



House of Commons
Science and Technology
Committee

**Building scientific capacity
for development:
Government and UK
Collaborative on
Development Sciences
Response to the
Committee's Fourth
Report of Session 2012–13**

**Fourth Special Report of Session
2012–13**

*Ordered by the House of Commons
to be printed 16 January 2013*

HC 907
Published on 24 January 2013
by authority of the House of Commons
London: The Stationery Office Limited
£0.00

Science and Technology Committee

The Science and Technology Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Government Office for Science and associated public bodies.

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Publications

The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the Internet at <http://www.parliament.uk/science>. A list of reports from the Committee in this Parliament is included at the back of this volume.

The Reports of the Committee, the formal minutes relating to that report, oral evidence taken and some or all written evidence are available in printed volume(s). Additional written evidence may be published on the internet only.

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are: Dr Stephen McGinness (Clerk); Jessica Montgomery (Second Clerk); Xameerah Malik (Senior Committee Specialist); Victoria Charlton (Committee Specialist); Darren Hackett (Senior Committee Assistant); Julie Storey (Committee Assistant); Henry Ayi-Hyde (Committee Office Assistant); and Nick Davies (Media Officer).

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Fourth Special Report

On 26 October 2012 the Science and Technology Committee published its Fourth Report of Session 2012–13, *Building scientific capacity for development* [HC 377]. On 8 January 2013 the Committee received a memorandum from the Government which contained a response to the Report. The memorandum is published as appendix to this Report.

Appendix: Government response

The Coalition Government welcomes the opportunity to respond to the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee Report into Building Scientific Capacity for Development.

The UK Government is committed to ensuring high-quality scientific evidence is effectively integrated into policy development and delivery. The Government recognises the importance of increasing scientific capacity in developing countries and the value of building sustainable scientific networks that individuals, institutions and organisations can benefit from. Capacity building takes many forms and with several parts of the British Government supporting this activity both directly and indirectly.

Strengthening scientific capacity is a complex long-term activity, requiring a number of different interventions. Building an evidence base of what works and what does not in different development contexts and environments is critical if we are to be successful in this endeavour. This is essential if we are to ensure better value for money on UK taxpayer investments and a smarter use of Aid.

DFID's commitment to science and research for development has been re-enforced by the Secretary of State. She recently stated that "another way of progressing the way we work is by using new technology and research. We must make sure that we are learning as much as we can, so that our work has the greatest impact on the ground."

The Government agrees with the Committee that scientific capacity building is a crucial process that enables developing countries to shape and sustain their own long-term development. In response to the Committee's report the Government have responded to each recommendation in turn.

Making a commitment to scientific capacity building

1. We welcome the many scientific capacity building activities that the Department for International Development (DFID) and its partners are involved in. It is our view that scientific capacity building is tremendously important in international development. We are therefore disappointed by the lack of explicit reference to both science and capacity building in DFID's report, UK Aid: Changing Lives and Delivering Results, which publicly sets out the Government's "new direction" for UK aid. We consider that, in the future, DFID should be much more explicit about both the importance of and its commitment to capacity building and the role of science and engineering in development. (Paragraph 13)

The Government welcomes the Committee's recognition of the many scientific capacity building activities that DFID (on behalf of HM Government) and our partners are engaged with. The collective and substantial effort in this important area highlights the level of commitment the Government places on building capacity in developing countries. Science and research play a significant role in Government policy formation, contributing to the evidence base for decision-making. DFID is committed to delivering evidence-based policy. The co-location of the Policy and Research and Evidence Divisions ensures that science feeds into all levels of DFID's thinking.

The UK Aid: Changing Lives and Delivering Results report is the public facing document that aims to communicate the UK Government's high-level position on the direction for UK Aid in meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The exclusion of commentary on the detailed underlying processes by which the overall strategic vision will be delivered is not an indication that building capacity initiatives are un-important. Capacity building is one of many complex interventions that are needed to meet our commitments on the MDGs. A public-facing document cannot outline all such interventions and strategies, or it will risk losing the core high-level message. The Secretary of State has re-enforced the importance of science for development during her 2012 party speech stating "I want to make sure that DFID is at the heart of the technology debate, and doing all it can to pioneer innovation and the use of technology to improve development". The Government does agree that continuing to improve communication about the role of science and engineering in achieving development goals is both important and should be undertaken wherever possible.

2. We have heard from a number of organisations concerned that DFID's focus on the Millennium Development Goals may be to the detriment of capacity building. We accept the Minister's assurance that he has seen no evidence of this, but believe that a more explicit commitment to capacity building, as described above, may go some way to dispelling the current perception. (Paragraph 14)

The Government has no evidence that DFID's focus on meeting the UK's commitments on the MDGs is to the detriment of capacity building activities. Any perceptions of this are not borne out by the facts. DFID's allocation of £56 million up to 2020 on scientific and research capacity strengthening is a clear acknowledgement of the important role capacity building has (as a part of its portfolio of interventions) in meeting the MDGs. DFID will continue to partner with the best international organisations to deliver its capacity building initiatives. A recent example of this is DFID's £15 Million Africa Scientific Capacity

Building Initiative with the Royal Society . Launched on 1 November 2012, this programme will strengthen the research capacity of universities and research institutions in sub-Saharan Africa by supporting the development of sustainable research networks. The Committee has acknowledged DFID's many scientific capacity building activities in this report. The Government agrees that continuing to communicate the important role of science and engineering for development will help to dispel myths.

Getting clarity about funding

3. We welcome the various ways in which DFID directly and indirectly provides financial support for scientific capacity building. However, it is clear to us that there is a need for greater clarity about the different funding streams available. We are specifically concerned about clarity over the provision of funding at the hundred thousand pound level and recommend that DFID's Chief Scientific Adviser meet representatives of the learned societies, national academies, and other interested bodies, to alleviate their concerns. We recommend that DFID publish a breakdown of the various direct and indirect funding streams available for scientific capacity building activities. (Paragraph 20)

The Government welcomes the Committee's recognition of the multiple routes by which DFID funds its research, including support for scientific capacity building. These multiple routes allow a wide range of research deliverers the opportunity to access and bid for DFID funds. DFID funding methods have been reviewed by the 2012 House of Commons International Development Committee Annual Accounts Inquiry . DFID funds a range of scientific capacity building programmes through the national academies, learned societies and organisations including the Royal Society, and the Wellcome Trust.

DFID acknowledges the value and contribution of smaller projects. However, DFID has limited means directly to manage these initiatives. Therefore, the Department works with partners to deliver these smaller projects such as the UK Research Councils and the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) in collaboration with UNICEF, UNDP, the World Bank and WHO. An advantage of working with partners like the UK Research Councils is the high level of quality and excellence in the research they commission and manage on DFID's behalf due to their capacity to run rigorous research competitions that commission the best proposals.

Many recipients of smaller DFID funds may not be aware that DFID is the original source of funding. The Department has addressed this issue by placing a clear requirement on research partners explicitly to recognise DFID funds on all projects and programmes. Details of DFID's research calls are already published on the Departmental external website. DFID will also be publishing details of its different funding streams on this site.

The DFID Chief Scientific Adviser already meets regularly with senior representatives of the learned societies, national academies, and other interested bodies like the UK Research Councils to discuss funding activities and scientific issues. Such meetings will continue.

4. We also encourage DFID to promote a sustainable approach to funding, which aims to ensure that capacity building initiatives become self-sustaining over time. (Paragraph 21)

The Government agrees that promoting a sustainable approach to funding is important to embed a culture of scientific capacity building within developing countries. DFID will continue to engage in dialogue with our southern and northern partners on this.

5. We welcome joint funding initiatives between DFID and Research Councils UK which we hope will ensure that high-quality science in the UK helps to alleviate poverty in developing countries. We invite DFID, in its response to us, to set out how it is addressing the difficulties presented by the extension to DFID's research funding of the requirement that the UK's aid funding must not be tied. (Paragraph 23)

The Coalition Government has re-confirmed the UK's commitment to untied aid by stating: "We will keep aid untied from commercial interests, and will maintain DFID as an independent department focused on poverty reduction". Providing aid which is untied is a central pillar of UK aid policy.

DFID is committed to funding the best international science and research for the purposes of international development, and already offers multiple routes by which a wide range of research deliverers have the opportunity to access and bid for DFID funds. Competitive calls for research are open to all international providers of research. DFID research funding is awarded through open competition and involves rigorous quality assurance processes and peer review. Where the best researchers in the world are UK based, there are no barriers for them to access and win DFID funds. In 2011-12, 31 per cent of DFID's central research funding was won in the first instance by UK institutions such as universities, research institutions and the Research Councils. DFID advertises research calls on its external DFID website, and is publishing details on the multiple funding modalities available.

Science careers in developing nations

6. There is a widely acknowledged problem in providing effective support to early career researchers in developing countries. We acknowledge that this is a complex issue with multiple causes. However, we have identified one possible solution that would go some way to improving the current situation. We recommend that the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission (CSC) introduce a new early-career award. This would be particularly welcome in countries that do not have the indigenous capacity to provide their own funding to support early career researchers. The new award would complement the CSC's existing portfolio of seven awards at various stages in the research career pipeline, and ideally it would not be at the expense of the support provided by the other awards. DFID should work with the CSC to identify and overcome any barriers to introducing the new award. The CSC should also review the manner in which its other scholarships are awarded to assess whether there is scope to provide some post-qualification funding. (Paragraph 36)

The Government welcomes the Committee's acknowledgement of the importance of building early career researchers in developing countries and its recognition that this is a complex issue. DFID is working with the CSC to identify ways in which the CSC can develop early career awards which can complement the existing CSC portfolio of activity. CSC has already made some steps towards easing the problem identified by the Committee. In 2011, CSC introduced a programme which allowed alumni working in

developing country universities to apply for three month Fellowships in the United Kingdom between three and five years after graduation, building on long standing mid-career programmes. The purpose of this scheme is to combine career development with the maintenance and development of links with the UK, and enabling recipients to better contribute to international programmes such as those offered by DFID. CSC is encouraging doctoral Commonwealth Scholars to make the best use of their time in the UK, and actively plan their return to home institutions, through a new module that will commence in 2013. This sometimes neglected element is an important part of any effective plan for early career development. DFID is working with CSC to identify and appropriate take forward ways to support the development of early career awards.

7. We believe that strengthening local institutions leads to more sustainable scientific capacity building by, for example, providing a strong foundation based on the development and retention of high-quality skills in country. The UK Government, through DFID, should continue to boost existing research expertise in developing countries through support for specific national research institutes and through broader support for regional organisations. However, DFID must not be complacent, the evidence we have received suggests that there is room for improvement. DFID should play a more active role in working with institutions in developing countries to identify and overcome barriers to sustainable capacity building. (Paragraph 40)

The Government agrees with the Committee's finding that strengthening local institutions leads to more sustainable scientific capacity building. DFID is and will continue to work with southern institutions on strengthening their ability to undertake, fund and manage research, as well as working to improve the broader enabling environment. DFID is currently funding a number of national-level research consortia with core capacity building components, examples include - Strengthening Agricultural Research and Development in Africa; Health Research Capacity Strengthening Initiative; European and Developing Countries Clinical Trial Platform; African Economic Research Consortium; and the DFID-Royal Society Africa Scientific Capacity Building Initiative. Such activities involve establishing realistic and achievable plans for country-led research and devolving research responsibility to southern partners. DFID collaborates with a range of science partners to address barriers and build sustainable capacity including the Royal Society, Wellcome Trust, British Council, UK Research Councils and the CSC.

8. There is much to be gained, both by UK researchers and their partners in developing countries, through scientific research collaboration; it should therefore be actively encouraged by funders of research in the UK. While there may be disincentives working against UK researchers who are working in partnership with scientists in developing countries, we recognise that many of these are common problems across many parts of the UK research community. Specific concerns include short-term research contracts, the availability of Research Council funding, a lack of career development and the way in which research and researchers are assessed. Although these issues are beyond the scope of this inquiry, they are nonetheless of great interest to us and as such we may return to them in more detail in the future. (Paragraph 43)

The Government agrees with the Committee's views that there is much to be gained by both UK researchers and developing country researchers through scientific research partnerships and collaboration. DFID will continue to commission and utilise the best international research for the purposes of international development. Much of DFID's research activity already involves partnerships between southern and northern researchers and organisations.

9. In the context of some of the more specific problems we have identified for those working on development issues, we recommend that the Research Councils consider how they can best assess the work of researchers working on development issues. Funders should ensure that researchers are recognised for the impact they are having on the ground in addition to other traditional measures of success, such as publication record. (Paragraph 44)

The Government would encourage the UK Research Councils to consider this recommendation by the Committee.

The value of scientific advice and challenge

10. Building capacity for innovation and economic growth is crucial to sustainable development. We welcome DFID's recent interest in innovation. We encourage DFID to work actively with the Technology Strategy Board in order to learn lessons from the UK's own experience in fostering innovation. (Paragraph 49)

The Government welcomes the Committee's acknowledgement of the role of innovation and economic growth for sustainable development. DFID already has an established culture for innovation which it will continue to strengthen. DFID would like to draw on the innovation expertise of the TSB. DFID is currently at the early stages of discussions with the TSB on global challenges in development.

11. We recommend that the UK Government actively promote to developing countries the advantages of having Chief Scientific Advisers in Government. While we acknowledge that a system designed for the UK may not directly transpose into other countries—it is our view that the adoption of a system that allows independent scientific advisers to challenge the decision-making process should be considered. Furthermore, we recommend that the UK Government's Chief Scientific Adviser should play a leading role in building a strong international network in which scientific advisers from around the globe can share knowledge and provide a more joined-up approach to supporting robust decision-making processes in relation to development issues. (Paragraph 54)

The UK Government regularly engages with interested parties internationally on how the UK model of Chief Scientific Advisers works. The UK CSA network is held in high regard—as evidenced by the Australian Government's appointment of a departmental CSA during Sir John Beddington's recent visit. A number of countries have a GCSA (including the Czech Republic, New Zealand, India and Estonia); not many have CSAs in Departments. However, it is important that any country develops a system that will work within their specific context and frameworks; one system may not be easily be transplanted to another country. A report recently published by the Government Office for Science identified four

different categories of advisory systems in international governments. It is clear that one size doesn't fit all.

The Government Chief Scientific Adviser already has a strong network of scientific advisers internationally with which to interact. A significant amount of his time is taken up engaging with international counterparts. For example, the Carnegie Group of G8+5 science advisers and ministers meets annually and has a strong focus on knowledge sharing and identifying enhanced collaboration to address global challenges – many of which have a strong development focus. He recently visited Burma to build relations as the country opens up, and to instil the importance of embedding science into national-level policy making. This effort will help to ensure countries such as Burma are well placed to address their development challenges. The DFID CSA will continue to work closely with and support the GCSA in championing a culture of science and evidence-based decision-making internationally in relation to development issues.

Communicating needs

12. We welcome DFID's commitment to increasing awareness and dissemination of research findings. DFID should support activities to expand the evidence base for the potential added value of investing in research communication to help justify future investment decisions in dissemination activities. (Paragraph 57)

The Government welcomes the Committee highlighting the importance of increasing the awareness and dissemination of research findings. DFID is committed to ensuring that the results of the research which it funds are communicated effectively.

DFID's main platform to communicate research is its Research 4 Development (R4D) portal. This open-access website is a repository for DFID funded projects and programmes. R4D receives around 150,000 international visits per month, with over 100,000 downloads undertaken. The latest Departmental monitoring shows that between April 2011 and May 2012, R4D received 40.72% visits from the global South. The use of R4D across DFID is enabling better evidence-based policy making through better access to high quality evidence products.

DFID agrees with the Committee's views on expanding the evidence base for the potential added value of investing in research communication to help justify future investment decisions in dissemination activities.

In recognition of this, DFID is intending to commission an independent evaluation that compares different approaches to making research available. This will look at a range of programmes and not just those funded by DFID. This evaluation will enable DFID to identify where DFID research communication funding has a comparative advantage and the types of programmes and interventions that represent value for money and best enhance the impact of research.

13. We welcome the improvements in communication and coordination between research funders in the UK with an interest in development since the formation of the UK Collaborative on Development Sciences (UKCDS). We reiterate the views expressed in a recent UKCDS evaluation report and recommend that its members, which include Government Departments and the Research Councils, should publicly commit to the continuation of the Collaborative beyond 2013 for at least another five years, at which point another evaluation should take place. (Paragraph 60)

The Government agrees that there has been a substantial improvement in communication and coordination between research funders in the UK with an interest in development since the formation of the UKCDS. The UKCDS steering board consisting of the 14 UK funders and stakeholders have agreed (subject to the comprehensive spending review and views of Ministers) that the Collaborative will be extended for another term from October 2012 to March 2018.

14. There is a need for greater clarity about the way in which the UKCDS relates to other cross-Government networks—for example the Global Science and Innovation Forum (GSIF) and the Science and Innovation Network (SIN)—that are involved in the international coordination of science. We support a more joined up approach between DFID and other arms of the UK Government that function abroad. As such, we welcome DFID's initiative to co-locate its overseas staff in "research hubs" with SIN officers in India and China, which may go some way to help address the acknowledged "disconnect" between DFID in London and its country offices. We recommend that DFID and SIN make rapid progress on the development of proposals for further such research hubs, including at least one in Africa. (Paragraph 65)

DFID would like to make a factual correction - DFID does not have a research hub in China. The DFID South Asia Research Hub (SARH) is located in Delhi, India and is co-located with SIN and RCUK offices to maximise linkages.

Close collaboration and working relationships between UKCDS, Global Science and Innovation Forum (GSIF) and Science and Innovation Network (SIN) already exist. Senior UKCDS officials attend development relevant GSIF meetings. A close interaction between UKCDS and the SIN also already takes place. Both the FCO CSA and BIS CSA are on the UKCDS Board and senior BIS, FCO and SIN officials are invited to UKCDS meetings.

It is important to recognise that SIN and UKCDS rightly have distinct and separate roles. On behalf of her HM Government, SIN proactively builds opportunities for the UK scientific community to enter into valuable partnerships with policy, business and academic counterparts around the world, mostly focusing on the high-income developed countries. SIN maximises opportunities for the UK from international science collaboration. In order to achieve this, SIN works in close partnership with a number of UK Government bodies including the British Council, UKTI, Universities UK, and the UK Research Council as well as BIS and where relevant DFID. UKCDS aims to maximise the impact of UK research funding on international development outcomes through its membership of 14 UK funders and stakeholders. UKCDS does work with international partners to strengthen the research and innovation capacity of poorer countries. Such work is already discussed through the mechanisms outlined above allowing the UK to develop a joined-up and coordinated approach.

Taking a joined up approach to overseas engagement is a key focus and the role of all HM Governments Embassies overseas. DFID country offices work closely with British Overseas Embassies. The Government welcomes the Committee's recognition of the important role DFID's SARH. Although co-located in New Delhi with SIN officers, the roles of each are distinct – SARH works to ensure the effective use of science within DFID country programmes, whilst SIN works to maximise opportunities for the UK from international science collaboration. Co-location does help to enhance communication and exchange of information. DFID is currently considering its options to expand the research hub model to Africa and will liaise with SIN on this discussion.

15. We welcome DFID's attempts to develop a mechanism by which it can meet groups of universities, where the discussion can be open and no university is privileged. In addition to this, we recommend that DFID also consider how it can best open regular dialogue with UK expert agencies that have an interest in capacity building and broader development work. (Paragraph 67)

DFID already engages with a wide range of UK organisations on international development issues including capacity building activities. DFID is committed to maximising the impact of research investments on international development outcomes and supporting the best international research in this effort. DFID has opened a mechanism (through UKCDS) of dialogue between international funders and researchers to help raise awareness of research funding opportunities available. The first 'Town-hall Meeting' was held in December 2012 and explored health research funding activities relevant to international development; and had senior representatives from DFID, Wellcome Trust, Medical Research Council, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, as well as over 80 senior researchers from a range of research organisations. This mechanism will help achieve a dialogue between the academic research community and Government on important development issues, whilst ensuring that no one institution is privileged.

16. We welcome DFID's support for and involvement in national and international forums that facilitate the exchange of best practice in evaluating and monitoring scientific capacity building programmes. We are confident that DFID understands the difficulties of evaluation and the need for robust evaluation tools, evident by the Minister's commitment to build the evaluation capability of DFID's staff, which we welcome. We encourage DFID to continue to work on developing robust evaluation tools, particularly those that are able to capture the longer-term benefits of capacity building in the years after a programme ends. DFID's approach to monitoring and evaluation should be both clear and publicly visible. We also consider that it is important for DFID to engage with those that it funds throughout the lifespan of a programme to ensure that problems are being continuously detected and corrected. DFID should have in place processes by which relevant stakeholders can formally make known their concerns about the effectiveness of its evaluation procedures. (Paragraph 74)

The Government welcomes the Committee's recognition of DFID's international role in facilitating the exchange of best practice in evaluating and monitoring of research programmes. DFID's Evaluation Department drives forward the Secretary of State's key priority to secure maximum value for money in aid through greater transparency, rigorous independent evaluation and unremitting focus on results. DFID is committed to

embedding the evaluation agenda so that we and others can learn from what DFID does best to ensure high quality spend. DFID has further enhanced its quality assurance processes so that evaluation Terms of Reference and products (primarily reports) must be independently reviewed; and has ethics principles and guidelines which all evaluation contractors must adhere to. This will ensure that DFID procedures are both appropriate and correctly implemented. In addition, DFID will be introducing a requirement to include within evaluation reports, details of a dedicated contact point in DFID to which concerns can be formally addressed.

Progress of DFID since 2004

17. We consider that the introduction of a Chief Scientific Adviser, following our predecessor Committee's 2004 Report, The Use of Science in UK International Development Policy, has improved the scientific culture in DFID. We were impressed by DFID's commitment to using a robust evidence base. However, we remain concerned about the level of DFID's in-house scientific and technical expertise and we reiterate the Government Office for Science's recent recommendation that "DFID needs to have mechanisms in place to keep under review its current and future needs for professional staff". DFID should also continue to draw on external scientific expertise, where appropriate, by strengthening its links with the UK academic community. This is particularly important in providing technical support to generalist staff in country offices, where we acknowledge it is difficult to have a full range of subject specialists. DFID should ensure that its generalist staff in country offices are appropriately trained to get the most out of the technical experts that they draw on for advice. (Paragraph 80)

The Government welcomes the Committee's recognition of the "improved scientific culture in DFID" and "DFID's commitment to using a robust evidence base." DFID will continue to seek ways to further improve and strengthen in-house scientific and technical expertise.

DFID does draw upon external scientific expertise, through: the informal Research Advisory Group (iRAG); the Senior Research Fellows (SRFs) Scheme; think-tank initiatives with international science organisations; and engaging in dialogue with the wider academic community through the professional networks of its advisers.

DFID's iRAG, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz FRS, has the primary objective of providing independent scientific advice to DFID. The provision of independent scientific advice by the iRAG helps to assist the DFID CSA (who is also the Director of the Research and Evidence Division) to assure the quality and appropriateness of RED's research portfolio for DFID's objectives.

DFID currently has a network of 12 SRFs working part-time for DFID. Many SRFs are Professors and all are leading international scientists drawn from respected academic research institutions. The SRFs are embedded within DFID thematic research teams, and many also work closely with policy and regional teams, helping DFID to utilise cutting-edge science and research in Departmental thinking and programme design and implementation.

Much of DFID's efforts in building internal technical capacity has already been outlined in the 2012 DFID response of the GCSA SEA Review. DFID is re-balancing its staffing needs by recruiting more specialists and fewer generalists. A periodic review of the numbers and profiles of advisers in each cadre as well as the future workforce requirements is undertaken by DFID's Chief Professional Officers (CPO's) and overseen by DFID's CSA. Many cadres have already strengthened their technical competencies - assessed against a cadre specific competency framework that includes 4 new cross-cadre areas. Technical competencies are used for annual assessments of all DFID advisers, as well as recruitment and promotion processes, and for planning and reviewing their CPD (Continuing Professional Development). Advisers also have a '10% time' built into their roles - which allows adviser expertise to be utilised by other parts of DFID (either at the centre or within country offices) for technical work-streams outside their immediate day-to-day post.

18. Scientific capacity building is a crucial process that enables developing countries to shape and sustain their own long-term development. We have been impressed by the improved scientific culture in DFID since our predecessor Committee's 2004 Report, The Use of Science in UK International Development Policy. While this has led to some improvements to the way in which DFID supports scientific capacity building, there is no room for complacency. The evidence we have received suggests that there is still potential for much improvement. (Paragraph 81)

The Government agrees that building capacity is an important part of enabling developing countries to self-sustainably drive and shape their own future. DFID agrees with the Committee that there is no room for complacency. The Government welcomes this Committee recognition of DFID's significant improvement in scientific culture since 2004, a point also acknowledged by the GCSA's Science and Engineering Assurance Review in 2011. DFID with its partners is identifying which interventions work best to build capacity in developing countries. This approach will allow the UK to better focus its efforts and maximise our collective effectiveness.

19. Many of the challenges faced by developing countries trying to build scientific capacity mirror those faced by the UK, such as, effectively supporting the in-country research base and improving the use of scientific evidence and advice by the Government. DFID should work actively with groups that are addressing these common challenges in the UK—for example, supporting early career researchers—in order to determine whether solutions here might be applicable in the developing world. (Paragraph 82)

The Government agrees that there is much to be gained from sharing lessons from the UK on building scientific capacity. DFID already partners with a range of organisations including the learned societies, professional institutions, and research councils on these issues and will continue to do so in the future. Many outstanding researchers working in scientific capacity building have received substantial DFID support during their careers. DFID anticipates the continuation of such activities.