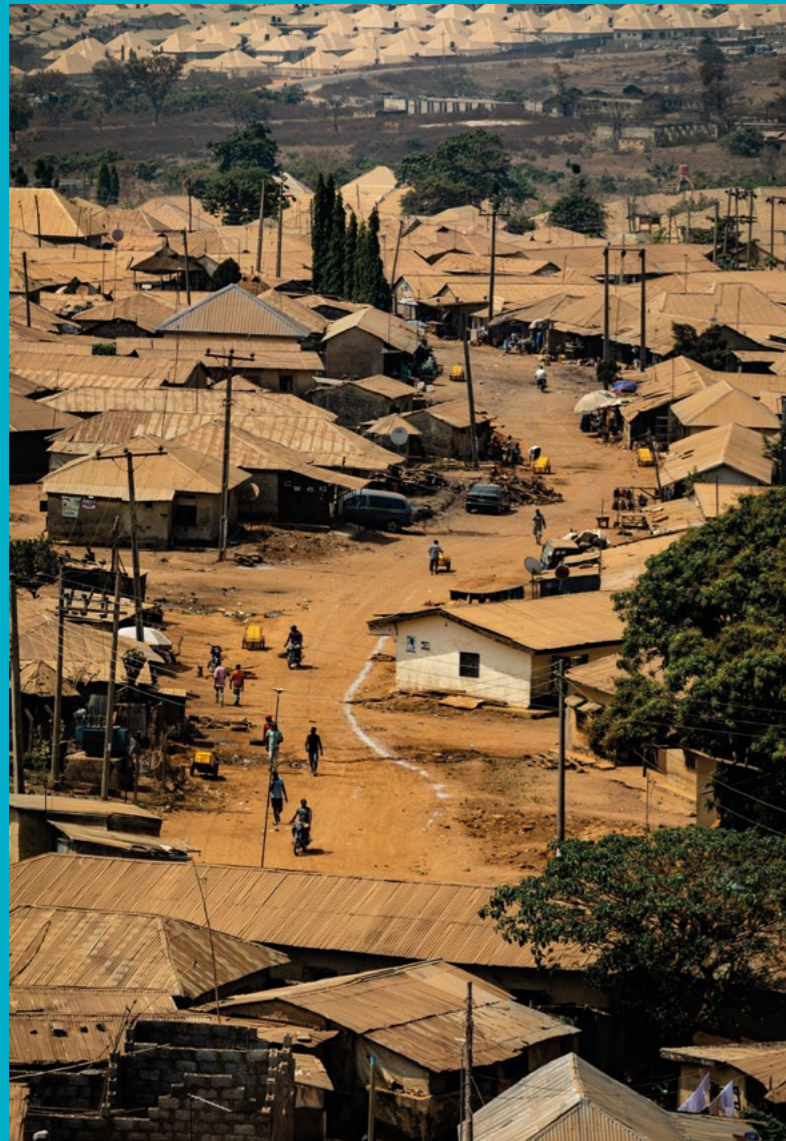


Left: A lab scientist holds a culture dish containing Vibrio Cholerae, ICDDR laboratory, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Both: © Louis Leeson / LSHTM



“The team is able to deploy rapidly and at short notice to support the prevention and control of infectious disease outbreaks, before they develop into global emergencies.”



Above: A lab scientist runs an External Quality Assurance test on samples sent from Public Health England in the National Reference Laboratory in Abuja.

Left: Pyakasa is a densely populated community on the outskirts of Abuja. Closely-knit housing and proximity to domesticated animals make the area susceptible to disease outbreaks.

Both: © Louis Leeson / LSHTM

Opposite: © WHO Europe



Fostering future leaders



“Being able to use my knowledge and experience to help students plan their next steps was fantastic, and I also met some alumni that could be possible collaborators for my current role.”



The bond between alumni and students is more than just a passing connection – it’s a vital thread weaving together the past, present, and future of the institution. Recognising the pivotal role that students play as the torchbearers of tomorrow’s alumni, the Alumni team are committed to nurturing these relationships and harnessing their potential.

Our alumni network is a powerful force, and it’s crucial for us to cultivate strong ties with our current students, who are the alumni of tomorrow. By engaging with students now, we not only lay the groundwork for future alumni involvement but also enrich their academic and professional journeys.

One of our team’s initiatives involved setting up a stand during Welcome Week – a bustling event marking the beginning of students’ LSHTM journey. Amidst the excitement of new beginnings, team members eagerly engaged with incoming students, delving into their motivations for joining LSHTM and outlining how our alumni network can help bring their aspirations for the future into reality.

We also organised an Alumni-Student Networking Event, providing a platform

for students to glean insights from seasoned alumni. Jeremy Dietz, a participant at the event, remarked on the invaluable opportunity to share his expertise with students and explore potential collaborations with fellow alumni. “Being able to use my knowledge and experience to help students plan their next steps was fantastic, and I also met some alumni that could be possible collaborators for my current role.”

Celebrating milestones is another cornerstone of our mission. The recent Diploma in Tropical Medicine & Hygiene (DTM&H) Closing Ceremony marked a significant moment as students bade farewell to their academic journey, ready to put their newfound knowledge of Tropical Medicine to work. Amidst cheers and applause, students received their certificates and yearbooks – a tangible reminder of their achievements and the LSHTM community they are now part of.

Our graduation stand presented yet another remarkable opportunity to connect with our newest graduates. Beyond extending a warm welcome into our esteemed alumni community, we seized the chance to inform them about the myri-

ad ways they can leverage their alumni network: from tapping into mentorship opportunities to participating in local chapters, and ultimately, enhancing their professional journeys using the tools of our alumni network at their fingertips.

While the team is rooted in alumni engagement, they remain steadfast in their dedication to involving students in every facet of their activities. Our alumni events are always open to current and prospective students as we believe in creating an inclusive space where students can not only benefit from alumni insights but also envision their own future paths within the LSHTM community.

Our team exemplifies the ethos of building bridges – bridges that span generations, disciplines, and continents. As they continue to nurture the symbiotic relationship between alumni and students, they pave the way for a future where each member of the LSHTM community plays a vital role in shaping the world of global health.

If you know anyone in your network who is interested in studying with us, please email study@lshtm.ac.uk

Take a peek



Dr Andrew Bastawrous is Founder & CEO of Peek Vision and Professor in Global Eye Health at LSHTM.

“I first experienced a dramatic improvement in my vision at the age of 12. I was diagnosed as being severely vision impaired and it was negatively affecting so many parts of my life. When I received my first pair of glasses my life changed forever. Since then I’ve been driven by a desire to help people see.

Today, more than one billion people live with vision loss because they do not have adequate access to eye care and that isn’t acceptable. In 2011, I was working as an ophthalmologist in the UK when an opportunity came up to study for a PhD at the International Centre for Eye Health (ICEH) at LSHTM. It was the ideal chance to fulfil my childhood dream and learn from leading experts.

My PhD project was a comprehensive survey of eye disease in Nakuru, Kenya. The challenges were immense. But as the work went on, it became clear that smartphone technology might help solve some of the huge issues preventing people from receiving the treatment they desperately needed. This was where the idea for Peek was born.

Over the next few years, I worked with a range of people including software developers, hardware engineers and the study team in Kenya to develop and test smartphone technology to test people’s vision and eye health. We then took this a step further to incorporate a data capture system. Non-specialists (such as teachers or community workers) could now accurately conduct vision screening in schools and communities using just a smartphone or tablet. Critically, it also provided real-time data insights so that services could be continuously improved to ensure no one was left behind.

In 2015, the Peek project spun out from LSHTM to become an independent social enterprise - Peek Vision. We still retain

a close research partnership with ICEH, and many of Peek’s team and collaborators have previously studied at LSHTM.

Peek is now working with fantastic partners to power school and community eye health programmes in multiple countries across Africa and Asia. The insights our software provides help partners deliver more efficient, more effective and more equitable programmes.

In collaboration with ICEH, Peek has recently developed a new version of the Rapid Assessment of Avoidable Blindness eye health survey (RAAB), which provides vital data for eye health planning. This latest version (RAAB7) fully digitises the workflow to enable faster, more accurate and more insightful data collection and analysis to tackle the global vision crisis.

The impact has grown to 69 programmes in 12 countries: Ghana, Uganda, Zambia, Botswana, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, Pakistan, India, Nepal – with 5,086,310 people screened, 1,141,502 identified with eye health need, and 595,786 connected to care.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on eye health. Thanks to the hard work and resourcefulness of the programmes we work with, most have been able to resume services despite COVID disruptions. But there is so much more to be done.

We will be dealing with the effects of COVID-19 - and the huge inequities in our health systems that it has highlighted – for a long time to come. If we don’t address this health inequity millions of people will be held back from fulfilling their potential. By focusing on innovating delivery, rather than just delivering new innovations, I believe that it is possible to end avoidable vision loss in a generation. I’m proud of the part that LSHTM, Peek and our partners are playing in achieving this audacious goal - making the invisible, visible and bringing better vision and eye health to everyone.

People screened

5,086,310

People identified with eye health need

1,141,502

People connected to care

595,786

“I believe that it is possible to end avoidable vision loss in a generation.”



Right: Peek app. © Peek Vision

Below: Preparing for school screening in Kenya. © Rolex Joan Bardeletti



Mahati Ramachandra (MSc Medical Microbiology, 2023) hosted a science art exhibition in Keppel Street, where she showcased her artwork for the new teaching rooms and a mural on 19 January. She spoke to us about bridging the gap between science and art to foster greater appreciation and understanding of our fascinating scientific world.

Art

in

science



“As I stepped to the back of room G08, filled with buzzing conversations between scientists and artists, I felt nothing but gratitude for the scientific art that brought all these people from different disciplines together. On January 19th, my team and I hosted a science art exhibition at LSHTM displaying artwork that I had created, including a mural painted by myself, Archie Khan, Tegwen Marlais, Kiran Roy and Keir Hughes.

Growing up, I had always loved science and art and believed these two worlds had to be mutually exclusive. Through my undergraduate years, however, I met individuals who introduced me to the field of science art and realised the power of visuals in communicating scientific concepts to make them more engaging and accessible to the public.

The scientific world is an extraordinary canvas comprising organisms and their interactions that provide great sources of art. Art can be found throughout science, from the fungal patterns on Petri dishes to glowing parasites under a fluorescent microscope. Further, creativity is an essential component of science, as scientists must constantly develop new ways of thinking and viewing the scientific world. Science and art are not mutually exclusive, rather each can enhance the approach to the other. Isaac Asimov once said, “There is an art to science, and science in art; the two are not enemies, but different aspects of the whole.”

The artwork displayed at the exhibition was part of an effort to include student work in the Teaching Rooms, to celebrate this very idea of scientific art. The illustrations aimed to showcase an aesthetic view of the scientific world and incorporated digital paintings based on scientific concepts including the malaria parasite life cycle, the diverse world

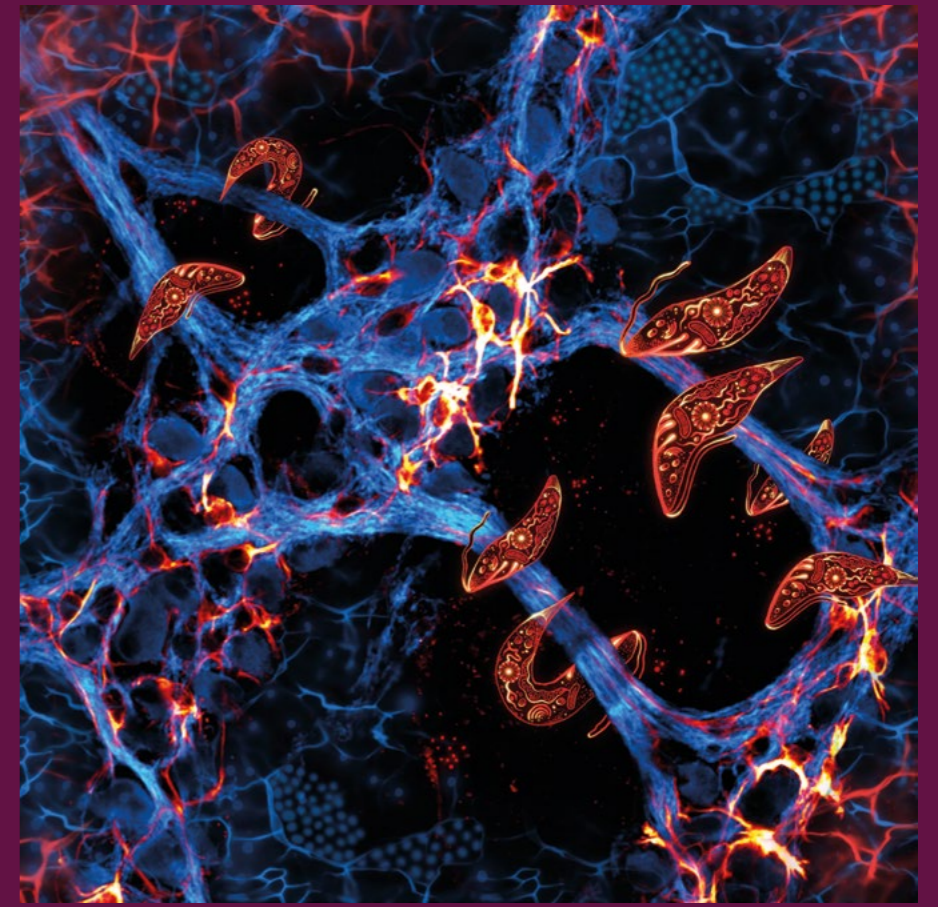
“Art can be found throughout science, from the fungal patterns on Petri dishes to glowing parasites under a fluorescent microscope.”

of sea slugs and the coral microbiome. Furthermore, the exciting collaboration wherein microscopy images depicting disease (produced by Dr Archie Khan) were merged with my own digital renditions of the infectious landscape. It was an opportunity to showcase how art could be extrapolated even from scientific methods of study and visually communicate infectious diseases.

The mural was a team effort and showcased the idea that every human carries within themselves a unique flora and fauna of microbes and biological interactions. Painting the mural was a huge feat, one that seemed overwhelming to fulfil. My team however were my strongest pillar and we learned and grew as both scientists and artists through this entire process of leaving our mark on the school. The process of painting the mural largely contributed to its outcome as individuals from different disciplines, having their unique art styles, came together to produce a piece that celebrated the merging of science and art. The experience was unforgettable as I got the opportunity to form meaningful connections with hardworking scientists who created beautiful art.

Hosting a science art exhibition at LSHTM is an experience I will always be grateful for. The success of the exhibition is not mine alone. I thank Dr Richard Stabler, Sally Karrar, John Stamos, Marcin Porada and my team of mural painters for encouraging me and providing me with their valuable input and talents. Their dedication and passion for this project made the exhibition what it was. I hope to continue creating scientific art and visually communicating scientific information so that more people can gain an appreciation and better understanding of our beautiful scientific world.”

Digital Artwork created by Mahati Ramachandra. Opposite: ‘Cryptic spaces’. Above: Mural Painting Team, from left to right – Keir Hughes, Tegwen Marlais, Archie Khan, Mahati Ramachandra, and Kiran Roy.



Opposite: 'Kaleidoscope'
Above right: 'Gut Nerve Havoc'
Above left: 'Coral Relief'

Meet two extraordinary women from diverse backgrounds, each pursuing unique paths at LSHTM. Their journeys highlight resilience, determination, and the power of breaking barriers.

Trailblazing women at LSHTM: Stories of perseverance and success



Ashlyn's story: Securing a life-changing scholarship

Ashlyn, from the USA, is pursuing an MSc in Nutrition for Global Health at LSHTM, thanks to a Rotary Global Grant scholarship. Her path to this prestigious program began with a chance encounter at 17.

After learning about the Rotary Global Grant at the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA), Ashlyn was inspired to seek international education opportunities. This led to her selection for the grant, funded by Rotary International to support global service and humanitarian initiatives like the Global Polio Eradication Initiative.

Researching funding opportunities can be challenging, but Ashlyn encourages students to explore scholarships through conversations and connections. These often reveal hidden opportunities, as she experienced with the Rotary Global Grant.

Following a Fulbright scholarship in Mexico, Ashlyn chose LSHTM for its alignment with her passion for nutrition and public health, as well as Rotary's focus on disease prevention and treatment. Her decision was reinforced by discussions with Chris Wong, a former Student Ambassador who also benefited from the Rotary Global Grant.

As a scholar in London, Ashlyn values the supportive Rotary community, which includes numerous scholars and Rotaract members. Committed to giving back, she ran in the London Landmarks Half Marathon to fund future scholarships: "This is not only a way to build physical stamina and endurance, but an opportunity to invest in funding sources that will pave the way for the next generation of scholars at LSHTM."

Read more student stories on our website: lshtm.ac.uk/study/student-experience/blogs



Ahsana's journey: Defying traditions and achieving a DrPH

Ahsana, a dedicated Pakistani doctor, has defied societal norms to pursue higher education and impactful research. Her story is one of triumph over deeply rooted traditions:

"Born into a family adhering to traditional customs in Pakistan, I faced substantial obstacles as a woman seeking higher education and a career. In a society where such pursuits were often discouraged for women, I was determined to challenge these norms. Supported wholeheartedly by my parents, I became the first woman in my family to achieve a medical degree. However, the journey didn't end there. Pursuing international education also presented challenges. Balancing my familial responsibilities with academic pursuits required careful planning and support. Yet, my unwavering commitment to gaining higher education and contributing to global health ultimately prevailed.

Advice I would give to help someone overcome these challenges is to connect with those who have triumphed over similar obstacles, stay informed about available resources, and celebrate every accomplishment, no matter how small."

Now at LSHTM, Ahsana researches climate change and healthcare resilience, embodying the spirit of perseverance and dedication to global health.

Why I give



Melissa Andrew (MSc Public Health 2004), who recently visited us in London, tells us about the impact LSHTM has had on her life and career and why she feels it's important to give back.



“I experienced the benefit of getting to work with and learn from students from around the world and think that it's important to pay it forward so that other people have the same chance.”

Why did you choose to study Public Health MSc at LSHTM?

I had the opportunity to do a summer internship at the World Health Organisation as a medical student. Whilst there, I met many people who had studied at LSHTM and realised that it's a true hub for public health training on the global stage. I was inspired to find a way to come to the School to study.

How did your experience at LSHTM shape your career and life experiences?

My time at LSHTM, and the experiences and training I received there, have been absolutely pivotal in shaping my career. In my clinical work, I am a geriatrician. My public health training has enabled me to make contributions to geriatric public health, starting with research about the social context of frailty and work on vaccines and vaccine preventable illnesses in older adults. Since the pandemic I have been honoured to contribute to vaccine policy in Canada. Although I had no idea while I was studying at LSHTM that this would be my career path, it made for a great foundation.

How do you feel about supporting scholarships, and why do you think this is important?

I had the good fortune of being able to attend LSHTM on a Commonwealth scholarship. I experienced the benefit of getting to work with and learn from students from around the world and think that it's important to pay it forward so that other people have the same chance.

Why should others consider giving?

LSHTM is an institution that educates and also influences change and public health policy around the world. Supporting the school creates both educational opportunities and public health action.

How do you feel about being part of the alumni community?

I have enjoyed the serendipity of meeting and working with people in varied research, policy and practice contexts only to realise later that we had training at LSHTM in common. It has also been fun to keep up with classmates and see what great contributions they have been making around the world.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

I have had the opportunity to visit the School a few times over the years, including with my children. Each time I visit I feel a renewed sense of inspiration. I hope they found it inspiring too!

If, like Melissa, you are feeling inspired, you can [support our scholarship fund here](#):



The impact of mentoring via LSHTM Connect



LSHTM Connect is our online networking platform for alumni, students and staff. It is easy to find (or become) a mentor and connect with like-minded public health professionals: lshtmconnect.org

Meet Dr Sam Agbo (MSc Epidemiology, 1993) who speaks on the enriching experience of becoming a mentor.

How has your experience as a mentor/mentee developed your professional skills?

My experience as both a mentor and mentee has been immensely rewarding and mutually beneficial. It has afforded me the opportunity to share my knowledge and experiences, contributing to the growth and development of another public health professional. This process has not only been gratifying in seeing my mentee reach their full potential but has also played a significant role in enhancing my own professional skills. The exchange of ideas and perspectives has broadened my understanding of public health issues and sharpened my problem-solving and leadership abilities, making it a truly enriching experience.

How has your relationship with your mentee/mentor enriched your professional life?

My relationship with my mentee (or mentor) has been excellent and profoundly enriching, characterised by an open mindset, honesty, and mutual respect. This foundation has allowed us to engage in meaningful dialogues, share insights, and challenge each other in constructive ways. It has not only fostered professional growth but also deepened my appreciation for diverse viewpoints and the importance of continuous learning. This relationship has become a cornerstone of my professional life, providing me with invaluable support and inspiration.

What advice would you give to first-time mentors / mentees?

To those embarking on a mentoring relationship for the first time, my advice would be to approach it with patience, less expectations and an eagerness to understand before seeking to be understood. Active listening and open, honest communication are key to building a strong and trusting relationship. Remember that mentoring is a journey of mutual growth and learning; thus, it's important to be open to feedback and new perspectives. Embrace the opportunity to build a lifelong connection that goes beyond professional development, fostering personal growth and enrichment for both mentor and mentee.



“This relationship has become a cornerstone of my professional life, providing me with invaluable support and inspiration.”



LSHTM Fund Scholar 2023-24

What course are you studying at LSHTM, and why did you choose this course?

I am currently studying for my Master's in Public Health in London. I have been interested in Public Health since working in the public sector in my country, Ecuador, and seeing the inequalities that we have in global access to health. I found LSHTM when searching for the best places in the world to learn about this field.

What are you passionate about, and why?

In the field of medicine, I love to work in the operating room, and I hope I might become a surgeon one day. I also have a passion for education, especially medical education, as I spent a lot of time during my medical degree teaching different subjects to younger medical students. Finally, in the field of Public Health, I feel a passion for politics. A good leader is able to make significant positive changes in policies for the improvement of health. If I summarise my passions, I might say that I have a passion for serving others, especially those most in need.

Can you tell us a bit more about your life and experiences?

I've spent most of my life living in Guayaquil, the largest city in Ecuador and also the nation's economic capital and main port. As a child, I lived for two and a half years in Santiago, Chile, while my father was training to be a doctor, with my mother, father and my three siblings (two sisters and one brother). I went to high school and medical school in Guayaquil, where I made my best friends. During medical school, I was involved in teaching and politics and took leadership positions most of the time. As an adolescent and young adult, I became involved in the Catholic religion and had some of my most life-changing spiritual experiences. I was able to know God and get closer to spirituality; I participated in many services that helped me understand the realities of the most in-need people in my country. I understood the importance of living with them and trying to give them my help, although, in truth, I also felt I benefitted from this enormously. This is one of the main reasons I decided to study medicine; because I see this profession as a form of service to those in need that involves a deep connection with those who are unwell.

What were you doing before you came to LSHTM?

I graduated from medical school in 2019 and spent one year working as a doctor in a very poor rural town in the Ecuadorian Amazon called San Jose de Morona. I consider this experience as my best 'school', and it is where my love of public health started. In this photograph, you can see the other people in the boat (to my right) who were the healthcare team I worked with; a nurse, a doctor, and a dentist. In the photo, we were returning from providing healthcare to a community that was far from the health centre. We used the boat to travel to different communities that were too far to access health facilities, and our travels usually took between one to two hours. I really loved that job.

Since then, I've been pursuing my area of specialism and spent much of my time preparing for exams and doing research in different areas of medicine. I also worked as a surgical assistant with my father during this time. However, after failing my first attempt at specialising as a surgeon, I decided to adjust my course and direct my studies towards my passion for Public

Health. That's why I applied to this MSc, and it was the LSHTM Fund scholarship, supported by alumni and friends, that gave me the tools to be able to achieve this goal.

Sebastian returned from providing community healthcare visits in the Ecuadorian Amazon in 2020, before coming to LSHTM.

What led you to specialise in this field and to your particular course of study?

Nelson Mandela once said that education is the most powerful weapon to change the world. I'd like to add to this, that politics can also be your best weapon. Without good politicians, policies and leaders, it is very difficult to make the huge structural changes in education and health (especially in the case of Public Health) that we need in countries such as Ecuador. I also knew that to be able to make those changes, I first had to learn, and I wanted to learn in the best place that I could; that is why I decided to study Public Health here at LSHTM. I would not have been able to do this without the support of the LSHTM Scholarship Fund.

What were the barriers to achieving your educational goals?

The first barrier I encountered in my country is the limited access to good quality education, which often forces people to look for opportunities abroad. This is where the biggest barriers appear. It is very competitive to study at international universities. Applying for a student visa isn't always straightforward, and is more complicated in certain countries such as Ecuador, and so the economic cost of education increases enormously. However, scholarships like the LSHTM Scholarship Fund, which are also aimed at students from developing countries, helped me to overcome all of these barriers.

What has this scholarship, and scholarships more generally, meant to you?

Unfortunately, in Ecuador, education continues to be a privilege, and scholarships are a tool to reduce inequality caused by economic conditions. This enables young people to develop all their abilities without limits. I might go as far as to say that scholarships are an indispensable tool for the overall development of low- and middle-income countries. For me, the LSHTM Fund Scholarship is a truly transformational gift, which generates in me a deep feeling of gratitude and duty. Being supported in this way moves me to give back everything I have learned to society, particularly in low- and middle-income countries.

Have scholarships changed your life? If so, how?

The opportunity to study at one of the best universities in the world is already a very enriching experience. Another very important impact of scholarships is the opportunity to live in a new country and meet students from all over the world with different viewpoints, enabling us to discover new cultures and new ways of understanding the world. I might describe this impact as; you are one person before you study at LSHTM, and quite a different person afterwards.



Why did you want to fundraise and run the Cambridge Half Marathon for LSHTM?

As one of the two LSHTM Fund Scholars this year, I was really delighted to be able to contribute to giving someone else the same opportunity that I had. When I heard that students, staff, alumni and friends were running a half-marathon for the LSHTM Scholarship Fund, I immediately contacted Sarah Enderby Coles, LSHTM's Regular Giving Officer. I told her about my desire to help raise funds for this scholarship, and running the Cambridge Half Marathon was a great opportunity to do so! With the support and generosity of my friends, family and fellow LSHTM students and staff, combined with holding a fundraising cake sale at Keppel Street, I was able to exceed my fundraising target in just a fortnight.

What message would you like to share with the people who have supported your scholarship?

Receiving this scholarship has made me think about the power that our small actions can have to instigate big changes in other people's lives. I have nothing other than words of gratitude to all the people who have contributed and continue to contribute to this scholarship, and I encourage them to please keep doing so. Donations to the LSHTM Scholarship Fund are reflected not only in one person's career but in all the positive impacts on the health of others that their actions will bring throughout their career.

If you would like to make a gift to support students like Sebastian to fulfil their potential, please visit www.lshtm.ac.uk/donate



Page 46, top: Sophie, Sebastian and Yiggie after completing the Cambridge Half Marathon 2024.

Page 46, centre: Sebastian returning from providing community healthcare visits in the Ecuadorian Amazon in 2020, before coming to LSHTM.

Below: 2023-24 MSc students Adrian Koessler and Ana Bush, and fellow Half Marathon runners Katie Fulford, Sophie Esnouf and Ashlyn Anderson support Sebastian (centre) to raise money for the LSHTM Scholarship Fund as part of his Cambridge Half Marathon Fundraising.

Over the past few years, we have been making the most of getting back to in-person events, inspiring the LSHTM community to stay fit and healthy, supporting teams of runners and cyclists to help raise funds and awareness and improve their health by taking on a challenge event for LSHTM.

Community



fundraising

Our recent London Landmarks Half Marathon team of 18 runners, consisting of staff, students, alumni and friends of LSHTM, broke records in 2024, achieving 270% of their target and raising over £16,200 this April to widen access to education and support LSHTM's ever-increasingly important work.

Thank you to all our LLHM 2024 runners who have helped make this event the most successful community fundraising event at LSHTM. We want to say a huge thank you and a special well done to;

- Imogen Sharp – PhD student, LSHTM
- Martin Lewy – Imogen's husband
- Heather Ingold – DrPH student, LSHTM, Programme Manager, WHO HQ
- Jolien Schraever – MSc Public Health 2022, Global Medical Affairs Program Manager at Novocure
- Grace O'Donovan – MSc Nutrition for Global Health 2022, Research Assistant, LSHTM
- Amy Brenner – MSc Epidemiology 2015, Assistant Professor in Epidemiology, LSHTM
- Kevin Brathwaite – Accounts Payable, LSHTM
- Payton Matthews – MSc Public Health 2024, LSHTM
- Ashlyn Anderson – MSc Nutrition for Global Health 2024, LSHTM
- Graeme Cappi – Director of IT Services, LSHTM
- Rachel Eagan – MSc Demography & Health 2021, Research Assistant, LSHTM
- Abigail Ngwang – MSc Public Health, Next Generation Scholar 2024, LSHTM
- Rachel Greenley – MSc Global Mental Health 2021, Research Fellow, LSHTM
- Entela Gjiana – Research Finance Office, LSHTM
- Katie Fulford – MSc Nutrition for Global Health 2024, LSHTM
- Jessica Pashby – MSc Public Health 2022
- Meghan Kumar – MSc Health Policy Planning & Financing 2009, Associate professor and Vice Chancellor's Fellow at Northumbria University
- Professor Charlotte Watts – MPhil/PhD Public Health & Policy 1994, Chief Scientific Officer (Secondment)
- Professor Ian Roberts – MSc Medical Demography 1997, Professor of Epidemiology and Public Health, LSHTM
- Jenni Sahlman – MSc Epidemiology 2024, LSHTM

Ashlyn says; "As a student fundraiser for LSHTM, and a scholarship recipient, completing the London Landmarks Half Marathon provided me with an unforgettable opportunity to challenge myself physically and mentally to run the race while leaving a legacy as part of something greater than myself, by raising funds for the LSHTM Scholarship Fund. I also really appreciated the amazing support and motivation from Sarah Enderby Coles, LSHTM's Regular Giving Officer."

Have you ever wanted to run a half marathon? Ten inspiring LSHTM runners, including current and former MSc students, staff and friends of LSHTM, can now tick that off their lists, as they ran 13.1 miles (131 miles as a team) and completed the Cambridge Half Marathon on 3 March, raising over £4,500 to support the next generation of global health leaders to study at LSHTM through the LSHTM Scholarship Fund.

This recent success parallels that of repeat Community Fundraiser and friend of LSHTM Abi Sakande, who took on

the full Brighton Marathon this April dressed as a toilet. Abi raised £3,721 for this event in memory of his mum, LSHTM professor Val Curtis, a passionate WASH specialist and well-loved LSHTM staff member. In total, Abi, his sister Naima, and their family and friends have now raised over £17,200 for the Val Curtis Memorial Fund at LSHTM.

Once the totals of our 2024 half marathon and marathon events are combined, our teams of LSHTM Community Fundraisers have now raised a truly incredible £24,500 from these three events so far this year. And that doesn't include the £10,000+ raised in September 2023 by our London to Brighton team of LSHTM cyclists!

We are incredibly grateful for the hard work and dedication of our Community Fundraisers and the many hundreds of donors who supported them in reaching and exceeding their goals this year.

Past events and what's next?

Passionate about the benefits of health and exercise, In September 2023, Professor Liam Smeeth cycled 55 miles as a team of 20 LSHTM cyclists from London to Brighton. When we asked him why he was taking part, he said:

"I'm taking part in the ride to raise funds for Scholarships, helping reduce financial barriers to people who want to study with us, and widening participation in our courses. I'm also taking part because it will be fun – even if it rains – cycling to the sea through the beautiful south downs, meeting new people, and being part of a shared endeavour."

Keir's story

Keir Hughes, Scientific Officer and recent LSHTM graduate (MSc Medical Entomology for Disease Control, 2022), felt both lucky and strong whilst embarking on the ride. He pledged to match his donors' contributions (up to £500) if he didn't complete the ride in 4 hours or less. Keir was confident he could complete all 55 miles in less than 4 hours, (even with his Deliveroo box on his shoulders as an extra challenge). As one of the first riders in our group to cross the line, he was excited to find out his finish time. On hearing the news that he missed his four-hour goal by a mere 10 minutes and 24 seconds, Keir, true to his words, promptly added to his fundraising total, taking the team to an incredible £10,195 raised for our LSHTM Scholarship Fund. Thank you, Keir, for your hard work, integrity, and infectious sense of humour helping take the whole team across the fundraising line.

You can join our team of LSHTM cyclists on 14 September 2024 to ride 55 miles from London to Brighton. Register your interest by emailing us at alumni@lshtm.ac.uk to join our record-breaking team.



"Completing the London Landmarks Half Marathon provided me with an unforgettable opportunity to challenge myself physically and mentally to run the race while leaving a legacy as part of something greater than myself."

Ashlyn Anderson



Page 49, top: London to Brighton 2023, after the ride: Liam Smeeth, Eduardo Gomes, Tanya Marchant, Zoe Solt and Jake Whelan in Brighton

Page 49, centre: Sarah Enderby Coles, Abigail Ngwang and Grace O'Donovan, after the London Landmarks Half Marathon 2024

Page 49, bottom: Imogen Sharp and her husband Martin Lewy, ready for the start of the LLHM, 7 April 2024

Above: Ashlyn Anderson, MSc Nutrition for Global Health 2024, running the LLHM

Centre: Keir arrives in Brighton in just over 4 hours, with his Deliveroo box and medal, fresh as a daisy.

Right: Abi Sakande dressed as a toilet after completing the Brighton Marathon in 4hr15min, April 2024.





We are immensely grateful to our global network of alumni chapters, a dedicated community of alumni and distance learning volunteers. Your unwavering commitment has been the cornerstone of our success, shaping the LSHTM experience for students around the world.

A heartfelt thank you to our incredible alumni chapters worldwide

From extending warm welcomes to new students to nurturing invaluable connections, you serve as ambassadors of our institution, inspiring others to study and collaborate with LSHTM. With over 30 chapters spanning across 24 countries, your collective efforts have created a vibrant tapestry of support, allowing our distance learning community to thrive regardless of geographical boundaries.

Our chapters are the heartbeat of our alumni community, engaging in a myriad of activities ranging from networking sessions to social gatherings. By participating in your local chapter, you not only reconnect with old classmates but also forge new relationships that transcend borders and disciplines. If you're eager to organise a meet-up in your city, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

LSHTM Connect serves as the hub for our chapter groups. Register now to tap into a wealth of opportunities, including networking with like-minded individuals in your area, discovering upcoming events, accessing our alumni directory, and exploring job opportunities.

To connect with chapter leaders, simply refer to the email addresses listed on our website. Please note that these emails serve as direct contacts for the chapters. For any inquiries related to LSHTM or updates to your contact details, kindly reach out to us at alumni@lshtm.ac.uk.



Chapters

30

Countries

24

Meetings in the past year

34



“What I love most about being a chapter coordinator is that our Toronto alumni are such an interesting, friendly group of people. Our gatherings are always a ton of fun. People meet old friends and classmates, and also make new connections.

I’ve been coordinating the chapter for about 15 years. What stands out is that every single gathering has been great, without exception. We especially loved having LSHTM’s Director of Development and Alumni Relations join us a few times over the years. We open our gatherings to anyone in the public health community, including prospective students. About ten years ago, one prospective student was so eager to meet alumni that he took the overnight bus from Montreal (about 7 hours), attended our happy hour, and got right back on the overnight bus for another seven hour ride back to Montreal. He turned up at our alumni gathering last year and made a point of telling me how life-changing going to LSHTM has been for him.”

—
Jana Orac, Toronto Chapter Lead



“What I love most about being a chapter lead is getting to meet alumni across the entire spectrum of public health careers, which is incredibly rewarding. From recent graduates just starting their journeys to seasoned professionals with decades of experience, there’s so much to learn from each other. Hearing about their diverse career paths and the impact they’re making in the world is truly inspiring. It keeps me motivated and excited about the future of public health.

My most memorable chapter encounter has been my very first chapter event! I went into it not knowing quite what to expect. So, I was thrilled when over 20 people showed up, even a prospective student! The energy was fantastic and we ended up going way over the planned time, but nobody seemed to mind. It was just such a wonderful way to connect with fellow LSHTM alumni in DC and build the foundation for a strong chapter network.”

—
Brianna Birchett, Washington DC Chapter Lead

“What I love most about being a chapter lead is meeting such a range of interesting, kind, and passionate people! I always learn something when LSHTM alumni gather. And I always walk away inspired by the range of jobs that we have, the depth of expertise, and the warmth of the community in general.

My most memorable chapter encounter has been the meeting right before COVID really hit NYC. I remember so clearly saying to everyone in February 2020 ‘unless you’re in a wet market in Wuhan, you’ll be fine.’ How humbled I am now!”

—
Corinne Thompson, New York City Chapter Lead



“What I love most about being a chapter lead is the fact that it gives me the opportunity to work closely with so many alumni who are doing absolutely amazing things in their various fields. That I get to engage, interact with and learn from them, and have them form an inspiring part of my network has been a deeply enriching part of my career journey - both personally and professionally.

My most memorable chapter encounter so far has been hosting the 2nd hybrid Symposium of the Nigeria LSHTM Alumni Network in December 2022 centred around Human Resources for Health for Universal Health Coverage. It resonated so strongly with the alumni, that we had a 100% acceptance rate for ALL the inspiring speakers who we invited, and once the registration links opened, the registration numbers climbed so rapidly that we were at first a bit alarmed that there may have been a glitch on the site! To top it all off, the audience engagement was outstanding.”

—
Adaeze Oreh, Abuja Chapter Lead



“I was very interested to know and meet alumni in Nepal. I queried the LSHTM alumni officer regarding my own country, Nepal chapter. There was none, and that’s how I started the LSHTM Alumni Nepal Chapter. We had our first meeting in Kathmandu on April 15, 2023.

Although it was a small gathering (7 people), there was great interest among the alumni towards the chapter. Most of them were travelling inside and abroad on the day, so they could not join. However, they reached out to me and committed to join another meet up.

Being a chapter lead, I got connected with a number of persons who were in distinguished positions and serving the country in many different ways. What I loved most about the meet up was sharing the experiences of London and LSHTM, which all sounded similar besides the huge year differences. We were sharing about how the central location of LSHTM had allowed everyone of us to experience city life, London’s public commute, and the bustling walkways. Together, we also explored avenues for co-working and possibility of collaboration with LSHTM in future.

I am very grateful to LSHTM and all Nepal alumni for joining the chapter and making it a success. I look forward to organising another meet up soon in Kathmandu.”

—
Junu Shrestha, Kathmandu Chapter Lead

“What I love most about being a chapter lead is that I have met wonderful individuals and learnt more about the LSHTM experience through them. Additionally, I have reconnected with LSHTM in a very rewarding way. The opportunity to showcase my home country Lesotho within the alumni network is also a proud achievement.

My most memorable chapter encounter has been the very first meeting that we had as the Lesotho Chapter in March 2023 and seeing a picture of that event on the official LSHTM social media pages.”

—
Yolisa Mashologu, Lesotho Chapter Lead



Thank you

We would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to all our supporters who have given so generously in support of LSHTM's mission to improve health worldwide.

Here we list every individual, be they alumni, staff, student or friend, who donated to the School last year.* We wish to acknowledge everyone who chooses to give anonymously and we remember those supporters who have sadly died since making their gift to us.

Last year, here are just some of the many ways your donations have helped us to...



Transform more students' lives through our scholarship funds



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Carry out vital research into neglected conditions like ME

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Amal Ibrahim
Alice Icelly
Olubukola Idoko

Mary Marovich
Claudia Marques
Marian Martin
Bianca Martindale
Armando Martinez
Roger Marwood
Laura Matheson
Alison Mathieson
Gillian Maude
Daniela Mayerova
Oscar Mbare
Katherine Mcallister
Frances McCabe
Joanne Mcconnell
Mary-Alice McDevitt
Stanley Mcdowell
Juliet McEachran
Anthony McGovern
Emma McGuire
Martin McGuire
Thomas McHale
Graham Medley
Tobias Meier
Johannes Mellinghoff
Ruth Mellor
Katherine Merrill & Jamison Merrill
Catherine Meyer
Elaine Miller
Anne Mills & Patrick Corran
Sally Milne
Neda Minakaran
Michelle Mitchell
Phil Mohr
Charlotte
Monnickendam
Dominic Montagu & Nepheli Foundation
Ann Moore
Colin Morgan
Elizabeth Morgan
Kimberly Morren
Mark Morrison
Tara Moshiri
James Mounter
Innocent Muleya
Claire Mulrenan
Kate Murphy
Nick Murphy
Alexandra Murrell
Nicole Musuwo
Chisomo Mutafya
Rutendo Muzambi
Ruvimbo Muzwidzwa
Modi Mwatsama
Behzad Nadjm
Masatoshi Nagata
Sussann Nasr
David Neasham
Hugh Neil
Aidan Neligan
Clive Nettleton
Aaron Ngwenya
Emily Nightingale
Erin Nishikawa
Richard Nkulikiyinka
Norman Noah
Claire Norcross
Sarina Norris & Enoch Chiu
Christine Norton
Christopher Noutsios
Dionysios Ntais
Laura Nwanyia
Paul Nyamweya
Ann O'Brien
Martha Ococ
Alexandra Oeser
Olanma Ogbuehi

Charlotte O'Halloran
Sariat Olatunji
Joanne Oldridge
Shannon O'Leary
Beth Oliver
Maryn Olson
Sulochana Omwenga
Guillaume Orjales-Ponce
Sarah Ouanhnon
Adeola Oyegebite
Bethan Page
Mark Pakianathan
Caroline Pang
Claire Panosian & The Healthquest Foundation
Louise Parmenter
Matti Parry
Gabriela Patten
Stuart Patterson
Robert Pawinski
Ruth Payne
Sally Pearce
Thomas Pearson & Heather Pearson
Hugo Pedder
Elizabeth Penrose
Natalia Perez Achiaga
Anthony Perry
Chitrouite Persaud
Thomas Peterman
Michael Peterson
Thomas Peto
Frances Philpot
Rachel Pick
Sabine Pierre-Louis
Margaret Pinder
Sacha Pires
Flora Pirquet
David Pitches
Lucy Pitt
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Jocelyn Popinchalk
Steven Pratt
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Bobbi Pritt
Simon Procter
Holly Prudden
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Isadora Quick
Rita Ramalhete
Ramyadevi Ravindrane
Jamie Rees
Barnaby Reeves & Toity Deave
Maura Reilly
Elizabeth Richards
Hannah Rickman
Karl Rijkse
Barry-James Ripley
Yaiza Rivero
Lucy Robinson
Rachel Roche
Andrew Romanovitch
Susan Ross
Penelope Rostron
Lynda Rowlinson
Alexander Ruby
Nicola Ruck
Ruth Ruggles
Sarah Rumbold
Helen Rushton
Edward Ryan
Maria Sale
Mark Salter
Fintirimam Sambo-

Donga
Natalia Sanz
Cathrin Sarll
Chris Sayer
Dominic Scarr
Maximilian Schlueter
Detlef Schmidt
Anna Scowcroft
Hannah Screech
Angela Seay & Richard Brow
Christian Seelhofer
Penelope Sellers
Layli Semple
James Shepherd
Roopa Shivashankar
Eduardo Simoes
Nathan Simpson
Navpreet Singh
Tony Sirimanna
Sarah Slade
David Sleep
Andrew Smith
Paul Smith
Stauffer Smith
David Snashall
Gemma Snell
Seyi Soremekun
Flanima Soumahoro
Christopher Speirs
Rebecca Spencer
Jannette Spittle
Denise Spreag
Michael Staunton
Daniel Stevens
Mary Stow
Pella Strandmark
Richard Straube
Sara Strout
Erin Stuckey
Yueqian Sun
Jayne Sutherland
Natalina Sutton
Piotr Szawarski
Julian Tang
Jamie-Rae Tanner
Geoffrey Targett & Julie Targett
Addisalem Taye
Nichola Taylor
Martin Taylor
Sally Tedstone
Adrienne Testa
Raji Thannivila Rajan
Philippa Thomas
Jonathan Thompson
Katy-Anne Thompson
Sandra Thorpe
Zuzanna Tittenbrun
Sophie Todd
Preet Tokhi
Jennifer Tomlins
Laurie Tomlinson
Phoebe Topping
Simon Townson
Susan Tredget
Ashley Treharne
Andrea Trill
Jordan Troup
Ming-Yuan Tseng
Henry Tufton
Mary Turay
Kathryn Turner
Nidhi Vaid
Jeanne-Marie Vaidie
Parastou Valeh
Leonard Valenzuela & Graciela Salvador-Davila
Liane Van Der Merwe

Donga
Natalia Sanz
Cathrin Sarll
Chris Sayer
Dominic Scarr
Maximilian Schlueter
Detlef Schmidt
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Martijn van Paassen
Zolta'n Vass
Ashley Vaughan
Joanne Veldman
Poppy Vernon
Hope Virgo
Salim Vohra
Zoe Wowles
Taizo Wada
Caroline Wade
Andrew Waldoock
Godfrey Walker
Verena Wallace
Patrick Waller
Peter Walsham & Hannah Kuper
TingTing Wang
Theresa Ward
Nicholas Wareham
Lee Ann Warner-Rivers
Donald Waters
Heather Watkins
Donovan Watson
Heather Watson
Rosamund Weatherall
Efrot Weiss
Suzanne Welham
Richard Weller
Sandya Wellwood
Frances Wensley
Peter Whincup
Cat White
Helena White
Mia White
Ann Whybrow
Sara Widdrington
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Lesley Wilkes
Frances Williams
Hannah Williams
Mark Williams
Sian Williams
Ryoko Williamson
Allegra Wilson
Danny Winsler
Bret Wirta
Benjamin Woolf
Inge Worni-Schudel
Kenneth Wrixon
Nicola Wyld
Kamran Yawar
La'Shay Yeboa-Atakora
Wing Choy Yeen
Alexandra Yeung
Andrew Younger
Ashley Younger
Dinara Zamanova
Nathalie Zerbib-Morgensztejn
Shuo Zhang
Ismail Zoutat
Soombul Zubairi
Juliana Zuccaro

*This list covers the period 1st August 2022 to 31st July 2023. If you can't find your name on here and think it should be, please get in touch: alumni@lshtm.ac.uk

LSHTM's dynamic duo



Israel Balogun (MSc Public Health in Developing Countries – now Public Health for Development, 2015) and Muktar Gadanya (MSc Reproductive and Sexual Health Research, 2010) are both alumni of LSHTM, Study UK Award winners, and very good friends. They told us about how their friendship has opened doors and opportunities for each other.

'We met virtually first, through a Whatsapp group for LSHTM alumni in Nigeria,' Muktar says, 'We were promoting our workshops and getting invited to panels to speak together, and that's where the friendship started.' Israel adds.

'When I saw that Israel was the Global Winner of the UK Alumni Award in the Social Action category, I was amazed and inspired. Israel is the first person from Nigeria, and the first person with a disability to win the award, I was so proud... while I was applying, I reached out and asked him for advice on how to apply!' Muktar chuckles.

Israel laughs. 'Being able to mentor a friend, and a peer, and then seeing them

succeed and win awards too...it's a privilege, it really is a privilege.'

Israel often mentions how every innovation, every breakthrough, and every victory isn't just for the individual; it's a stepping stone for the young minds and fresh eyes that will look at our world tomorrow... 'It's all about helping the next generation.' He says, 'They're the ones that will lead us into the future, and with mentorship and sharing stories, we can ensure it will be a better one!'

Israel was named as an award winner in the prestigious 2021–22 Global Study UK Alumni Awards in the Social Action category. This award recognised his exemplary work in advocating for, and facilitating discussions around, disability and gender inclusivity in public life. He has fiercely promoted the needs of disabled people across Africa – including in Nigeria, Cameroon, Sierra Leone, and Somalia; and the Middle East in Iraq – and aims to lay the foundations to enable their acceleration into prominent public roles. He is proud that his

evidence-based research for policy formulations has helped to shape public policy in a number of ways, including the establishment of a disability commission in some states and at the national level in Nigeria.

'I was so proud to see that Israel had won this award' Muktar says, 'To see him bring his expertise in the issues surrounding disability to a national and international level, was just amazing.'

In the following year, Muktar received the Nigeria National UK Alumni Award in Science and Sustainability in recognition of his groundbreaking work leading the development of Nigeria's National Family Planning Blueprint. His work contributed to the uptake of contraception and has led to a projected reduction of over 67,000 maternal and child mortalities.

'The best thing about being the first person from Nigeria to win this award, is seeing other people from my country applying,' Israel says. 'Muktar's work hasn't just saved lives, he has improved the quality of life for so many people.'

When asked what advice they would give students and recent graduates, both discussed networking, and building life-long friendships just like they have. 'To go far in life, you need to go in groups, meaning, very hardly can anything truly great be done alone.'

Muktar nods his head in agreement, 'And be open to seeking help. Be open to collaborate and help others too.'

Israel says 'Yes, volunteer! It seriously circles back. I was mentoring a student after I had graduated from LSHTM, who then mentored me a few years later when I was applying for my PhD.'

Talking to Israel and Muktar, their laughter is just as contagious as their motivation for helping others. Through their story, we're reminded that the power of friendship and volunteering can shape communities and forge bonds that last a lifetime.



LSHTM updates

News features and profiles from across the LSHTM community.

The LSHTM Archives Service holds documents, letters, photographs, maps, publications and objects relating to global and public health. Collections date from the mid-nineteenth century. The Archives also includes material on the history and development of the School since its foundation in 1899. Inevitably, the LSHTM archives are steeped in the colonial history of our School.

Describing LSHTM with

five objects



Medical student to global health trailblazer



Dr Toyin Togun, Associate Professor of Global Public Health in the Faculty of Infectious and Tropical Diseases, stands as a testament to the School's legacy of shaping the future of global health. From navigating the corridors as a student to charting groundbreaking research paths, Dr Togun's journey is an inspiration to students and his fellow alumni.

Today: Toyin vs TB

As Co-Director of the LSHTM Tuberculosis (TB) Centre and also a Senior Clinician-Scientist in the Vaccines & Immunity Theme of the LSHTM-MRC Unit in The Gambia, Dr Togun's expertise spans continents. Reflecting on his journey, Dr Togun shares, "My research is principally focused on investigating novel strategies and approaches to improve the diagnosis and management of TB in high burden settings, with a particular interest in childhood TB. My background in both laboratory and epidemiological science provides the scientific backbone for my research interests."

An Alumnus Returns: The LSHTM Experience

Dr Togun's connection with LSHTM

runs deep, rooted in his days as a student pursuing his MSc in Public Health in Developing Countries. "That experience changed the trajectory of my career," he recalls. "Before my MSc, I was on the path to pursuing postgraduate medical training in Obstetrics and Gynaecology. The modular nature of the MSc training enabled me to tailor the course to my interests, igniting a passion for public health and research focused on controlling communicable diseases in Africa."

Indeed, Dr Togun's journey from student to faculty member mirrors the transformative power of education. "Apart from the excellent didactic education," he reflects, "my time at LSHTM introduced me to the nuances of effectively working in groups and the importance of equality, diversity, and inclusion."

Forging Memories: From Student to Faculty

As a student, Dr Togun fondly remembers conducting mock disease outbreak investigations, an example of LSHTM's hands-on approach to learning. "Studying at the School introduced me to effective teamwork and problem-solving techniques," he shares. "These skills have

"My goal is to bridge the gap between research and social impact, leveraging my expertise to drive positive change."

been invaluable throughout my career, as I navigate diverse committees and collaborative partnerships."

Now, as a faculty member, Dr Togun continues to create memories and a lasting impact on global health, leveraging LSHTM's global footprint to drive research and promote equality and social justice. "I am excited to consolidate my networks and collaborations," he enthuses. "I look forward to initiating new research projects, training students, and contributing to the development of equitable partnerships and inclusive strategies at LSHTM."

Looking Ahead: A Vision for Impact

In the year ahead, Dr Togun's vision is clear - to advance research, nurture talent, and champion equality. "I am committed to promoting a positive research culture and environment," he affirms. "My goal is to bridge the gap between research and social impact, leveraging my expertise to drive positive change."

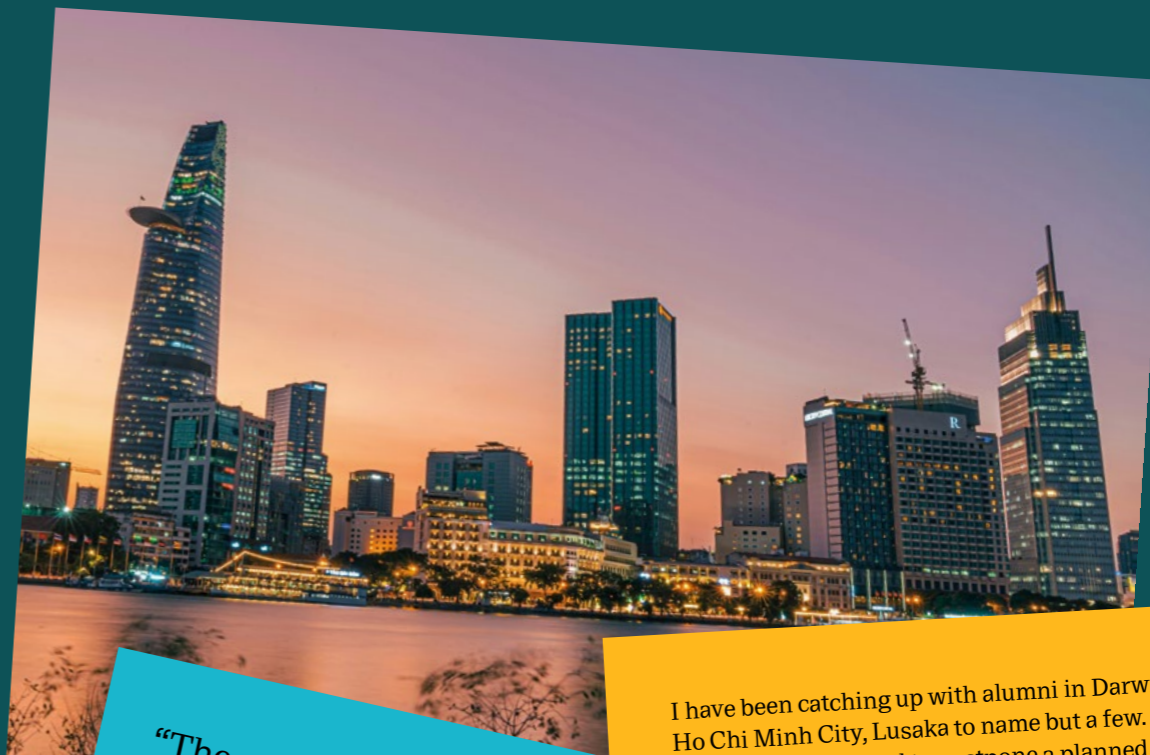
From promising medical student to global health trailblazer, Dr Togun's story vividly illustrates how LSHTM can transform lives and careers, opening young minds to new and exciting opportunities.



Greetings from **A F A R**

I hope this postcard finds you well. It's been quite the adventure over the past year as I had the huge privilege of embarking upon a sabbatical to ponder the future direction of the Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (DTM&H) (and of course, to seek your invaluable insights!). Along the way, I've delved into new frontiers for our research on TB and Chagas disease, opening up a world of possibilities which I'm excited to explore.

The major highlight has been reconnecting with fellow alumni and I've been lucky enough to be able to do this in many of the vibrant cities of Australia and Asia (and as a cheeky add-on to a work trip to Zambia). So this is a postcard to say a huge thank-you to those who have generously shared their time and their always fascinating and inspiring stories with us. The conversations and camaraderie have truly been a treasure and a clear reminder of the wonderful richness and diversity of the people we are lucky enough to have the privilege to pass through the School year on year (that's you!).



"The conversations and camaraderie have truly been a treasure and a clear reminder of the wonderful richness and diversity of the people we are lucky enough to have the privilege to pass through the School year on year (that's you!)."

I have been catching up with alumni in Darwin, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Lusaka to name but a few. And though I recently had to postpone a planned visit to colleagues in the Caribbean and central America, in the last week we have managed instead at least some 'virtual tour' catch-up Zoom calls with alumni based in Jamaica, Dominica, Guatemala and Trinidad.

As the odyssey continues, I will be in Argentina, Paraguay and Bolivia later this summer, immersed in Chagas activity, so if you're in that part of the world please do get in touch!

Until then, take care, and may your days be filled with adventure, wonder and discovery!

Cheers,
Dave



Leading the Charge for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion



Meet Roshni Mooneeram, the Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), whose passion for fostering a culture of equity transcends boundaries.

“According to the World Economic Forum, globally, gender parity is 131 years away. Post Covid, many Sustainable Development Goals related to gender have fallen behind. And yet, we know that fair representation of women in all sectors is fundamental to building a healthier, more equitable world for all. Prioritising the meaningful representation and leadership of women across all areas of global health - from research and policymaking to healthcare delivery and humanitarian response is key to developing effective solutions to our greatest global health.

I believe that organisations can and should be catalysts in pushing for equity. The fact that equity is at the heart of the mission of LSHTM creates good momentum for us to progress the wider EDI agenda within the School and in our global work. We, however, have further groundwork to do in terms of addressing the gender pay gap and ensuring that our working and research culture is inclusive and supportive of women’s leadership.”

The Pentacell Development Group

Pentacell wins Kindness in Education award

The Pentacell Development Group are beyond proud and humbled to announce that our Pentacell programme has won the Kindness in Education Awards this year! The group consists of Rachel Gould, Senior Counsellor and Wellbeing Manager, Ford Hickson, Associate Professor and Programme Director for MSc Public Health, Tom Osborn, LSHTM alumnus and former Pentacell facilitator, Chris Conneely, Head of Alumni Relations and Regular Giving, and Meron Berhanu, Alumni Engagement Officer. But we would not have achieved this success without the tremendous support of all our alumni ambassadors and our remarkable programme directors and administrators.

It is our goal to ensure that every student feels supported and connected when they join LSHTM, and Pentacell does just that. Through Pentacell, five students come together each week to discuss their passions, outlooks, and perspectives. And for further support and guidance, we have Pentacell Alumni Ambassadors who are available to share their own experience of studying at LSHTM. We are passionate about creating a warm and welcoming environment for our new students and we are grateful for this recognition. The awards are a key feature of #Kindfest2023, an annual online celebration of kindness in all its forms.

As part of our prize, we were able to offer everyone at LSHTM complementary festival tickets. Staff, students and alumni were able to join and celebrate the impact of kindness in educational settings.



Team updates



Greetings from the Alumni Office!

Our small yet dynamic team of three is on a mission—to champion our remarkable alumni community. As we embark on this journey of connection and celebration, we’re continually inspired by the incredible endeavours of our alumni, volunteers, and donors, whose tireless efforts reverberate across the globe, shaping a brighter, healthier future for all.

Now, let’s dive into some exciting highlights and updates from our team.

Chris Conneely, Head of Alumni Relations & Regular Giving

As the newest member of the team, there’s been a lot of firsts and a lot of highlights in my first 12 months! I’m very fortunate to lead a small but perfectly formed team and we work very hard to engage our alumni community and give you lots of reasons to keep in touch and hopefully give back – whether as volunteers, donors, mentors or advisors – you are amazing, and we love hearing from you. A personal highlight for me was joining LSHTM Director Liam Smeeth in hosting a reception at the ASTMH conference in Chicago. Witnessing 100+ alumni, colleagues, students and friends of all ages and nationalities coming together under the LSHTM umbrella really brought home to me, at my first ever LSHTM alumni event, just how uniquely welcoming and nurturing this family of ours truly is!

Sarah Enderby Coles, Regular Giving Officer

My highlight for the last year has to be the London to Brighton cycle in September 2023. I felt so proud that Professor Liam Smeeth joined our team of 20 inspirational LSHTM cyclists, who all completed the 55-mile ride, on a beautifully sunny September day, raising over £10,000 to remove the barriers to education and ensure the ongoing diversity of our School’s

community through scholarships. I’m really looking forward to cheering on and celebrating our 30 LSHTM runners in our half marathon events in 2024. One of the best parts of my job is helping our amazing community fundraisers reach their training and fundraising goals and watching them have a lot of fun along the way, supporting and motivating each other to stay fit and active and help find more balance their busy lives. I’m also looking forward to offering them a free yoga class and an alumni gift bag, to help support their post-event recovery and thank them for their hard work.

Meron Berhanu, Alumni Engagement Officer

Working as the Alumni Engagement Officer at LSHTM has truly been a remarkable experience. Since starting in August 2022, I’ve had countless memorable moments. One standout event was organising and hosting our alumni reception in Paris, in collaboration with the TB Centre, following the first day of the UNION conference. Meeting our alumni based in France, as well as those traveling for the occasion, was incredibly rewarding. Plus, I tried escargots for the first time!

However, the most fulfilling aspect of my role is undoubtedly conducting interviews with our alumni who are making significant contributions to saving and improving lives worldwide. Whether through policy advocacy or clinical practice, their stories are truly inspiring. Many of our alumni are humble and hesitant to share their achievements, so I feel privileged to hear their stories firsthand and assist them in sharing their journeys through blogs or filmed interviews, allowing them to showcase their impact in their own words. It’s an honour to be entrusted with such meaningful narratives and to play a part in amplifying their voices.

Valerie Boulet has been Director of Development at LSHTM for over five years and in that time has grown the Development & Alumni Relations (DARO) team into a high-performing department raising significant sums in philanthropic income year on year. Sadly for us, she has secured a very exciting new role at the WHO Foundation, but before she left, she took the time to reflect on her achievements and experiences.

Au revoir, Valerie!



You have a long and impressive career in fundraising and alumni engagement, working in higher education, the arts and the wider non-profit sector. What was it about LSHTM that attracted you to this role back in 2018?

I think the first element was obviously the reputation of the school as a global leader in public health research and education. I had a wonderful time at King's College (my previous employer) where I focused on health issues and areas that were critical to global health, so I think it was a natural transition coming to LSHTM. I would say that the School's strategic priorities resonated really strongly with my own values, together with my passion for making a positive impact.

Furthermore, working with Peter Piot as LSHTM Director, was an important factor.

What do you think have been the biggest changes that you've witnessed at LSHTM?

Firstly, the incredible growth that the institution has gone through - we're dynamic and innovative and the global amplification of our research has taken us to another level. I think the pandemic demonstrated that we are really leveraging our multidisciplinary expertise. All the way from lab science to policy I've witnessed an approach that's truly global in nature.

Thanks to the proactive role that we played in major epidemics and the joining of the two MRC units in The Gambia and Uganda, I think our growth has not only been geographic, but also very much in terms of discipline - whether that's social science, vaccine hesitancy, or epidemiology - and our spheres of influence.

When I reflect, I see the adaptability and the commitment to excellence that the school has when facing evolving global challenges. It's always exciting and humbling for us as fundraisers and relationship builders to see the impact of this.

Another big change has been in our efforts to decolonise global health and we continue to work towards more equitable partnership and more equitable ways of working.

Philanthropic income has grown significantly under your leadership of DARO, we also have a thriving and generous alumni community. If you were to pick out three personal or team achievements from your time here that you're particularly proud of, what would they be?

Amidst our various achievements and ongoing projects, there's much to take pride in. The team consistently puts in hard work to support numerous brilliant endeavours. A few highlights come to mind:

The Stanford Fellowships - The Fellowship provides a unique opportunity for Fellows to participate in the planetary health community at both LSHTM and Stanford. It was such a brilliant project to set up, distinctive and amazing to see the valuable opportunity for our students to engage actively within the planetary health community at two renowned institutions.

The Pentacell Project - such a great intervention designed to develop a sense of belonging among MSc students. I love that it was focused on increasing inclusion, belonging and interdependency. It won so many awards and really went beyond the traditional academic framework by actively promoting a sense of community.

Lastly, working with our Californian donors KHR Fund and seeing how engaged and impactful they have been for the institution. This is a prime example of how a long-term relationship allows for sustained impact. We can really see that this deepened connection goes beyond financial transactions, creating a sense of shared purpose and commitment. The trip to Sonoma to see them was pure joy!



LSHTM played a significant part in combating COVID-19. We also saw a notable upturn in the School's philanthropic income. Why do you think that was and what can we do to build upon that pivotal moment?

I feel very strongly that we were the only institution in the world able to take an effective cross-disciplinary approach. We were working with communities on the ground, often in low resource settings; we could very quickly draw upon our established international networks to support policy and practice globally. Our response and our research really inspired confidence in existing and potential donors. I think we were very strong at showcasing the school's impact and relevance. Furthermore, we demonstrated resilience and adaptability.

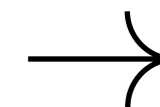
In terms of what we do to build upon this moment? I would say to just continue to showcase the impact of the institution and its relevance.

What have been your most memorable international trips and why?

So many amazing opportunities to meet with our alumni, colleagues and friends across the globe and I'm so very grateful to have had those encounters. If I were to highlight the most memorable ones, I have to say my first visits to The Gambia and Uganda units undoubtedly stand out.

The Gambia (2021): Exploring the work of our unit was personally very enriching. I remember the first time in the Fajara site: lush greenery, the sheer scale of the unit, so many buildings, birds chirping, monkeys, the heat and feeling that peaceful vibe inside the MRC site! The efforts by our colleagues to share knowledge, to show us as much as possible of the unit and finally discovering the clinic, just after Covid, a real powerhouse of care and dedication, really serving the local community. The impact they're having is so real.

And on a more light-hearted note, getting up close and personal with some crocs and the nights filled with dance added an unforgettable dimension to this first Gambian journey!



Uganda (2023): Witnessing the impact of our initiatives on local communities left an indelible mark. I was so impressed to see our researchers working on the General Population Cohort (GPC) with the rural community members and discovering how the local villagers have contributed to population studies for 35 years. The warmth and professionalism of our colleagues who took so much of their time to show us the unit and to plan a great itinerary. Standing on the equator line was fun, having one foot in each hemisphere, and again (seems to be a recurring theme!) more teamwork hitting a crescendo on the dance floor!

Our alumni community represent what's best about LSHTM through their commitment to tackling global health challenges while their generosity towards their alma mater and future generations of public health professionals is so special. How would you describe the bond LSHTM has with its former students?

I think this bond is truly exceptional. The affinity, the loyalty, it goes beyond a mere connection. There's a real shared commitment to making the world a better place and to address global health challenges. And that's something that's very humbling - you see the generosity displayed by our alumni both in terms of their time and their philanthropic support.

When you look at how alumni support our scholarship fund to help widen access to education - either by donating or raising funds through community events, or when you meet an inspirational graduate, such as Israel Balogun, whose advocacy for disability and gender inclusivity is just so humbling and inspiring, you see that the added value that alumni bring to the institution is a real treasure. I think our relationship with alumni extends the boundaries of what we as an institution can do, and gives our students the opportunity to connect with, and learn from those who have gone before them.

Alumni help us to stay true to ourselves and hold us to account, which is so crucial in ensuring we realise our long term vision and impact.

Tell us about your new role at the WHO Foundation.

I am joining the newly established WHO Foundation, which is an independent affiliated charitable foundation, unique in the area of world health, set up to support the mission of The WHO. I will be leading on their regional philanthropic activity for Europe, UK and Switzerland, and the mission is to mobilise greater private funding, capital and partnerships to advance the mission of The WHO.

I will miss LSHTM a lot but this is of course an exciting new challenge for me, and I can build upon the work that I've done to be a positive catalyst for global health, engaging philanthropists and businesses in our mission.

What do you think you will miss most about LSHTM?

The incredible DARO team of course, and my professional services colleagues, our amazing academics, and our wonderful community of donors, partners and alumni.

I will miss the incredible diversity of the work that we do, and that supportive network of people who want to improve health equity worldwide.



“Alumni help us to stay true to ourselves and hold us to account, which is so crucial in ensuring we realise our long term vision and impact.”



Make a lasting impact






**Do you remember your graduation day?
How did it feel as you contemplated your future?**

By making a gift to LSHTM in your will, you can provide life changing opportunities to the next generation of global and public health professionals and ensure a fairer and healthier future for all.

Email us to find out more:
→ development@lshtm.ac.uk

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