

The **Northumbria University's Centre for Global Development (CGD)** brings together academics, practitioners and students to promote research, consultancy, teaching, training and public engagement on issues of global poverty and inequality, the communities and individuals who experience this, and the policies, practices and approaches that seek to address it. **Check out our LinkedIn page: @NUGlobalDev**

Welcome to the CGD newsletter! We hope to give a flavour of some of the activities we've been involved in over the past few months. If you would like any more information about any of our activities or programmes, please do get in touch.



RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

State of the World Volunteerism Report 2026 (SWVR)

As part of the work of [Northumbria's Peak of Research Excellence on volunteering, humanitarian crises and development](#), CGD researchers have been selected as the lead partners to work with United Nations Volunteers (UNV) to produce the next State of the World's Volunteerism Report (SWVR), a flagship publication designed to strengthen the understanding of volunteerism and demonstrate its universality, scope, and reach in the twenty-first century. The forthcoming edition, the SWVR 2026, will focus on volunteer measurement, and will showcase the latest thinking and evidence from across the world on the contributions of volunteers and volunteerism to peace and development. Measuring volunteering means different things to different people and organisations around the world, depending on their specific contexts, interests and approaches to promoting peace and development. The focus of the next SWVR report responds to the call for improved data and frameworks for measuring volunteering work, ensuring that volunteers' roles are recognised and better integrated into policy and practice. The report will explore differences in definitions, in what is measured, and in the approaches and methodologies used, including through practical case studies from diverse contexts. More details [here](#).

We also recently welcomed Dr Andrew Fleming, British Deputy High Commissioner for East and North East India. The sun shone as CGD's Prof Matt Baillie Smith introduced Dr Fleming to CGD researchers to hear about their work with United Nations Volunteers on volunteer measurement and the latest evidence from across the world on the contributions of volunteers to peace, development and climate action. Read more about Dr Fleming's visit [here](#).



THANK YOU!

A big thank you to visiting researcher Ali Heuser, who joined CGD in March & April for a short fellowship experience as part of their PhD research, in liaison with Prof Katy Jenkins. Ali is from the University of Vienna, and their PhD explores mining extractivism and gender relations in Latin America. It was a great opportunity to share experiences and learn from each other, and Ali also presented their research during one of our CGD research group meetings.



Many thanks also to Zouhal Younis who supported the CGD research activities in the area of volunteering, humanitarian crises and development,

in liaison with Maxine Mpofu. Zouhal is a Northumbria University student pursuing a degree in Politics and International Relations and it was a fantastic experience for the CGD team to collaborate with her as part of her undergraduate student placement.



RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

RECLAMA Project Podcasts

The [RECLAMA Project](#) is really pleased to have released a podcast series focusing on Afro-Ecuadorian women's heritage (Spanish only). Research team members Juana, Lorena and Sophia guide the listeners through themes including traditional medicine, cuisine, aesthetics, and songs. The podcasts feature excerpts from interviews with women from across Esmeraldas province (Ecuador) commenting on this wide range of cultural practice and collective knowledge.

Find all episodes on the project's [website](#) or on [Spotify](#).



Podcast

Prácticas de cuidado Afroecuatorianas y el compromiso de RECLAMA en la transmisión de estos saberes

Juanita Francis Bone, Lorena Valdez, y Sophia Valle-Cornibert

Working towards Adaptive & Versatile Environmental Sustainability project (WAVES)

Oliver Hensengerth is a Co-investigator on a new ISPF/BBSRC-funded project on [Working towards Adaptive and Versatile Environmental Sustainability in mollusc aquaculture \(WAVES\)](#). The project sites are in Vietnam, Malaysia and Indonesia. WAVES will run for three years and is led by Prof Chris Hauton at Southampton University.

Sustainable Wildlife Management Programme in Zambia

Francis Massé is part of a project on sustainable wildlife management in Zambia. This has resulted in a number of recent publications, including a UNFAO brochure: [The Legal game meat sector in Zambia: Status, challenges and opportunities](#). He has also been involved in a participatory study of animal and zoonotic diseases around Mize Community Conservancy (MiCC) in Nyawa Chiefdom, which has resulted in an internal technical report for the Sustainable Wildlife Management Programme. For more details about this work check out this [blog](#).



GOOD LUCK!

We are really sorry to say farewell to two very valued members of the CGD community, **Melisa Maida** and **Katherine Arrell**.

Melisa has been a Research Fellow working on volunteering as adaptation to climate change in South Asia's delta regions in the [VOCAD project](#) (Voluntary Labour, Climate Adaptation and Disasters), which is part of the Living Deltas Hub. The project explores everyday ways delta dwellers undertake voluntary or unpaid work to respond to disasters and or the changing environment and how this work is organised.

Katherine has been a Research Fellow on the Global Challenges Research Fund [Sajag-Nepal project](#). In this project she has been examining shifting patterns of hazard and risk and approaches to mapping exposure to these cascading hazard systems.

We wish them all the best for the future and very much hope to keep in touch!



STUDENT VOICES

Blogging for attention: sharing my PhD experiences through a blog series

By Janet Clark

My PhD is exploring whether the changes made by volunteering organisations working in the global South to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, such as an increased focus on working with local volunteers and remote volunteering, have transformed approaches to, and understandings of volunteering and development. It is a collaborative study in partnership with the [International Forum for Volunteering in Development](#) which is a network of volunteer-involving organisations. The research is using an organisational focus and so the engagement and involvement of network organisations is important. In order to support this, I am writing blog posts to try and shed light on academic research processes as well as findings further down the line. The network itself, and many of its member organisations, undertake or commission research and so have insights into applied research. In my first post I introduce the study and also highlight how a PhD differs from some of the research that is more familiar to them. The next blog will tackle research ethics. Registering my blog posts on FigShare helps me to track how the posts are being used and will also enable me to link them together as one project.

Janet's first blog can be found here: [Transforming volunteering in development: Project introduction](#)

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Here are some of the things CGD members and colleagues have been talking and writing about over the last few months:

- By **Ana Laura Zavala Guillen** and Nadia Mosquera Muriel. (2025). [Afro-descendant geographies \(Book chapter in Latin American Geographies\)](#).
- By Brock Bersaglio, Charis Enns, Edgar Hichoonga, **Francis Massé**, Matt Sommerville, Nathalie van Vliet. (2025). [How socio-economic and environmental potential of game meat value chains: The case of legal game meat in Zambia](#).
- By **Francis Massé** & Ekaterina Gladkova. (2025). [Spatialising zoonotic disease dynamics from a political ecology perspective: Reconceptualising spillover as structure](#).
- By **Matt Baillie Smith**, **Bianca Fadel**, Frank Ahimbisibwe & Robert Turyamureeba. (2025). [Refugee volunteering and responses to displacement in Uganda: Navigating service-delivery, work and precarity](#).
- By Sarah Mills, **Matt Baillie Smith**, **Bianca Fadel** & Moses Okech. (2025). [Reconceptualising volunteering, crisis and precarity: the experiences of refugee youth in Uganda during COVID-19](#).
- By **Sarah Peck**. (2025). ['Doubly exploited': Migration, activism and the generative geographies of labour agency](#).



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Public lecture:

The Spirit of the Rainforest: Dr Rosa Vásquez Espinoza, Founder of Amazon Research Internacional

Tuesday, 13th May, 5.30pm – 6.30pm

Lecture Theatre 002, Business & Law Building, City Campus East

The Amazon Rainforest – vast, mysterious, and teeming with life – has long captured the imagination of explorers, scientists, and storytellers alike. Yet today, it stands at a crossroads, facing mounting threats from deforestation, climate change, and cultural erosion.

In this fascinating talk, scientist and author Rosa Vásquez Espinoza takes us on a deeply personal journey into the heart of the Amazon. Blending indigenous wisdom with cutting-edge science, she explores the rainforest not just as an ecosystem, but as a living, breathing entity – one that holds profound lessons for resilience, healing, and our connection to the natural world.

Drawing from her book *The Spirit of the Rainforest*, Rosa shares intimate encounters with Amazonian communities, revealing how their ancestral knowledge offers a vital perspective in the face of environmental crises. She explores her own experiences navigating remote ecosystems, discovering biodiversity known to very few, and rekindling our innate sense of wonder and the spirit of exploration.

Rosa is being hosted by the Ecology, Conservation and Society and Centre for Global Development research groups within the Dept of Geography and Environmental Sciences, as part of research funded by NERC (Natural Environment Research Council). [You can register for her lecture here.](#)

CONGRATULATIONS



PhD successes!

Benita Siloko successfully defended her PhD in March, huge congratulations to Benita whose thesis is entitled: *'Human Security, Livelihoods, and Environmental Degradation in the Niger Delta Region, Nigeria'*.

Robert Bowden successfully defended his PhD thesis in February. Massive congratulations to Rob, whose thesis is entitled: *'Localisation and global social change: agency, intent and learning in INGO/supporter relations'*.

WELL DONE DR SILOKO AND DR BOWDEN!