



Review of the Year, 2015

We seek to support organisations working to reduce poverty to collect, gather and analyse reliable information, and to use this information to create better and more accountable development policies and programmes.

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 Evidence for Development

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Introduction from the Chair

Evidence for Development (EfD) was launched in 2006 by John Seaman and Celia Petty, both with well-established careers in international development.

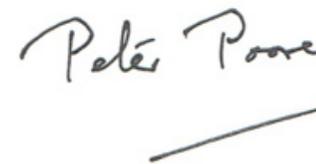
Based on long experience in the field, we know that a sound, empirical understanding of how poor people live in harsh economic environments is essential for effective national or international aid and investment. Until recently, this understanding has been incomplete.

To fill the gap, Evidence for Development has developed new ways of gathering, measuring and analysing information on household economies in order to understand better how poor people survive and thrive. This requires reliable, household-level data collected with rigorous attention to detail, and it needs state-of-the-art technology to handle complex household data sets. EfD brings together the highest level of expertise in both these fields. We also know that unless local researchers and institutions are part of the process of generating and using this information, any impact will be short lived. So, in addition to high quality data and analytics, EfD works with

researchers from local universities and national institutions to ensure they can continue the process.

Nearly 10 years on we find our work is more relevant than ever, as governments and communities everywhere struggle to cope with new shocks and uncertainties, particularly those arising from climate change. Our aim is to work with governments and international organisations to improve the resilience of poor communities by ensuring that programmes to address poverty are effective.

Our mission remains to harness information to change lives. We are pleased to share with you an overview of our work in the past year and to give you a preview of the work we plan to do in 2016 and beyond.



Peter Poore, Chair

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Objectives and activities

Evidence for Development seeks to reduce poverty by improving the quality and effectiveness of development decisions and programmes around the world and promoting openness, impact and accountability at every level – from regional or national policies affecting the lives of millions, to projects that work closely with individual households.

Our core objective is to support organisations working to reduce poverty to collect, gather and analyse reliable information, and use it to create and evaluate policies and programmes based on this evidence. Understanding how people survive and thrive in poor settings is essential if any intervention to support them is to be useful and its impact measurable. This involves training and capacity building with national universities and other local institutions and organisations, as well as UK-based universities and international NGOs.

Over the last decade we have promoted and developed techniques which are widely used by governments, donors, UN agencies and non-governmental organisations, to develop policies and plan programmes addressing climate change and adaptation, food security, nutrition, health, micro-enterprise and social protection, and to measure their impact.



Self Help Africa Uganda's Charles Mbiru prepares to measure a young child's height, as part of a nutrition survey conducted alongside a household economy survey (using the IHM), to explore the relationship between household income and children's nutritional status.

Our methods

Using innovative data collection and analytical methods, EfD's work puts much-needed information about household income and livelihoods in the hands of key decision makers from local to international levels. This information can change lives, allowing evidence-based programmes to guide development and helping the most effective types of assistance to go to the people who need it most.



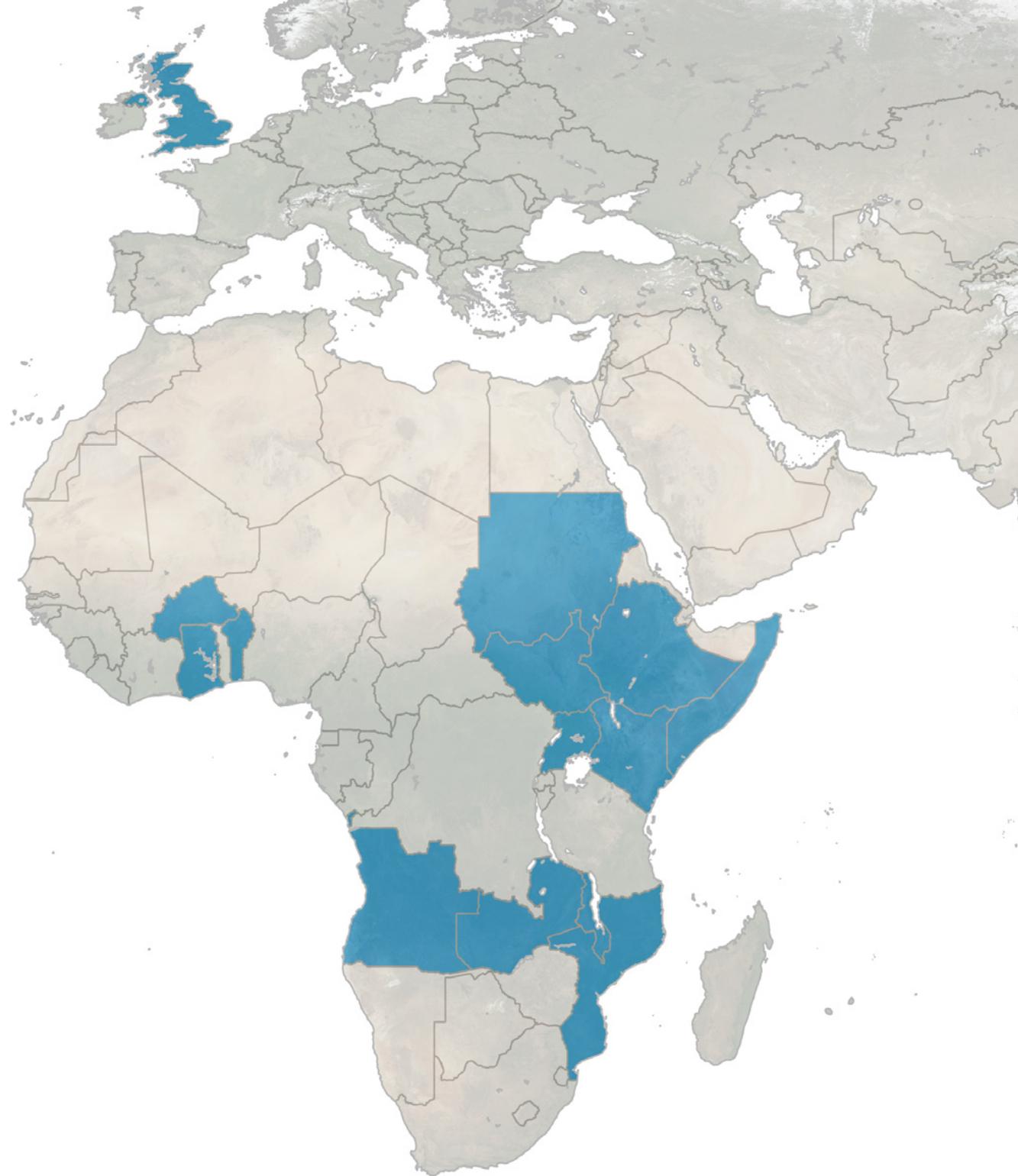
A focus group discussion near Lake Chilwa, Malawi

Our work is based on two methods used for collecting, modelling and analysing data on household income. Both methods have been developed over many years of practical, village-level field work.

The first is the [Household Economy Approach \(HEA\)](#). This has been adopted as a method of famine early warning and routine food security assessment by many governments and humanitarian agencies across sub-Saharan Africa. The scope of this work is currently being increased through the development of open-source software that will be freely available to users.

HEA assessments can be used to simulate the impacts of economic shocks or changes (e.g. drought, floods, or disease in crops or animals) on access to food and basic non-food needs for typical households from each wealth group. This data can be used in the management of national food policy and in understanding the potential impacts of climate change on different population groups and in different geographical areas.

Whereas HEA studies collect information on 'typical' households from defined sections of the population through group interviews, the [Individual Household Method \(IHM\)](#) collects information on actual households from their members. This can identify more complex variations across populations than is possible with the HEA and can be used to model the impact of changes on a much wider range of social and economic factors. IHM data can be used to support the design and targeting of development policies and programmes, and to monitor and evaluate their impact at household and community level. To analyse the IHM data, EfD has developed its own [software](#) which we have placed on an open-source platform available for anyone to use.



Where we work

EfD has recently carried out projects and assessments in Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Malawi, Zambia, Namibia, Benin, Burkina Faso and Ghana. We plan to extend our work to South and South-East Asia in the near future.

Who we work with

We work with NGOs, government agencies, universities and research institutes, training students and staff to use the HEA and IHM methodologies to measure and analyse livelihoods, food security and the economic impacts of development and humanitarian programmes at the household level. We work in three key areas: [research](#), [capacity building](#) and [advancing technology](#).

Research

We aim to extend the boundaries of livelihood analysis. Where relevant we build bridges between disciplines, for example linking livelihood analysis with climate change research and combining household income analysis and nutrition research. Analysis generated by this work can be applied across a wide range of disciplines including [climate change and adaptation](#), [food security](#), health, micro-enterprise and social protection.

“ Since joining Efd almost eight years ago I’ve learned so many new things and workfellows have always shared their knowledge with me. The organisation has given me the opportunity to grow not only within the organization but also as a person and to gain postgraduate education. I have travelled in various countries, which has increased my international communication and relationships with people from all over the world. It has been exciting to work at Efd almost from the very beginning and to see and be part of the organisation’s constant growth.

Each and every member is respected, his or her contribution is considered important, and this is a truly professional organization that never compromises on quality. I am proud to be associated with such energetic people. We all strive for excellence in our personal capacity, as an organisation and when working with our partners and clients.”



Stella Ngoleka,
Efd Associate

Stella is an economist based in Malawi with experience in development policy, microeconomics, econometrics, agriculture, health and environmental economics.

Capacity building

We work in partnership with local and international agencies and universities in the UK and Africa to build skills in livelihood analysis, focusing on household economy measurement and modelling.

Our training is designed to produce skilled practitioners, able to work with national and international organisations to improve programme impact and aid effectiveness. The wider availability of local expertise should contribute to policies and projects that increasingly reflect the needs and capabilities of target populations. Skilled practitioners are better able to design, target, implement, monitor and evaluate development and humanitarian programmes.



EfD's Director of Research, John Seaman, with students at Chancellor College, University of Malawi.

A five-year capacity building programme with the Department of Economics had spin-offs in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, where open-source programming is now part of the curriculum.



Team members checking their interview data after a day in the field in Malawi

Advancing technology

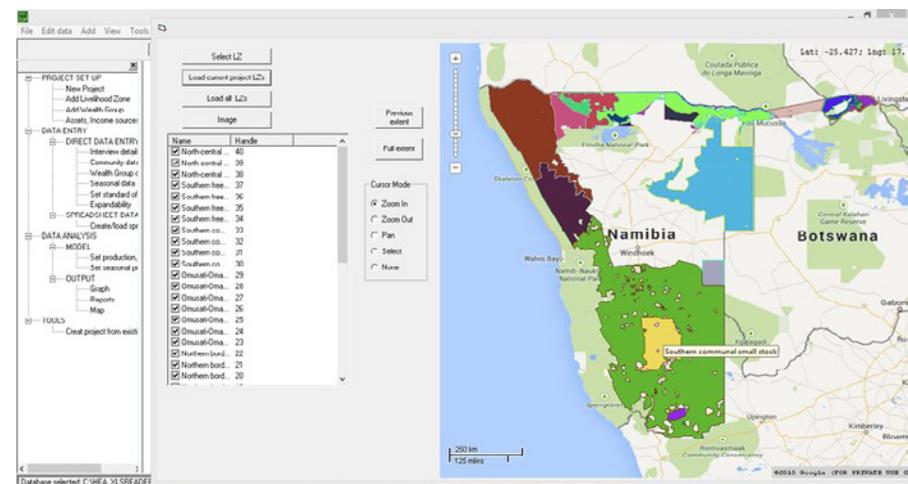
We aim to make state-of-the-art poverty analysis tools freely available to researchers across the world, providing technology that is easy to use and can help decision-makers find answers to key development problems. We are continuing to improve and enhance the analytical software we have developed.

The [Household Economy Approach \(HEA\)](#) is based on data describing the economies and wealth distributions of households in rural livelihood zones of developing countries, with current and projected data on types and quantities of production (including crops, wild foods and employment) and prices used to predict the impacts of drought and other changes on household incomes and welfare. These datasets are difficult to manage and analyse. At national scale, analysis requires the manipulation of data describing many livelihood zones, the development of multiple scenarios based on different assumptions – such as different price projections – and the production of output which is accessible to decision-makers.

The original HEA design was based on the use of dedicated software, but for institutional reasons prototype software produced in the 1990s was never redeveloped in a usable package. The gap has been filled by spreadsheets. However, spreadsheets have limitations: they are a poor medium for data storage, leading to difficulties in data retrieval; there is also limited scope for data manipulation and for quickly obtaining output in a form that can be used by decision-makers.

The HEA software developed by Efd overcomes these limitations by simplifying, speeding up and reducing errors in data entry. Data can be entered manually or via computer-generated spreadsheets. This creates more extensive data checks as well as the ability to retrieve data from existing spreadsheets. This in turn allows an archive to be developed in a single searchable database. The HEA software also allows data to be retrieved and scenarios developed at any scale, from an individual livelihood zone to a regional dataset. This will allow HEA data to be

combined with other Global Information System (GIS) datasets such as land use, which has immediate applications to the understanding of the vulnerability of livelihoods to climate change, and to better inform the development of policies addressing future threats.



A screenshot example from the HEA software developed by Efd, showing livelihood zones in Namibia.

Achievements and performance

In the past year we have completed [studies in Malawi and Ethiopia](#) in partnership with the University of Bath and two agricultural NGOs, to find more reliable ways of measuring the impact and effectiveness of projects. We have established a new partnership with the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) to help them assess the economic situation of Malian refugees in Burkina Faso and build the capacity of local university staff and students to implement studies. Our work on climate change has expanded through a major [DfID/National Environmental Research Council \(NERC\)](#)-funded project, Future Climate for Africa. We are part of the project's [HyCRISTAL consortium](#) working in the Lake Victoria basin, East Africa. We continue to teach at King's College London on the [Environment and Development MA course](#). We also provide opportunities for students and young graduates from a wide range of UK universities to work with us as volunteer interns. Finally, we have published in the [journal Climate Change Management](#) and continue to make our studies and reports

available on the [Efd website](#). Some of these activities are described here in more detail:

Assessing Rural Transformations (the 'ART' project)

Evaluating the impact of projects is a key part of accountability and transparency in international aid. Supported by the [Economic and Social Research Council \(ESRC\)](#) and the UK [Department for International Development \(DfID\)](#), we have been working with partners at the University of Bath and the NGOs Gorta-Self Help Africa and Farm Africa to pilot new evaluation methodologies for assessing rural development interventions in complex contexts, with a view to making more widely available credible and cost-effective tools. The three projects began in 2012 and ended this year with final assessments in Malawi and Ethiopia, followed by national workshops in Ethiopia and Malawi and presentations at the Development Studies Association annual conference in September 2015.



Celia Petty, Director of Operations, presenting at the ART project's Ethiopia workshop in Addis Ababa, July 2015

The project investigated practical and reliable ways of assessing the impact of development activities. Two approaches were used: the Qualitative Impact Assessment Protocol (QUIP), a tool for self-reported attribution, and the Individual Household Method (IHM). A series of four working papers, ‘[Assessing Rural Transformations: IHM Evidence](#)’, which are available to view on our website, outlines the IHM results.

UNHCR: Malian refugees in Burkina Faso

In September 2014 we conducted baseline assessments in three official camps, for which the report can be viewed [on our website](#). This was followed by a [study of urban refugees in Burkina Faso’s second city](#), Bobo-Dioulasso, and by studies in the Sahel region where UNHCR is supporting a milk production and marketing project that will assist both refugees and the host community.

These are some of the insights gained from Efd studies in Burkina Faso:

- The World Food Programme (WFP) provides assistance in cash and in kind to refugees in Burkina Faso. Our study of refugee households living in the city of Bobo-Dioulasso showed that without the cash transfers they receive from WFP, the poorest households would be left with less than US\$0.33 per person per day to pay for all other expenses such as rent, water, clothes, soap etc. after they had met the most basic food needs. This kind of analysis is only possible with the detailed information that can be gained from Efd’s analysis.
- Of equal importance for programme design, baseline information for a dairy project in the Sahel showed that the number of dairy cows owned by refugees would need to increase significantly for the project to make a real difference in the ability of refugee households to fend for themselves without external support.



An IHM interview with Malian refugees in Burkina Faso’s Sahel region, conducted by a local NGO staff member, January 2015

The three baseline reports:

Livelihood baseline assessment of Malian refugees in Burkina Faso: Quantitative analysis of household economies (2014) >

Baseline assessment of Malian refugees in Burkina Faso: Qualitative social and economic study (2014) >

Baseline assessment of Malian refugees in Bobo-Dioulasso: Quantitative analysis of urban household economies (2015) >

King's College London

Celia Petty and John Seaman are visiting academics in the [Department of Geography](#) at King's College London. Together with southern Africa expert Dr Deborah Potts, we are providing a masters' course unit – 'Analysing Poverty: Concepts, Measurement and Modelling' – combining e-learning with workshop teaching sessions.

The first cohort of students completed the course in May 2013, and the course is growing in popularity with both UK students and international students. The e-learning course won a highly competitive King's College Teaching Fund award, which has allowed us to pilot new methods of delivering course content.

“Working with Evidence for Development over the past few years has been a great pleasure and very stimulating both for teaching and research. We have succeeded in getting College funds to develop a masters course, [Analysing Poverty](#), which teaches students both about conceptualisations of poverty and about how the methods promoted by Evidence for Development enable deep insights into patterns of household livelihoods within communities. They learn how these methods work and their development of a vocational skill with policy relevance has been welcomed.

This course is taught via innovative e-learning techniques with online materials which the Efd partners helped to develop and they also run computer workshops for the students. The link with Efd has contributed to research applications and we currently also have a jointly supervised (KCL/ Efd) ESRC PhD CASE Studentship student working on UK food poverty. The collaboration is very successful and we look forward to its continuation.”



Dr Deborah Potts,
Reader in Human Geography,
King's College London

Protecting livelihoods in the face of climate change

In partnership with the [University of Reading's Walker Institute](#), we have joined new consortia working on the impact of climate change on livelihoods in Africa. The Walker Institute is pioneering a more integrated approach to understanding and predicting climate and how it affects human society, on timescales from seasons to decades and beyond. We share many of the Institute's objectives and look forward to on-going collaboration.

The first of the consortia, HyCRISTAL, is developing new tools to better understand and predict the impacts of climate change on livelihoods in the Lake Victoria basin. EfD is leading work on the assessment of rural livelihoods, and in linking climate change models with livelihood information and models, with data collected using [household economy assessment methods](#) (HEA and IHM).

Other climate change work under discussion will involve work in East Africa and the Sahel, working with the Walker Institute, the UK Met Office and other academic institutions based in Africa, the US and Europe.

Conferences and publications

We took part in the Post-2015 Development Challenges in Conflict Zones conference at King's College London. The panel included EfD's John Seaman alongside experts from Médecins Sans Frontières and the King's Institute of Cancer Policy.

At the Development Studies Association conference at the University of Bath Celia Petty, EfD Director of Operations, presented a paper in the session Beyond surveys and experiments: other approaches to impact evaluation.

A paper – *The Household Economy Approach: Managing the impact of*

climate change on poverty and food security in developing countries – written by John Seaman, Gary Sawdon, James Acidri and Celia Petty was [published in the Journal Climate Change Management](#).

Copies of all recent studies and reports can be found on the [EfD website](#).



John Seaman at the 'Post-2015 Development Challenges in Conflict Zones' conference. Visit our website for a video of John being interviewed at the event about these challenges >

Software development

We are upgrading the open-IHM software in a refactoring project led by EfD Senior Associate Dai Clegg. New functions have been added over the past year and further enhancements are planned for 2016.

John Seaman has produced the first HEA software to be developed since his earlier work in the 1990s. This will be piloted in Uganda in early 2016. A blog describing the software can be found [on our website](#).

Volunteers

EfD recognises the enormous reserves of talent and enthusiasm that exist among young graduates who want to contribute to international development. We have a very active volunteer intern programme, where we aim to match the interests and skills of volunteers with on-going work. We put great emphasis on teaching new skills and encourage interns to contribute to EfD's social media and blogs as well as contributing to other communications and research work. We are delighted



that all the interns who have worked with us over the past year have gone on to paid employment in a relevant field or are continuing with their studies.

Sponsorship and pro-bono support

We are extremely grateful to Covington & Burling LLP for their pro-bono legal advice and to Lee, Dicketts and Co. for their continuing accountancy support. Thanks also to Tom Nurse for his extremely generous donations of time and skill in developing and improving our website, which can now be viewed on mobile phones and other platforms. Finally, we are indebted to Ruby Lake and Tom Nurse who have designed and produced this Annual Report.

Financial review

Whilst the income from grants and fees from research and training has increased over 10% from the previous year, the income of our trading subsidiary has dropped sharply as the result of the ending of the FEWS NET engagement. Our continued success in bidding for research funding as part of consortia with UK universities and other major

institutions is gratifying and provides an assured medium term income stream, although it does not fully address our continued central concern which is the funding of the central costs of the organisation.

Patrons

We value the support of our patrons and aim to keep them informed of our activities, so that they can act as advocates for EfD among their wide ranging networks. We welcome their feedback and advice and will continue to engage with them whenever their schedules permit.

Fundraising

Over the past year, most of our income has come from work commissioned by DfID and from our NGO training and capacity building work.

To reach a wider audience, we will continue to develop our profile on social media and through our website, which can now be easily read on smartphones and other devices. We have also produced a version of our annual report with photographs and a more engaging lay-out.

We hope this will give potential donors a closer understanding of the work we do in the field. We will continue to work with patrons and friends of EfD to extend our reach to potential corporate and philanthropic supporters.

Plans for the future

In the coming year we will continue to support UNHCR and local university partners in Burkina Faso, in their on-going dairy project activities in the Sahel. A deterioration in the security situation in the north of Mali has meant that international staff are no longer able to travel to the project area. However, we have put in place plans to provide distance support and mentoring to national staff who are able to continue working in the area. This introduces new challenges but also significant opportunities for capacity building and refining practical techniques for remote supervision.

Livelihood assessments will take place in Uganda early in 2016 as part of our work with the HyCRISTAL consortium. This will involve IHM training for staff from the national fisheries institute (NaFIRRI) and Maseno University in Kenya, as well as colleagues from the University of Reading and Practical Action. Software and data management work linking climate and livelihoods data will be led by Dai Clegg, who will be collaborating with climate scientists across the HyCRISTAL consortium.

Other work with the University of Reading and the Walker Institute will focus on the Sahel region and southern Africa (Malawi), where research proposals are currently under discussion. Capacity building of local academics and the strengthening of local systems to collect and analyse livelihoods information will be an important part of this work.

Teaching at King's College London will continue in 2015-16. In addition to teaching students of international development we will be extending the range of our work to UK poverty in collaboration with King's. This will be conducted through a PhD project focusing on the use of food banks and will be undertaken by EfD's Research Officer Wolf Ellis. The work will be carried out under an ESRC CASE award with sponsorship from EfD and will be jointly supervised by Deborah Potts at King's and Celia Petty at EfD. Wolf will leave his role as EfD Research Officer, where he has done valuable work over the past three years, to take up his studentship in the 2015-16 academic year while continuing to work as an EfD associate.

Communication through social media will remain an important activity; we will also continue to make studies and reports available through our web site.

Finally, we will remain open to new partnerships and collaborations in order to extend the range and impact of our work, and to ensure our financial sustainability and growth.





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