From the Head of Department

Welcome!

We hope that this newsletter finds all members and friends of the SOAS Development Studies community – past and present – well! We are in the midst of a busy academic year, with a new MSc programme in Environment, Politics and Development and a soon-to-be launched BA Honours degree in Development Studies (see below). This brings our current number of degree offerings to eight MSc programmes, a vibrant PhD programme, and two undergraduate pathways.

Our staff continues to be involved in exciting and cutting-edge research. To note just a few examples, the details of which are described in this newsletter, we are, under the leadership of Jonathan Goodhand, embarking on a major collaboration with the University of Melbourne for research on Frontiers, Conflict and the State. Carlos Oya is leading a team in an ESRC-funded research project on ‘Assessing the Employment Impact of Chinese Firms in Sub-Saharan Africa’. Members of the migration research cluster are involved in a Royal Geographical Society-supported project on migration to cities in Africa and Asia. And Carlos Chirinos has been centrally involved in production and promotion of the ‘Africa Stop Ebola’ song featuring the greats of West African music in an effort to respond to the Ebola crisis.

Our two seminars - Development Studies on Tuesdays (5 pm, room G3) and Agrarian Change on Wednesdays (5 pm, room 4426) - are open to the public. More regular updates, job listings, event announcements, alumni news and other interesting bits are available through our Facebook page (SOAS Development Studies - Young ‘n’ Old) and on Twitter (@soasdevelopment). Our Globalisation Lecture series will continue this term with Ahlem Belhadi, MD, speaking on ‘Women’s Rights and the Arab Uprisings’ on 26 January and Barbara Harriss-White speaking on ‘Development and the Metabolic Rift: Reactions to the Contradiction’ on 2 March (look here for details and for videos of past lectures). We also held a very successful series of Professional Practice seminars in Term 1 with podcasts of all of the presentations available online.

We welcome contributions to this newsletter from past and present students and staff! Send us something, and if you are in London, drop by and see us! devstudies@soas.ac.uk

Laura Hammond
Head of Department, Development Studies

New MSc Programme in Environment, Politics and Development!

In September 2014, we welcomed the first intake of students to our MSc Programme in Environment, Politics and Development. We tackle the ‘big questions’ around the environment and sustainable development. We cover a range of issues including climate change, water privatisation, biofuel production, biodiversity conservation, conflict and resource extraction, tourism and environmental movements.

The students are drawn from all over the world and have a range of academic backgrounds: geography, politics, anthropology, sociology, to name a few. We have students with a wealth of professional expertise as well: some are environmental activists while others work in government ministries or environmental NGOs. As part of the new MSc, we are running two additional dedicated workshops: one on the development of green states in Africa and another on de-growth as an alternative pathway to sustainable development. Visit the programme webpage for more information.
Current Research Projects and Other Activities

States, Frontiers and Conflict
As part of a new research collaboration between SOAS and the University of Melbourne, Jonathan Goodhand organised and convened a workshop on Frontiers, Conflict and the State in the Asia-Pacific, held at SOAS from November 24-26, 2014.

3ie International Initiative for Impact Evaluation
Carlos Oya secured a research grant to do a Systematic Review of Effects of Certification Schemes for Agricultural Commodities centred on the socio-economic well-being of beneficiaries (farmers and workers). As the Principal Investigator on the project, Oya started in September 2014 and will finish in March 2016. The grant is approximately US$120,000 one of the largest grants 3ie has ever given for a Systematic Review. Staff involved include SOAS Economics’ Deborah Johnston and Development Studies PhD researcher Florian Schaefer.

China and Africa Research Programme
Carlos Oya secured a research grant worth £827,000 from the ESRC-DFID for a project entitled ‘Assessing the Employment Impact of Chinese Firms in Sub-Saharan Africa.’ This three-year project, which will begin in April 2015, will use mixed methods to compare labour relations in two sectors (construction and manufacturing) in Angola and Ethiopia with background evidence from practices in China.

The project involves a large group of specialists in different aspects of the research, including SOAS staff members Tim Pringle, Dae- Oup Chang, Florian Schaefer, Christina Wolf, Terry McKinley and Dic Lo. It also includes a partnership with Renmin University (China) and University Agostinho Neto (Angola) as well as collaborators from other institutions, including Chinese, Ethiopian and Angolan academics.

Internship for SOAS Students at Self-Employed Women Association (SEWA Bharat)
Based on a collaboration with Alessandra Mezzadri beginning 2013, the Self-Employed Women Association (SEWA Bharat), Delhi office, established an internship for SOAS Development Studies students interested in issues of work, informality, gender and labour standards. In 2014, the two students selected were Kavita Dattani and Nidhi Tambi.

‘Africa Stop Ebola’ Song
Carlos Chirinos, Director of SOAS Radio and convenor of the undergraduate course Development Communication, was the co-producer and lyricist of the song ‘Africa Stop Ebola,’ recorded by 12 West African artists including Salif Keita, Amadou & Mariam, Tiken Jah Fakoly, Oumou Sangare and Mory Kante, amongst others. Performed in French, English and vernacular languages widely spoken across the West African sub-region, the song is now part of a global fundraising campaign with profits donated to Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders. Chirinos is currently coordinating the #AfricaStopEbola Global Advocacy campaign and will be using this experience in his course to explore the intersection between music, communication and advocacy in international development. Watch the video clip here.

Fair Trade, Employment and Poverty Reduction (FTEPR) Project
Led by Christopher Cramer, Carlos Oya, Deborah Johnston and John Sender, this recently-completed four-year research project was funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and implemented in Ethiopia and Uganda. The project collected detailed micro-level evidence from areas producing agricultural exports on how rural labour markets affect poor people’s lives. Comparative evidence was collected to cover Fair Trade certified production and non-certified production. The research produced striking findings and policy recommendations that were reported in a research report that generated considerable international media attention. The research made front page news in The Observer in May 2014.

It was also discussed widely in blogs and other social media. The lead researchers were interviewed by Al Jazeera, BBC World Service and radio and magazine editors in the US, Canada, the UK, Sweden, the EC, and elsewhere.

Migrants on the Margins Research Project
Migrants on the Margins, a collaborative research project involving the University of Sussex, Durham University, SOAS and in-country partner institutions has been selected by the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) as its Field Research Programme. The project, a major three-year study, will look at migration and vulnerability of migrants in some of the world’s most pressured cities, including Colombo (Sri Lanka), Dhaka (Bangladesh), Harare (Zimbabwe), and Hargeisa (Somaliland). The work at SOAS will be coordinated by Laura Hammond and Richard Black.

Partnership with School of Leadership, University of Johannesburg
Christopher Cramer and Jonathan Di John are involved in the creation and development of a partnership with the School of Leadership at the University of Johannesburg, organised around the development of blended learning teaching for mid- and senior level government officials and others in leadership positions throughout Africa. The School of Leadership is directed by Dr Sydney Mufamadi, a former government minister, leading anti-apartheid activist and alumnus of SOAS.

SOAS in Africa: Mo Ibrahim Foundation (MIF) Residential Governance School in Mauritius
A number of Development Studies affiliates participated in the Residential School, facilitated by the Centre of African Studies, University of London, as either lecturers or facilitators, including: Michael Jennings, Christopher Cramer, Carlos Oya, Laura Hammond, Jonathan Di John and Carlos Chirinos. The next Residential School will be held in London in March 2015 and will include a special focus on Health Governance.

Miscellaneous
Peter Mollinga was awarded, together with Alberto Asquer of DeFIMS and Philippe Cullet of Law, a £15,000 grant from the Law and Social Sciences Faculty, SOAS, for a project on Water Governance Reform and Water Security.

Laura Hammond was appointed Chair of the Independent Advisory Group on Country Information (IAGCI). The IAGCI reviews country of origin information products issued by the UK Home Office, reporting directly to the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration. The group is composed of academics as well as users of country of origin information, including the Upper Tribunal for Immigration and Asylum, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and the Immigration Law Practitioners’ Association. She has also been appointed review panel member on the Swiss National Science Foundation’s Research for Development (R4D) programmes on Food Security, a 6-year engagement that involves supporting food security research projects funded by SNSF.
Recent Publications


In straightforward language, John F. Weeks exposes the myths of mainstream economics and explains why current economic policies fail to serve the vast majority of people in the United States, Europe and elsewhere. Drawing on examples from around the world, this book provides a bold alternative to the economics of the 1%. Their failure to serve the interests of the many results from their devoted service to the few.
In December 2014 in New Delhi, **Guy Standing** and the Self-Employed Women’s Association of India (SEWA) presented a book on the results of their four-year study of the impact of an unconditional basic income in Indian villages in Madhya Pradesh. *Basic Income: A Transformative Policy for India*, by Sarath Davala, Renana Jhabvala, Soumya Kapoor Mehta and Guy Standing, is published by Bloomsbury Academic and will be available in the UK at the end of January 2015.

In November 2014, **Christopher Cramer** presented a talk on ‘Agrarian Relations in War to Peace Transitions’ (produced with SOAS PhD researcher Helena Perez Nino) in Bogota, Colombia, to a conference held by the Observatorio de Restitucion y Regulacion de Derechos de Propiedad Agraria.

In November 2014, **Rosaleen Duffy** was invited to speak on implementing social justice in conservation, and on the implications of the Green Economy at the IUCN World Parks Congress in Sydney. The Congress takes place once every ten years, and last year it attracted over 6000 participants, including heads of state, ministers, NGO representatives, academics and the private sector.

In September 2014, **Christopher Cramer, Jonathan Di John, and Carlos Oya** took part in the annual African Programme on Rethinking Development Economics (APORDE) in Johannesburg, South Africa. Cramer is Chair of the Scientific Committee of APORDE.

**Laura Hammond** presented at the Somali Economic Forum in Dubai in April 2014.

**Carlos Oya** presented on ‘State Capacity De-building, Aid Management and Ministries of Finance (and Planning) in Mozambique and Senegal’, at the Oxford University Africa History and Politics Seminar in March 2014.

**Guy Standing** presented on ‘Citizen’s Income: A Minor Policy Change that Would Transform Our Society’ at the People’s Parliament, at the People’s Parliament in March 2014. The People’s Parliament is a discussion series held in Parliament, hosted by John McDonnell, MP, with the aim of livening up and providing political depth to the debate in the run-up to the next election.


**Gilbert Achcar** was presented with The Phoenix Prize for his latest book *The People Want* at a prestigious ceremony held in Beirut in January 2014. The Phoenix Prize was established in 1996 and is awarded annually to books written in French by Lebanese writers, or French-authored books related to Lebanon. The award’s judging panel is chaired by famous Lebanese author and member of the Académie Française, Amin Maalouf. Achcar received the 2014 award jointly with well-known French author Sorj Chalandon for his novel *Le Quatrième Mur*. The award’s judging panel is chaired by famous Lebanese author and member of the Académie Française, Amin Maalouf. Achcar received the 2014 award jointly with well-known French author Sorj Chalandon for his novel *Le Quatrième Mur*. **Development Studies Out & About**
Life after SOAS...

Menelaos Agaloglou (MSc Globalisation and Development 2009) wrote an article on land grabs in Africa that was published by the Centre for Mediterranean, Middle East and Islamic Studies.

Benjamin Dix (BA Development Studies and Geography 2003) founded PositiveNegatives in 2011, a non-profit company that uses multi-media technology to convey stories from marginalised communities to a large and diverse audience. Most recently, Dix was commissioned by Open Society Foundations (OSF) to produce a collection of 14 illustrated stories about the real life experiences of Somalis in seven cities in Europe to accompany the official OSF research. Some of the stories were displayed to the public on large boards in the centre of Oslo. ‘Meet the Somalis’ was published on the OSF website.


Gemma McNeil-Walsh (BA in Development and Economics 2014) published a blog defending the relevance of a development studies degree, entitled “Reflections and Ramblings of a Development Undergrad”.

Taimur Rahman (PhD 2010) was awarded the Dr. Akhtar Hameed Khan Memorial Award for the book version of his thesis, which focuses on the class structure of Pakistan. The hardback of the book has sold out, and it will be republished as a paperback.

Laura Stankhe (MSc in Migration, Mobility and Development 2013) was the first intern chosen for SEWA RUUAB, a new SEWA (Self-Employed Women’s Association) project in Bharat, Delhi, which organises women to obtain full employment, including work security, income security, food security and social security.

Yoomie Huynh (MSc in Violence, Conflict and Development 2010-2011) completed a consultancy in Georgia at the Children and Youth National Center, Ministry of Sports and Youth, between July 2013 and January 2014. Before that, she consulted in Tajikistan at the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in Dushanbe between July 2011 and April 2012.

Mette Steen (MSc in Migration, Mobility and Development 2011) Talks about Working in South Sudan

During my MSc year at SOAS, I joined the Danish Red Cross Emergency Response Unit. My first deployment was with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Northern South Sudan on the border of Sudan and Ethiopia, Maban country in Yusef Batil Refugee Camp. My task was to manage a base camp for delegates conducting an intervention in Wathab [Water and Habitat] and Ecosec [Economic Security] in the area. I also assisted ICRC in livestock interventions and various distributions.

After a spiel with field research in agro-pastoralists, land rights and displacement for an advocacy organisation within the Horn of Africa region, I was offered a longer-term Red Cross delegate position in South Sudan. The main task was to set up, in partnership with South Sudan Red Cross, a primary health program in Eastern Equatorial State and Western Bahr El Ghazal. Working for the Red Cross Movement was a conscious choice after many years of observing development and humanitarian actors. During the latest political turmoil in South Sudan, I witnessed the strength of the South Sudan Red Cross, their partners and volunteers come together and act despite the intensity of the hardship they faced.

It was a long and winding road being at SOAS from 1998-2002 and 2010-2011. However, I have landed in the right place, the right sector and in a place where I feel I can make a positive contribution as an expatriate humanitarian worker in a conflict situation.