



Perivoli Africa Research Centre

Year One

October 2020

Thank you to the Perivoli Foundation for your commitment to establishing the University of Bristol's Perivoli Africa Research Centre (PARC). This report outlines PARC's key achievements between its establishment in January 2020 and October 2020.



PARC Vision

The Perivoli Africa Research Centre (PARC) was established as the University of Bristol's cross-disciplinary commitment to advancing Africa's development objectives, through transformation in research and partnerships

Who we are

Within academia and beyond there is a growing recognition of the historically rooted power imbalances and inequities in research collaboration with Africa. These have imposed limitations not only on African institutions and individuals, but also on the relevance and use of evidence in Africa's pursuit of its own development objectives.

PARC's core ambition is to overcome these inequities while challenging the assumed authority of Western knowledge systems to drive positive social and economic change. The success of our work will be based on our ability to apply new approaches in practice and to foster their wider embrace within and beyond the University of Bristol.

The PARC team includes:

Professor Isabella Aboderin
Perivoli Chair in Africa Research and Partnerships and Director of PARC

Dr Susan Jim
Manager of PARC and the Worldwide Universities Network (WUN) Development Manager and Chair of WUN Coordinators Group

Dr Robert Crowe
International Research Partnerships Officer for PARC and WUN

Mr Elliot James
Communication and Administration Intern for PARC

What we do

PARC will bring together relevant expertise and scholarship housed within the University of Bristol, and pursue meaningful and Africa-led collaboration with academic, policy, advocacy and technical actors in countries and at regional levels across the continent.

Such collaboration will always ensure that there is room for those outside existing hierarchies to contribute vision, ideas and thinking.



L-R: Susan Jim (SJ), Isabella Aboderin (IA), Dr Divine Fuh [Co-Chair of GAG/Director, Institute for Humanities Africa (HUMA), UCT] and Ms Wilna Venter (Research Collaboration Specialist, UCT).

Worldwide Universities Network Global Africa Group Co-Chairs' Meeting, University of Cape Town, South Africa, February 2020.

Image L-R: SJ, Baroness Liz Sugg CBE (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development), Dr Tigist Grieve (Vice Chancellor's Fellow, School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol).

On the Road to Nairobi UNFPA ICPD25 Parliamentary Reception co-hosted by Baroness Sugg CBE, the APPG for Population, Development and Reproductive Health and The UK SRHR Network, House of Lords, November 2019.

Our journey so far



Points of departure

PARC's starting points arise from: the exigency of post-pandemic burdens; the present decolonial movement; the University's existing engagement with Africa, and from our personal experiences of navigating relationships between African and international institutions.

Our points of departure are five-fold:

1. A recognition of the historically rooted and enduring power and epistemic imbalances and inequities in research collaboration with Africa
2. A recognition that these asymmetries have limited African institutions and actors and, crucially, the relevance and use of evidence in Africa's pursuit of its own development objectives and in advancing the global scientific endeavour as a whole
3. A recognition of a necessary shift in the research ecosystem through which African institutions, interests and terms take their rightful place in knowledge production globally in and for the continent
4. A strong sense that the University of Bristol is particularly positioned to play a part in informing and advancing such a transformation
5. A recognition that PARC's core role must be to enable and support the University to play its part: our strategy and plans are oriented to this end

Images: UNFPA Nairobi Summit on International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD25), Kenya, November 2019.

Top: Isabella Aboderin. Panel discussions: Preparing for an Older World - How can governments equitably address the needs, rights and choices of older persons, especially older women?

Bottom: Dr Tigist Grieve (Vice Chancellor's Fellow, School for Policy Studies), SJ, Mr Julio Mkok (Student Union Affairs Officer/International Law Student), Ms Jassi Sandhar (PhD candidate in International Law) and colleagues.

PARC's journey over the last nine months has comprised three broad phases

Scoping period: January to March 2020

In a first scoping period, we sought to understand the spectrum of relevant debates and initiatives and the associated expectations, opportunities and needs (in the UK and Africa) to which PARC may need to be responsive. We gathered data on existing UoB Africa-facing research, considered potential partners in the continent, and read relevant literature. From this we distilled an initial sense of where PARC ought to and could seek to add value, and how.

Positioning period: April to July 2020

In a subsequent 'positioning' period, informed by consultations with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost, colleagues and key individuals in Africa, we developed an initial PARC strategy and made plans for its governance structure, initial projects and partnerships, and the recruitment of two Research Associates and a PhD Student.

Launch: July 2020

We created a new PARC website and launched internally to the University of Bristol on 15 July 2020. We then embarked on a period of more concrete planning. Building on feedback received in the wake of our launch, we further elaborated the Centre's strategy, developed concepts and proposals for a number of initiatives and projects and established the Internal Management Board (IMB) and External Advisory Boards (EAB).

We are ready to embark on the next phase in PARC's journey, where we begin to programme activities while enabling partnerships and resources, and developing a longer-term vision and sustainable funding model for the Centre's role post-2023.

PARC and COVID-19

We are pleased to have been able to come together as a team and to make the above progress in spite of the limitations and difficulties imposed by the COVID-19 crisis. Nonetheless, we have certainly not been able to engage as widely or meaningfully as we would have wanted to, both within the University of Bristol research community and externally. We hope that opportunities for face-to-face connections and exchange will become increasingly available as we move forward.

2019

22 March 2019
£1m gift from The Perivoli Foundation made public

August 2019
First installment of £250,000 gift

2020

13 January 2020
Professor Isabella Aboderin starts as PARC Director

February-March 2020
Isabella Aboderin and Susan Jim visit partners in Namibia, Kenya and South Africa. Travel to Ethiopia was also planned but curbed due to the pandemic

15 July 2020
PARC launches internally

- Blogs
- Presentations
- Q&A

Summer-Autumn 2020
Scoping, strategy development, partner engagement

August 2020
Second installment of £250,000 gift

September 2020
Hewlett Foundation (£1.35m) and DANIDA (£1.25m) bids confirmed

19 October 2020
Inaugural meeting of the Internal Management Board (IMB) including ratification of core strategy and goals

28 October 2020
Inaugural meeting of the External Advisory Board (EAB)

December 2020
First report to The Perivoli Foundation Trustees

2021

March 2021
Research Associates and PhD Student in post

Strategy: themes and ambitions



PARC's work spans three strategic themes:

1 Promote transformation in research collaboration with Africa

PARC will develop inquiry, debate and thought-leadership on partnership models that overcome inequities and yield action and change, by articulating and promoting the adoption of principles, standards and 'how to' guidance for practice. PARC will apply such practice to building programmes of transformative research and policy engagement in three substantive areas:

- Care systems and economies to harness Africa's demographic transition
- Realizing Africa's ICPD25 commitments to advance the sexual and reproductive health and the rights of the continent's young people and women
- Innovations in the future management of water, sanitation and hygiene

2 Facilitate mutual skills and knowledge sharing

PARC will connect African scholars and students to relevant University disciplines through visiting fellowships and exchange schemes, and will broker links between the University and African technology innovation and enterprise, and wildlife conservation.

PARC will involve the University in existing and emergent Africa-led initiatives to expand research and nurture the next generation of research leaders in the continent.

3 Enable wider engagement with Bristol's Africa-focused expertise

PARC will stimulate critical debate with scholars, students and others within the University and in Bristol's black communities who are working on, or interested in African issues.

PARC will curate and showcase existing Africa-facing scholarship at Bristol through its web platform.

Enablers for the PARC strategy

Our strategy for the next three years and beyond is ambitious. We have devised a series of 'enablers' to support our capacity to deliver this ambitious strategy:

Anchoring partnerships

We are working to establish a set of key partnerships with Africa regional-level policy and research bodies to ensure the fidelity of our work to our stated Africa-focused goals and values, and to heighten its credibility and legitimacy. Target partners are the African Union Commission/Development Agency, the UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) East and Southern, and West and Central Africa Regional Offices; the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, and the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC).

Building on these regional links we will foster collaboration with relevant sub-regional and national-level research, policy and civil society bodies to underpin the execution of our key activities. In doing so, we will, wherever appropriate, leverage the University's Worldwide Universities Network and TransformU (UNFPA's university network) partnerships with the Universities of Cape Town, Ghana and Nairobi, and Makerere University.

External advisory board (EAB)

We have established a strong External Advisory Board (EAB), comprising a spectrum of UK, diaspora and Africa-based members with expertise in the African research and higher education ecosystem, development, organisation building, and decolonization debates and movements. The EAB will help us to refine PARC's strategy, and identify and realise opportunities for positioning, funding and partnerships to enhance its implementation.

Recruitment of Research Associates

To support PARC's work, we are advertising two new Research Associate positions based at the School for Policy Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences and Law:

Research Associate in Care Systems and Economies in Africa

Research Associate in Regional and National Policy Processes in Africa

The recruitment of two Research Associates will contribute to the execution of core functions of PARC: supporting learning on, and the application of new standards and practice approaches for Africa research partnerships; catalysing and nurturing the capstone programmes; and engaging the PARC community of interest. The Research Associates may further strengthen PARC's work in the longer term, possibly by being recruited as core personnel.

Envisioning a longer-term role and sustainable funding model for PARC

It is important we develop a longer-term vision, beyond our current three-year strategy, in collaboration with our Boards, donors and partners in the continent. This will align with the University's overall internationalisation plans and will see PARC enabling the University to play a leading role in shifting the global research ecosystem toward truly supporting the interests of the continent. We aim to have articulated both the future vision and an accompanying funding model for PARC by the end of summer 2021.

Systematic engagement with the University's research community

We seek to engage systematically across University faculties and institutes to enable us to connect with the spectrum of relevant researchers and departments who might be keen to contribute to key areas of our planned work: the articulation and application of new standards and practice approaches for Africa research partnerships; the building of capstone programmes and the involvement in Africa-led research capacity strengthening programmes such as the Consortium for Advanced Research Training in Africa (CARTA) and the Partnership for skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology - Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund (PASET RSIF).

A key step to this end will be PARC's presentation to, and participation in a forthcoming University Research Committee (URC) meeting. We look forward to identifying other possible steps with support of the the Internal Management Board (IMB).

Developing indicators

We have developed a set of output indicators to help us track what we have undertaken in order to reach our objectives. To complement our longer-term vision we are working to identify a set of outcome indicators that will help us measure PARC's impact.

We aim to have developed such indicators by the end of Q1 2021.



Finances 2019-2020



The slight delay in recruiting the PARC Director led to an underspend in the last financial year. However, we expect to be back on track in the coming months.

Salary Costs 2019-20		Non-salary Costs 2019-20	
Director (7 mos)	£70,631	Travel/accommodation/subsistence	£10,919
Manager (11 mos)	£32,263	Meetings	£188
IRPO (9 mos)	£19,286	IT and training	£90
Intern (4 mos)	£7,316	Other	£384
Total Salary costs	£129,496	Total Non-salary costs	£11,581

Total expenditure 2019-20		£141,077
First tranche of gift June 2019		£250,000
Balance of gift at 1 August 2020		£108,923
Second tranche of gift Sep 2020		£250,000
Balance of gift at 17 Sep 2020		£358,923

Image (above) L-R: Dr Tigist Grieve (Vice Chancellor's Fellow, School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol), Dr Yehualashet Mekonen (Programme Manager, ACPF), Dr Shimelis Tsegaye (Director of Programmes, ACPF), SJ and Dr Assefa Bequele (Founder and Executive Director, ACPF).

Image (opposite page, left) L-R: Isabella Aboderin and Susan Jim with Ministers of Gender and Health, and Education, Ministry of Health and Social Sciences, Windhoek, Namibia, March 2020.

Image (opposite page, right) L-R: Mr Julio Mkok (Student Union Affairs Officer/International Law Student, University of Bristol), SJ, Mr Matt Jackson (Director, UNFPA UK) and Ms Jassi Sandhar (PhD candidate in International Law, University of Bristol).

UNFPA Nairobi Summit on International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD25), Kenya, November 2019

African Child Policy Forum, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, December 2019.

Next steps

PARC is recruiting three candidates to work within the School for Policy Studies and PARC to advance research in care systems and economies in Africa, and regional and national policy processes in Africa



Research Associate in Care Systems and Economies in Africa

A fully funded two-year Research Associate based at the School for Policy Studies, starting in March 2021.

The candidate will spend substantial periods at the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) in Nairobi, Kenya. The candidate will be line managed by Professor Isabella Aboderin and will work within a multidisciplinary team on a research and engagement programme, 'Care Work and Economy Africa: toward transformative care systems and economies to harness Africa's demographic transition', funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

The candidate will have key research and administration responsibilities, including collecting desk-based and primary data, working as part of the project steering group, developing a publication record, research ideas and grant applications in the area of care systems and economies and actively contributing to PARC and the University of Bristol's School for Policy Studies.



PhD studentship in Long-term Care Systems and Economies in Africa

A fully funded three-year PhD Student based at the School for Policy Studies, starting in March 2021.

The candidate will spend substantial periods at the APHRC in Nairobi, Kenya. The candidate will be supervised by Professor Isabella Aboderin and will work within a multidisciplinary team on the same William and Flora Hewlett Foundation funded project as the Research Associate in Care Systems and Economies in Africa. The studentship funds will be open to applicants based in Africa to extend opportunities for advanced research training on the continent.

Research Associate in Regional and National Policy Processes in Africa

A fully funded two-year Research Associate based at the School for Policy Studies, starting in March 2021.

The candidate will spend substantial periods at the APHRC in Nairobi, Kenya, working on a collaborative, co-funded project on 'Regional development commitments and national policy change in Africa'.

The programme aims to generate a coherent body of empirical evidence and theoretical perspectives to advance the effectiveness of research and civil society partnerships and engagement with continental, regional and national level policy mechanisms to yield positive action and change at local levels.

Successes so far

PARC has been awarded two major grants for new projects in Africa

Project 1

Care Work and Economy Africa: toward transformative care systems and economies to harness Africa's demographic transition

Awarded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

Partners:

- African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC), Nairobi, Kenya,
- University of Toronto, Canada
- Regional Consortium for Research on the Generational Economy (CREG) (Senegal)
- UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)
- Institute for Economic Justice (IEJ), South Africa
- Nawi: Afrifem Macroeconomics Collective

3 years

Length of award

£1.35m

Total value

Project 2

Developing Ghana's care economy: case and potential

Funded by DANIDA (Danish International Development Agency)

Partners:

- University of Ghana, Ghana
- APHRC, Nairobi, Kenya
- Aarhus University, Denmark

5 years

Length of award

£1.25m

Total value

Outlining PARC's future aspirations

PARC and the Perivoli Foundation have begun to explore and outline expectations and aspirations for the future. Central to these discussions have been questions on the value of expanding our core staff, and the utility and necessity of a dedicated PARC office space. The ongoing dialogue will inform our ideas around the nature and scope of PARC's engagement and profile within the University of Bristol, in the local Bristol and national context, and indeed globally. The PARC team looks forward to progressing this dialogue with the Perivoli Foundation.

We, the PARC team, wish to express our gratitude to the Perivoli Foundation for their commitment to establishing PARC. We look forward to updating the Foundation on further progress and warmly welcome Trustees' suggestions or thoughts on our work.

Image (opposite page): Susan Jim and Isabella Aboderin with teachers and trainers at the Etuhole Pre-primary School and Day Care (part of the Perivoli Schools' Trust portfolio), Windhoek, Namibia, March 2020.



Contact



Transformation in Africa
research and partnerships

Professor Isabella Aboderin
isabella.aboderin@bristol.ac.uk

Dr Susan Jim
susan.jim@bristol.ac.uk

Dr Robert Crowe
robert.crowe@bristol.ac.uk

Mr Elliot James
parc-enquiries@bristol.ac.uk

www.parc.bristol.ac.uk

@PerivoliARC



