Section A: Official Development Assistance (ODA) and GCRF strategy

The strategy

1. Summarise the key aspects of your three year **strategy for development related and GCRF research activity**, including:

   a. Your institution's strategy and priority objectives for all development related research activity funded through all sources for three years from 2018-19.

   b. Summary of the key aspects of your three year strategic plan for QR-GCRF in light of the criteria and objectives for the GCRF outlined in the guidance.

   c. How activity funded through QR-GCRF fits into your broader strategy and priorities for all development related research activity.

   d. How activity funded through QR-GCRF relates to the UK strategy for the GCRF.[1]

   e. How your development-related and GCRF strategies relate to your wider institutional strategy for using QR.

   f. Likely key barriers and enablers to implementing your strategy.

   g. The key activities by which you will realise your objectives, such as capacity and capability building; mono-disciplinary interdisciplinary and collaborative research; generating impact from research; meeting the full economic cost of GCRF activity funded through other sources; rapid response to emergencies with an urgent research need; and pump priming.

   h. The main Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list developing countries you intend to collaborate with.

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a. INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH

The University of Reading's Vision for Development Research is to be a foremost practitioner of <u>multidisciplinary, social research-led</u> approaches bringing new <u>ideas</u>, <u>evidence</u> and <u>practical approaches</u> to solve <u>societal challenges</u> in <u>partnership with developing countries</u>.

We have a long-established track record of development research across a wide range of disciplines. To effectively support this, the University established a dedicated Global Development Research Division in 2015, bringing together researchers from Agriculture, Geography, Economics, and Law with shared interests in development challenges. Also in 2015, the University's Walker Institute refined its strategy to focus specifically on supporting the development of climate-resilient societies, with an

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[1] UK Strategy for the Global Challenges Research Fund,
http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/gcrf/challenges/

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emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa, and supporting collaborations between researchers at Reading and partners from this region.

To deliver towards our vision, we support and deliver excellent development research through three priority objectives:

1. **Building capacity** to conduct problem-focused research into development challenges;
2. **Developing relationships** with partners in the global south, at local, national, and regional levels;
3. **Generating impact** from excellent research, applying knowledge and skills to facilitate meaningful societal impacts and technological advances.

Rooted in our particular disciplinary mix, and our institutional culture, we have developed a distinctive approach to development research that emphasises:

- The importance of understanding the relationships between challenges, enabling a system-wide understanding of the consequences of change;
- Empowerment through relationships with people, communities and institutions in developing countries, and a culture of mutual learning and respect;
- The development, in partnership with local communities, of responses to development challenges based on excellent research;
- The importance of understanding local contexts to effectively embed evidence-based solutions in local communities.

Our strategy is being realised across a range of inter-related challenge areas. These challenges are intentionally broad and overlapping, facilitating our strength in working at their interfaces and understanding the complex interdependencies.

For the purposes of strategic planning, our investments in these are balanced across three modes, ensuring a pipeline of evolving development-related research.

Mode 1: Existing development-focused strengths.
Extending the reach and deepening the impact of already well-established and highly impactful research, with critical mass and strong equitable partnerships. Examples include:

Environment, livelihoods & resilience;
Soil erosion & quality;
Conflict & justice.

Mode 2: Extending the focus of existing research strengths currently not focussed on development challenges to development-related contexts. In such areas, we will develop the contextual understanding of challenges by establishing deep relationships with stakeholders to shift the emphasis of research towards development-related questions. Examples include:

Food Systems and production

Nutrition and health
Heritage and conflict

Mode 3: Upscaling and deepening areas of research of high relevance to development challenges where research quality is high, but capacity for development-related work currently constrained. We will work in close partnership with stakeholders in developing countries to develop local capacity supported by parallel strengthened capacity at the university. Examples include:

Migration and language;
Cognition and mental health.

Details on the specific development challenges we expect to address in year 1 with regard to the three modes are outlined in Annex A2.

b. STRATEGIC PLAN FOR QR-GCRF

The QR-GCRF allocation will be used in 3 ways:

1. GCRF Strategic Fund;
2. Rapid response fund;
3. Institutional professional capacity to support Development Research.

Funding from the GCRF Strategic and Rapid Response Funds will be allocated by the GCRF Steering Group against a set of criteria including the ODA eligibility of the proposed research, fit to UoR QR-GCRF strategy, the expected impact on ODA-eligible countries, and the quality of the proposed research. The allocation process is outlined in detail in Section 3(c) below.

1. GCRF Strategic Fund: £418k annually, based on indicative allocation

The fund will be used to develop a pipeline of projects with significant development impact in priority DAC countries. Initially (year 1), it will, first, fund collaborative research, impact, and capacity building activities in areas of existing strength (Mode 1); and, second, support the development of challenge-led projects with DAC country partners through scoping, partnership building, and pilot research (Modes 2 and 3). In the second phase (years 2-3) the Strategic Fund will support research and the generation of developmental impacts from a selection of these.

These projects contribute to the ODA objectives by generating evidence and tools that support decision-making or improve practice, and by supporting knowledge exchange, and local capacity to generate and effectively use research and evidence to improve development outcomes. Priority challenges deriving from the SDGs, and areas of expertise from which projects will be chosen for these activities, are outlined in detail in Annex A2, as are the relevant priority DAC countries for these activities.

2. Rapid Response Fund: £200k annually

We already engage in a range of activities requiring time-sensitive responses to specific trigger events or crises. Examples of current projects funded with QR-GCRF funds include post-hurricane agriculture research in Dominica; and reviewing SEA and safeguarding policies for international aid organisations.

We will establish a ring-fenced Rapid Response Fund for projects that can make a quick, timely, and significant difference in DAC-list nations in partnership with Reading. Funding will be for projects that require a rapid, flexible and agile response to emergencies or time-limited opportunities with an urgent research need. Such responses will include mono-, inter-, and trans-disciplinary and collaborative research; impact and knowledge exchange; and capacity building in the form of people-based capacity and capability to undertake research.

3. Institutional professional capacity to support Development Research: £120k per annum

GCRF QR funding will be used to enhance the existing institutional capacity to support Development Research:

(i) GCRF-focused Research Development support (funded 60% by QR-GCRF, £38k pa). Remit includes raising awareness of GCRF-related opportunities, developing strong links with stakeholders, advising on and monitoring ODA compliance of projects, managing internal calls and pre-filtering GCRF applications, managing the work of the University's GCRF Steering Group, managing QR-GCRF budget. The post will also contribute to developing research support capacity at partner universities in Africa, in partnership with the University of Kent, the School of Oriental & African Studies, and with the African Academy of Sciences. The programme will be delivering training and shadowing to support the development of Research Managers at universities in Africa (£7k pa).

(ii) Relationship Development support: (1FTE at grade 7 plus travel budget, £75k pa). Targeted relationship development for GCRF-eligible and ODA-compatible research and impact opportunities. Includes supporting challenge-led workshops and maintaining the stakeholder relationships post-event.

c. HOW QR-GCRF FUNDED ACTIVITY FITS INTO THE INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH

Our Institutional Strategy will deliver excellent development research through the priority objectives of building capacity, developing relationships, and generating impact. Our strategic plan for QR-GCRF contributes to delivery of this broader strategy, both facilitating early stage research and relationship development and by contributing to impact through extension projects. We envisage much of this activity either feeding into larger GCRF funding opportunities, or extending the research and impact delivered through grants that have been awarded by other GCRF funders. In this way, QR-GCRF supports both the early stage and high-risk phases of our Development Research pathways, and the impact phases of the pathways.

The table below illustrates how the planned activity funded by QR-GCRF contributes to the wider University strategy for development research. The table shows an extended 5 year timeframe for the broader institutional strategy in order to demonstrate how activity funded via QR-GCRF continues to contribute to our vision beyond the 3 year planning period.

Development research pipeline modes	Institutional 5-year Development Research Strategy		
	QR GCRF 3-year strategy period		Year 4-5
	Year 1	Year 2-3	
Mode 1: existing development-focused strengths *Environment, livelihoods and resilience* *Soil erosion & quality* *Conflict & justice*	Impact: extending and deepening Capacity: in country at scale Relationships: extending breadth and geography	→	→
Mode 2: shifting focus of existing strengths to development challenges *Food systems & production* *Nutrition and health* *Heritage & conflict*	Relationships: making connections Capacity: understanding local challenges	Relationships: deepening Capacity: exploratory and proof of concept research	Relationships: deepening Capacity: exploratory and proof of concept research
Mode 3: upscaling and deepening areas of development research *Child experiences of migration*	Capacity: bringing researchers together	Relationships: making connections Capacity: understanding local challenges	Relationships: deepening Capacity: exploratory and proof of concept research

d. How the QR-GCRF funded activity relates to the UK Strategy for GCRF

The activities outlined in this strategy relate to wider objectives of the GCRF to support problem-focussed, cutting edge research with impact into challenges faced by developing countries. The QR funding will support activities that:

- Identify and contextualise relevant development challenges in partnership with practitioners, experts, and communities in developing countries, and jointly develop research strategies to address them (through Partnership Development Projects);
- Help to develop partnerships with researchers and end users in developing countries (through workshops, joint research projects; and Relationship Development Support);
- Conduct problem-focussed, cutting edge research (through research and impact projects);
- Support the translation of research evidence into policy and practice to the economic and social benefit of developing countries (through research projects, partnership projects, and Rapid Response Projects).

The thematic focus areas of our Strategy also relate to the thematic challenges identified in the UK Strategy for GCRF:

- Secure and resilient food systems;
- Resilience and action on short-term environmental shocks and long-term environmental change;
- Sustainable cities and communities;
- Reduce conflict and promote peace, justice, and humanitarian action;
- Responding to forced displacement and multiple refugee crises.

Importantly, though, this strategy reflects the broader principles that inform the GCRF. The activities proposed are rooted in two important premises:

1. Complexity of development challenges requires interdisciplinary approaches to fully understand their nature and to identify and develop effective responses to them. The promotion of interdisciplinary approaches is built into the processes of developing QR GRCF-funded projects, and is supported by the institutional posts.

2. Research and its outcomes needs to be locally owned, to strengthen the sustainability of any research impact. For that reason the strategy focusses on supporting partnerships and the joint design and implementation of research projects.

e. HOW THE QR-GCRF STRATEGY RELATES TO THE WIDER INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY FOR USING QR

The University's principles for use of QR include supporting the necessary infrastructure, staff, and environment to enable high quality impactful research, and to facilitate innovation with the flexibility to support new and emerging areas. We achieve this through distribution of QR income to our 15 academic Schools.

In the same vein, the GCRF QR allocation contributes to supporting infrastructure and research environment for excellent and impactful development research. Recognising the particular requirements of development research to engage with local stakeholders throughout all stages of the research process, and the ODA requirement to deliver economic and social benefits for developing countries, the strategy focusses its support on relationship building with DAC-list nation partners and supporting challenge-focussed research. To be able to account transparently for the QR funding and demonstrate ODA eligibility of its uses, the mechanism by which it is allocated is different to the regular QR allocation.

f. BARRIERS AND ENABLERS TO IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

Reading has a long track-record and critical mass in development research. We have a range of well-established vehicles that are enablers to our strategy, including the Walker Institute and the Global Development Research Division. Through both vehicles, we have well-established and partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders in broad spread of DAC-list nations (as listed in section 1h).

Similarly, we have already established mechanisms to facilitate the University's engagement with GCRF opportunities. Our plan for QR-GCRF builds on these mechanisms as part of facilitating our broader institutional Development Research Strategy. They include the already established GCRF Steering Group (described in section 3), the Research Development Manager who is already in post, and the GCRF Strategic Fund that we previously established in July 2017 using QR-GCRF.

With respect to potential barriers, we foresee the following issues and have put in place the following mitigations.

Potential Barrier: Fragmentation of QR-GCRF across the University, if allocated through our normal institutional mechanisms for QR distribution, undermining the impact of the GCRF component of QR, and limits the ability to demonstrate ODA-compliance.

Mitigation: ring-fence QR-GCRF for targeted support for ODA-compliant and GCRF-compatible research and impact. GCRF Steering Group and Strategic Fund enable effective mitigation.

Potential Barrier: Sustainability and the limited ability to plan long-term strategic use of QR-GCRF, resulting from the 3-year time duration of the funding. Realising the full impact of research relies upon sustained relationships with a diverse network of partners and stakeholders. Developing such relationships requires a long-term approach, giving stakeholders in developing countries confidence that UK partners will not retreat once funding sources are withdrawn.

Mitigation: Our strategic plan for QR-GCRF takes a targeted and challenge-led approach, with funding aligned with specific challenge areas in which we have significant capacity and capability. We will support research in these areas at multiple phases of maturation, allowing us to mitigate the risk of spreading funding too thinly and failing to realise impact within the short timeframe of GCRF. However, the limited GCRF-timeframe constrains our ability to strategically support these challenge areas beyond 3 years.

Potential Barrier: Awareness of, and engagement with, GCRF opportunities and the broader institutional strategy for Development Research.

Mitigation: We have an active and growing community of researchers engaging with the development agenda. Awareness of GCRF is already strong, aided by the Research Development Manager who is already in post. The existing vehicles of the Walker Institute and the Global Development Research Division further facilitate engagement of a broad range of researchers with development-related challenges.

g. KEY ACTIVITIES FOR REALISING THE OBJECTIVES

Section 1b outlines in detail the ways in which we will deploy our QR-GCRF to contribute to our priority objectives. Within the approaches we describe, we envisage the following types of activity being funded by the QR-GCRF.

Strategic Fund

This will support three types of activities:

(i) Facilitate **substantial research projects** that are too early stage or high risk for other funders within the GCRF. We will achieve this by funding 4-6 interdisciplinary projects with defined risk-mitigation plans, in two waves, circa 24 months duration and up to £200k per project.

Projects will build capacity in partner DAC-list countries and in the UK, and include activities such as secondments, exchanges, fellowships, and interdisciplinary and collaborative research.

Projects will be challenge-led, focused on problems faced by developing countries. Each wave will emphasize particular groups of challenges within which, and at the interfaces between, proposals will be particularly welcomed, selected by the GCRF Steering Group.

The emphasis of wave 1 projects will be the Mode 1 thematic priorities. Specific challenges that we intend to address, the DAC-list nations involved, and the benefits to DAC-list nations are specified in Annex A2. Wave 1 allocation is £436k i.e. £218k from 2018/19 and £218k from 2019/20. Wave 2 (from 2019/20) will have an increasing focus on Mode 2 and 3 thematic priorities, with an allocation of £400k i.e. £200k from 2019/20 and £200k from 2020/21.

(ii) **Development of equitable partnerships** with researchers in developing countries (see Annex A2 for focus countries) around specific development challenges, to jointly synthesise existing evidence, identify gaps and research needs, and co-design and pilot research programmes to address these challenges. This activity is primarily focussed on year 1, as preparation for wave 2 substantial research projects.

Indicative allocation of £200k in 2018/9 for 4-6 partnership development projects, through workshops in partner countries with a broad range of local researchers and stakeholders, and joint scoping and pilot research. Partnerships are expected to focus in particular on mode 2 and 3 thematic priorities. Research projects arising will be given priority for the second wave of funding (section (i) above), and will be proactively supported in applying to other GCRF opportunities.

(iii) **Extending the research and impact activities of existing ODA-compliant projects** that are within 12 months of their conclusion. We will use this mechanism to target existing projects that are GCRF-compatible, with established networks of partners, and already benefitting DAC-list nations but where there is potential to extend and deepen these benefits. Indicative allocation of £200k in 2020/21 for extension projects.

Rapid response

The rapid response fund will support research, impact, and knowledge exchange activities that respond directly to urgent development needs posed by emergencies (e.g. natural disasters) or by time-limited opportunities (e.g. sudden access to a country after conflict). We expect projects to derive predominantly from the mode 1 themes (environment, livelihoods, and resilience; soil erosion and quality; conflict and justice): areas in which we have sufficient existing capacity and capability to respond effectively with urgency. Projects will benefit developing countries through the generation of evidence, or through generating impact from research and evidence. We expect benefits to include increased food security; improved agricultural productivity; the recovery from environmental shocks; and reduced violence, especially sexual violence and abuse.

Professional institutional capacity to support Development Research

We will use QR-GCRF to enhance the professional institutional support we provide for the delivery of ODA eligible research and impact. QR-GCRF will support a UK-based Research Development Manager,

who will have a key role in the monitoring of projects to a) ensure ODA eligibility of activities, b) support the risk management of projects, and ensure value for money; and c) contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of development outcomes. It will also support a collaborative programme with other UK universities of in-region capacity development for research support at partner universities in Africa, as professional development for both African colleagues and Reading staff. This post will support in particular the substantive research projects of the Strategic Fund, and the Rapid Response projects. QR-GCRF will also fund professional support to build relationships with developing country partners and stakeholders, with the expectation that in excess of 50% of time is spent in DAC-listed countries; working in particular with the pilot and partnership building projects of the Strategic Fund. Finally, it will support an external review of our Development Research strategy (including the GCRF QR strategy) in year 3 to evaluate outcomes and to support learning for the remainder of our 5-year Development Research strategy.

The envisaged activities will strengthen the institutional capacity to support, and in consequence to conduct, Development Research. It will help to effectively manage risks inherent in Development Research, and to maximise the impact of our projects, and ensure value for money.

h. THE MAIN DAC-LIST DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WE INTEND TO COLLABORATE WITH

Our existing research collaborations in a large number of DAC List countries are the basis for growing our development research. We commit to fund research that addresses **compelling development challenges** with **research of excellent quality,** with a particular focus on the countries listed below, where on the basis of existing projects and partnerships we expect to be able maximise the development impact of our research.

- South America and the Caribbean: Colombia, Haiti, Dominica
- Asia: China, Malaysia
- East Africa: Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda
- West Africa: Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal
- Middle East: Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon

2.   Provide details of the main intended **outcomes and impacts** of your strategy.

Priority Objectives	Outcomes	Impact	Measures
Building Capacity	Increased capacity in focus countries for challenge-driven development research, and to effectively use research and evidence; increased capacity of UoR researchers to generate challenge-driven development research	Stronger evidence to address specific development challenges; more evidence-based policies, practices, and tools developed on the basis of our research	Number of collaborative research outputs, number of evidence and knowledge exchange products (e.g. evidence syntheses, policy paper etc.); training provided as part of GCRF QR projects, grant income from GCRF and related sources, evidence of engagement local research partners with policymakers and practitioners
Developing Equitable Relationships	Deeper and more diverse equitable relationships with in-country partners in DAC-list focus countries	Effective contextualisation of research and evidence; equitable collaborative engagement in research and impact activities; more effective engagement with policy and practice in country; strengthened capacity of in-country partners	Number of partnerships extending to multiple projects and grant applications; number of co-authored outputs; number of joint events; number of joint activities led by in-country partners
Generating Impact	Working with partners in country to change policies and practice	Policies and practices in DAC-list focus countries more effectively address identified development challenges, and improve situation with regard to specific SDGs	Evidenced at project level through case studies and evaluation data, with reference to relevant SDGs

The anticipated outcomes and impacts (as well as relevant DAC list countries countries) of specific activities in year 1 that we will fund within this strategy are listed in annex A2.

As part of setting meaningful targets for measuring progress towards our strategy, we are in the process of disaggregating data to establish a baseline against which we can measure progress. Setting quantitative targets is challenging ahead of completion of the baseline exercise. We will complete the process of establishing the baseline and setting appropriate three-year targets, proportionate to the high-risk nature of the QR-GCRF activity, by December 2018.

While we will be able to use some data that is already regularly collected by the university to measure progress against the objectives of the GCRF QR strategy (e.g. co-authored publications, co-applications for grants with regard to the objectives of *Building Capacity* and *Developing*

Relationships), the fact that outcomes and impact predominantly occur in relevant developing countries will require additional data collection against the measures identified in the table above. These will be collected regularly at project level, reviewed by the GCRF Steering Group, and aggregated annually to assess overall progress against the three objectives.

We also propose an external evaluation in the third quarter of year 3 to look holistically at the whole programme, measure success and inform planning for the subsequent 2 years of our institutional Development Research strategy. Prior to this, the GCRF Steering Group will undertake a mid-point review in year 2.

Management of GCRF

3.   How will your HEI **monitor** and **evaluate** its progress and compliance in ODA and GCRF activity, including assessing geographical distribution of activity, outputs, outcomes and economic and social impacts?

Please describe the policies, procedures and approach you have in place to measure progress, evaluate outcomes, identify lessons learned, and ensure ODA compliance.

a. MANAGEMENT

In July 2017, the University established a GCRF Steering Group, tasked "**To ensure that the university engages effectively and strategically with the Global Challenges Research Fund, and makes maximum opportunity of the funding calls arising.**"   The terms of reference include: Overseeing the implementation of the University's Development Research strategy, which includes detailed monitoring and oversight of QR-GCRF and leading strategic engagement with, awareness of and performance within the GCRF opportunities.

The GCRF Steering Group meets twice termly, and reports to both the University Research Committee (monthly) and the University Board for Research and Innovation (termly). Together, the Committee and Board have overall responsibility for implementation of the University's research strategy and report to the University Executive Committee.

The GCRF Steering Group membership includes: Professor Dominik Zaum [Chair], Research Dean and Pro-Vice Chancellor (elect) for Research & Innovation; Dr Phil Newton, Research DeanProfessor Richard Bennett, Research Dean; Professor Rosa Freedman, Research Division Lead, Global Development Research Division; Dr Anne-Marie van Dodeweerd, Head of Research Services; Dr Caroline Knowles, Head of Research Communications; and Dr Elisavet Kitou, GCRF Research Development Manager. The Board also includes an external member. Professor Alan Thorpe OBE, former Director General of the European Centre for Medium-range Weather Forecasting (2011-15) and Chief Executive Natural Environment Research Council (2005-11). Collectively, the group have extensive experience of assessing the quality and ODA-compliance of research proposals: encompassing a lead role in establishing the UK Collaborative on Development Sciences (Thorpe); executive positions at NERC

(Thorpe & Newton); senior secondment to DfID (Zaum); first-hand experience of development research on the ground (Bennett & Zaum), and senior research management professionals (van Dodeweerd & Knowles). All panel members have had appropriate training in equality and diversity issues.

The GCRF Research Development Manager is responsible for the operational management and monitoring of the QR-GCRF budget, reporting to the Steering Group.

b. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Steering Group is the structure through which we will monitor and evaluate progress of our Development Research strategy, as defined by the outcomes, impacts and measures outlined in section 2. The Group will draw upon relevant data already collected through existing research management processes at institutional level, on data collected at project level, and on data generated by external evaluation.

To support the M&E process, project-specific targets for development outcomes and impacts will be agreed at the outset of each project. Projects will regularly report activities, outcomes, and impacts against these. This will both ensure that projects meet ODA eligibility criteria, and supports monitoring and evaluation of individual projects, and of the strategy as a whole. Evaluation of progress against targets will be undertaken for quantitative data on the basis of actual vs projected performance towards target. A more detailed annual evaluation exercise will be performed by the Steering Group across all three priority objectives and all information sources at the close of each academic cycle, and formally reported to the University Executive Board via the University Board for Research and Innovation. This will include assurance that the activity funded by the GCRF Strategic Fund, the Rapid Response Fund, and the activities of the Facilitation Posts are compliant with ODA and GCRF criteria.

Relevant data that can be collected through existing research management processes includes:

- research income and academic FTE relating to GCRF projects (quarterly snapshot)

- collaborative research outputs with developing country partners (twice-yearly snapshot)

- PGR students trained as part of GCRF projects (annual PGR dashboard)

- Impact from GCRF-compatible projects (project-level data collected through the *Building Outstanding Impact Support Programme*)

Data to be collected at the project level includes:

- Altmetrics data to evidence research uptake

- development and uptake of evidence products, policy papers, and toolkits in country

- joint events with partners, and led by partners; including attendance

- other in-country activities supporting impact, in particular joint activities (e.g. policy briefings, 1-1 meetings)

- training events and participation

- quantitative data evidencing reach and nature of impact (e.g. number of users of particular tool; changes and benefits attributable to the research and KE activities)

Data collected through external evaluation:

- qualitative data from partners and stakeholders to assess impact and outcomes

In addition to this, the external evaluation will draw on all other data collected at project and institutional level, to form a comprehensive and holistic assessment of progress of the strategy.

c. PROCEDURES FOR ALLOCATION OF FUNDING

GCRF QR funding will be allocated in a transparent and open manner, and in compliance with ODA requirements, against the following criteria:

- substantial development benefit in DAC-list country

- research excellence, assessed in terms of development relevance of the research, originality, rigour of proposed methods

- equitable involvement of developing country partners in project design and implementation

- focussed on priority DAC-list countries identified in this strategy

- existence of a robust risk-management process

Project funding under the Strategic Fund will be allocated through an open and competitive process by the GCRF Steering Group, which will review applications against the above criteria. Calls for projects will be issued annually: upon acceptance of the Institutional Strategy for wave 1; and April/May 2019 for wave 2. Projects for wave 1 substantive research projects will be limited to mode 1; while pilot- and partnership development projects will come from thematic modes 2 and 3 (see Annex A2 for details). Wave 2 projects will draw from the pilot- and partnership building projects.

Rapid response projects, by their nature, need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis. In addition to the above criteria, they need to explain the urgency of the project in terms of development need or time-limited opportunity. The fund will be open for applications at any time, with the option of issuing particular calls for proposals in response to trigger events as they arise.

Criteria, deadlines and application proforma for both funds will be made available on the University's internal GCRF webpages, and will be actively promoted by the Walker Institute, the Global Development Research Division, and by the Research Deans.

The University is committed to increasing participation and career progression for under-represented groups (we have established diversity objectives and targets, and have action plans to achieve these

targets (for example, the University of Reading Athena SWAN Action Plan)). Calls for funding will be formulated to ensure maximum participation from all groups.

d. ODA-COMPLIANCE AND GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF ACTIVITY

Compliance with ODA requirements will be ensured through the allocation process of funding from the Strategic and Rapid Response Funds, where it is one of the criteria against which the Steering Group assesses proposals. Ongoing compliance is assured through regular monitoring by the Steering Group. Through her ongoing engagement with GCRF-QR funded projects, the GCRF Research Development Manager will be able to proactively highlight projects at risk of not meeting ODA eligibility.

Activity will be focussed on the priority countries identified in this strategy, in particular on the sub-set of countries identified for wave 1 projects in Annex A2 (in particular Ethiopia, Ghana, Haiti, India, Iraq, Jordan, Tanzania, and Uganda). However, as the pool of researchers engaging with GCRF widens, we expect the geographic distribution of projects will also extend. The Steering Board will monitor and report on geographical distribution of activity, and work to identify both opportunities for synergies or extension of activities that could arise from this.

The GCRF Research Development Manager and the Steering Board will collate data and report on the geographical distribution of activity from the awards and progress reports.

e. IDENTIFYING AND SHARING LESSONS LEARNED

We will identify lessons at both the project and programme level. These will be identified at the project level through the annual project reports, where PIs will be asked to reflect on barriers and enablers for their project; and at the programme level through a mid-term review in 2019/20 led by the Steering Group; and a final external review towards the end of the three-year strategy in 2021. The Steering Group will dedicate a meeting at the end of each year to reflect on the lessons identified at project and programme level. Lessons will be shared with PIs and other interested staff at an annual workshop. They will be shared with the wider research governance structure of the university through the Steering Group's reporting.

f. POLICIES FOR DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH

The university has robust processes for ethical approval, for managing the risks associated with research, and for due diligence. Our development research, including research supported through GCRF QR funding, will be supported by these processes. We have identified specific ethical and security challenges that research in developing countries can pose, and already provide dedicated guidance on both that is available to all researchers through the university website. Where necessary, university staff can access dedicated training for undertaking work in high risk and conflict affected countries. We have introduced a due diligence process for international collaborators, based on RCUK guidance, which ascertains their capacity and capability to undertake research to the necessary standard, and their ability to manage research funds.

Section B: Use of QR-GCRF 2018-19 allocation and future QR-GCRF priorities

4.   Please complete the table in Annex A2 detailing the expected spending and activities for QR-GCRF in the academic year 2018-19. Note that the total QR-GCRF spending must equal the indicative allocation (available in Annex C), and all activities must be ODA-compliant for strategies to be assessed as ODA-compliant overall.

5.   Please add here any explanatory notes on how you have completed the table in Annex A2 that will help inform assessment of ODA compliance.

Annex A2 organises spending and activities under the three ways in which we seek to use the QR-GCRF allocation. For each activity, it outlines the development challenge(s) the proposed activity will address, the priority countries, and the outputs and development impacts; or in case of the institutional professional capacity how this support relates to specific activities and their impacts.

For the GCRF Strategic Fund, a competitive process according to the criteria outlined in Section 3c of Annex A1 will select the strongest projects within the outlined thematic areas and development challenges. Calls for the GCRF Strategic Fund will be issued within 4 weeks of the acceptance of our Institutional Strategy for GCRF-QR, with successful University of Reading GCRF Strategic Fund awards confirmed 2 months after the call. A call for the Rapid Response Fund will be continually open. ODA compliance will be a gateway criterion for all projects.

6.   How would your **priorities and activities** for 2018-19 QR-GCRF change if the funding level differs from that outlined in indicative allocations? Please include detail of how priorities will change with increases and decreases to QR-GCRF funding, and details of how each priority meets ODA criteria.

In the event of an increase in funding, we would preferentially increase investment in the GCRF Strategic Fund, where we would expect additional funding to have most impact. Strategic Fund projects will be a core component of our distinctive, sustained, equitable and long-term approach to working with partners in developing countries, and we are confident that there would be sufficient high-quality demand for such projects to respond to increased funding.

A small increase (up to £50,000) would allow us to increase the number of partnership development projects, strengthening the pipeline of co-designed projects that could be developed into substantive research projects. The partnership development projects help to build capacity and capability to address country-specific development challenges by building equitable partnerships, and by pump-priming pilot and scoping research. These activities help to maximise the developmental impact of research project building on them. Thematically, we would expect additional projects to focus on mode 2 themes (food systems and food production, nutrition and health, heritage and conflict). The DAC-list countries benefitting from this additional activity, and the expected impacts and benefits, are explicitly identified under these themes in Annex A2.

A larger increase would be used to either increase the number of substantive research projects supported by the fund, focussing on additional projects from the three thematic challenges already identified for year 1 for these projects (improving food security and reducing hunger; restoring degraded land and soil; and addressing sexual exploitation and abuse, especially by peacekeepers and NGOs); and/or scale up the 3-4 projects originally envisaged. The DAC-list countries benefitting from this additional activity, and the expected impacts and benefits, are explicitly identified under these themes in Annex A2. A scaling-up of the envisaged projects could either broaden the geographic scope to additional DAC list priority countries (e.g. SEA work from Haiti to Tanzania, working with the Kofi Annan Peacekeeping Training Centre; or extending participatory climate services work from Malawi and Uganda to Nigeria).

By contrast, we feel that our allocation of £200k/y to the Rapid Response Fund will be sufficient to meet the high-quality demand, and that the Institutional Professional Capacity posts are a fixed core requirement into which increased investment would not necessarily scale effectively with outputs.

In the event of a decrease in funding, we would seek to maintain the level of funding in the GCRF Strategic Fund (for the reasons outlined in the 'increased funding' scenario above). We would accordingly modestly decrease the size of the Rapid Response Fund (noting that we have set its size to be on the generous side, in the knowledge that events that would draw on this fund are unpredictable). If a further decrease were required we would reduce the FTE in the Relationship Development post, and up to a 40% reduction in the number of partnership development projects; this would decelerate capacity building and relationship development.

7. Based on indicative funding allocations, what are your **priorities** for QR-GCRF activity in 2019-20? Please include detail of how priorities will change with increases and decreases to QR-GCRF funding, and details of how each priority meets ODA criteria.

In 2019/20, our priorities will build on the activities in 2018/9.

Through the Strategic Fund, we expect to continue to support the wave 1 research projects identified the previous year for another year; and to select a further 2-3 projects from the cohort of partnership development and pilot projects we initiated in 2018/9. Building on the partnerships developed by these projects, we will fund research and impact activities that aim to address a sub-set of the following development challenges (with target countries):
 - improve efficiency, sustainability and resilience of agricultural production and food systems to enhance food security (Ghana, Dominica, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia)
 - improve diets and nutrition in DAC nations to reduce hunger and improve health and wellbeing (Ghana, China, Nepal)
 - identify and protect cultural heritage at risk from conflict, and developing educational and economic impact from archaeological research to develop relevant skills and reduce income inequality (Jordan, Iraq)

8.   Based on indicative funding allocations, what are your **priorities** for QR-GCRF activity in 2020-21? Please include detail of how priorities will change with increases and decreases to QR-GCRF funding, and details of how each priority meets ODA criteria.

Priorities for 2020-21 outlined here assume that GCRF-QR funding will end after that year.

Through the Strategic Fund, we expect to continue to fund the Wave 2 projects started in 2019-20 for another year (c. £200k). Depending on the specific projects chosen, they will address research questions relating to some of the following development challenges:

- improve efficiency, sustainability and resilience of agricultural production and food systems to enhance food security (Ghana, Dominica, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia)
- improve diets and nutrition in DAC nations to reduce hunger and improve health and wellbeing (Ghana, China, Nepal)
- identify and protect cultural heritage at risk from conflict, and developing educational and economic impact from archaeological research to develop relevant skills and reduce income inequality (Jordan, Iraq)
- improve language policies, especially in refugee camps, which constrict equitable and inclusive access to services and protection, with disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable (Lebanon, Jordan)
- improving learning outcomes, especially for girls (Nepal, Ghana, India)

In addition to the substantial research projects of Wave 2, the Strategic Fund will fund the extension of 2-3 existing GCRF projects (c. £218k) that have come to a conclusion within the last 12 months, to extend and consolidate their development impact. Given our current portfolio of projects, and the likely wave 1 projects (some of which might qualify for extension support), the likely development impacts are

- improvements in food security (Ghana, Ethiopia, Uganda, Malawi)
- restoration of degraded soils (China, Kenya, India, Tanzania, Ethiopia)

We intend to continue the funding for institutional professional support posts at the same level as in the previous years, though expect the type of support offered by the posts to shift, with support from the Research Development Manager focussing on the Extension projects, and the relationship development support splitting time between the projects in their second year, and the extension projects to maximise the impact of both.

We intend to keep stable the allocation to the Rapid Response Fund.

ODA compliance of all Extension Projects under the Strategic Fund and Rapid Response Projects will be ensured through the competitive process outlined in Section 3c of this strategy.

In the case of an increased QR allocation, we would use additional funds in two ways. First, if the additional funding is recurrent, we would use some of it to fund any additional projects identified in the previous year. In this way, we will ensure that the development impact of these projects is maximised. Second, additional funding will be used to increase the number of extension projects we fund from the Strategic Fund. Additional and scaled up projects will meet the ODA requirements by addressing the development challenges identified above, through the generation of relevant evidence to improve policy and practice, knowledge exchange and research uptake activities, and the development of specific tools enabling developing countries to address these specific development challenges.

In the event of a decrease in funding, we would seek to maintain the level of funding in the GCRF Strategic Fund. We would accordingly modestly decrease the size of the Rapid Response Fund, and , if

a further decrease were required, we would reduce the FTE in the Research Development Management post to 0.5FTE. We would prioritise continuing to support the projects started in the previous year (subject to their performance), to ensure that they deliver the envisaged development benefits.