

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

STUDY TITLE

Development consultants and contractors: for-profit companies in the changing world of 'Aidland'

INVITATION PARAGRAPH

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

The objective of the project is to explore the growing role of private sector consultants and contractors within the UK's development sector. We will look at seven consulting and contracting firms. We will examine their roles in the production, translation, implementation and evaluation of development knowledge and practice. Core components include a critical financial analysis to map and analyse financial flows and contracts; understanding policy contexts; detailed understanding of personal and institutional profiles in the sector, including governance, management techniques and influencing roles. Central to the research are detailed case studies of multi-million-pound projects in eight countries, with seven in low and middle-income countries.

WHY HAVE I BEEN INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

You have been chosen to participate in this study because of your experience with aid-funded contractors or consultants, either as a contractor or representative of government.

DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time before the close of the project on 31 August 2024 and without giving a reason.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME IF I TAKE PART?

If you take part, you will participate in an interview (up to 60 minutes) and/or a half-day focus group session (up to two hours) with other study participants.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF TAKING PART?

We intend that this research project will help increase understanding of aid-funded contracting for participants, consulting and contracting firms, civil servants and policymakers. The research will involve the opportunity to participate in open and constructive discussions and focus groups with representatives of other organisations and government bodies working in the space, furthering the sharing of knowledge between a range of interested parties.

WILL MY INFORMATION IN THIS STUDY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Any and all information that enables individuals to be identified ('personal data') will be kept strictly confidential (subject to legal limitations). Confidentiality, privacy and anonymity will be ensured in the collection, storage and publication of research material. The project Privacy Notice can be found [HERE](#). A project researcher will carefully discuss with you the level of anonymization you require, and you can confirm this and whether or not you consent to the interview being recorded on the attached consent form or verbally with a member of the project team.

The project team will store, process and manage all data in accordance with UK Research & Innovation protocols and UK Data Service recommendations. Any member of the project research team is happy to answer further questions about these data management standards should you have any. No sensitive or detailed personal data will be collected, but personal data such as age/gender may be collected as part of interviews and focus groups, if explicit consent is granted.

Interview notes and transcripts will be 'pseudonymized' (i.e., assigned a code for record keeping purposes, rather than being stored according to interviewee name), and stored on the lead institution's (University of Cambridge) OneDrive system which is ISO 27001 compliant, and data is encrypted at transit and at rest.

As a condition of our research funding, some research data must be shared and stored in the UK Data Archive. All identifying references will be redacted from any interview notes that are deposited in this repository, and all interview records will be pseudonymised and your name will not be used.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I WANT TO TAKE PART?

If you wish to take part in the study, you may express your consent verbally, or sign the attached consent form.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY?

The results of this research will be used in a number of academic publications (journal articles and books), as well as in conference papers and semi-academic blogs/web articles. You can contact the project at any time for a copy of any published material that makes reference to an interview/focus group in which you were a participant. Some data produced by this research will be stored indefinitely by the UK Data Archive, but any and all identifying features or statements will be fully redacted (see above).

WHO IS ORGANISING AND FUNDING THE RESEARCH?

The research is being carried out as part of a three-year project (2021-2024) funded by the Economic & Social Research Council, led by Professor Emma Mawdsley at the University of Cambridge.

The project team are conducting this research as a member of staff in their respective institutions:

- Emma Mawdsley, Department of Geography, University of Cambridge (em10@cam.ac.uk)
- Paul Gilbert, School of Global Studies, University of Sussex (p.gilbert@sussex.ac.uk)
- Olivia Taylor, School of Global Studies, University of Sussex (o.g.taylor@sussex.ac.uk)
- Jo-Anna Russon, School of Education, University of Nottingham (Jo-Anna.Russon@nottingham.ac.uk)
- Jessica Sklair, School of Business and Management, Queen Mary University of London (j.sklair@qmul.ac.uk)
- Brendan Whitty, School of International Development, University of East Anglia (B.Whitty@uea.ac.uk)

WHO HAS APPROVED THIS STUDY?

This project has been individually approved by the five university partner institutions: University of Cambridge, University of East Anglia, University of Nottingham, University of Sussex and QMUL.

CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any concerns relating to this project, please contact the Principal Investigator Professor Emma Mawdsley or Project Manager Dr Jo-Anna Russon (Jo-Anna.Russon@nottingham.ac.uk), or any member of the project team (contact details above).

You may also contact the Ethics Committees at the respective institutions to formally discuss any research ethics and integrity matters:

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, Cambridge: HSSREC@admin.cam.ac.uk
Chair of the Social Sciences & Arts Research Ethics Committee, Sussex: c-recss@sussex.ac.uk
Research Integrity in the Research and Innovation Services, UEA, researchIntegrity@uea.ac.uk
University of Nottingham Research Ethics Office, TT-ResearchEthics@exmail.nottingham.ac.uk
Queen Mary Ethics of Research Committee, research-ethics@qmul.ac.uk

INSURANCE

The five University partners each have insurance in place to cover their legal liabilities in respect of this study.

THANK YOU

Many thanks for taking the time to read this information sheet. Please do not hesitate to contact the project team at any time if you have further enquiries.