

# **A Short History of the Development Studies Association<sup>1,2</sup>**

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## **Preamble**

Over the last three decades the Development Studies Association (DSA) has had a significant impact on development studies in the United Kingdom and beyond. This short history aims to record the origins and contributions of the DSA, and attempts to set out its impact in:

- mobilizing and sustaining attention to development studies over three decades or more;
- providing a framework stimulating a spirit of collegiality between development studies researchers and teachers in the UK, with an especially focus on those in multi-disciplinary social science;
- establishing priorities between emerging issues for development studies research and teaching;
- representing the development studies research community in consultations relating to the funding of research;
- providing professional support for publication of current development studies research results.

The discussion which follows does not aim to chart the intellectual history of the association, which would follow the relative significance of different disciplines within the multidisciplinary nature of our concerns as well as the evolution of ideas, methods and paradigms more broadly. The objectives have been considerably more modest than would be implied by such an agenda.

From the beginning the DSA has been a strong and active partner in the development studies community in Europe, as well encouraging regional research associations in Africa, Asia and Latin America. It is noteworthy that there is no parallel development studies association, and no comparable focus on multidisciplinary studies, in the United States. The influential position of development economics in US development policy and in such US-influenced institutions as the World Bank and IMF can perhaps be attributed to there not being a DSA equivalent in the USA.

The aim is to set out some of the basic features of the history of the Development Studies Association of the UK and Ireland (the DSA). With associations such as the DSA there is always a danger that knowledge about origins are lost in the passing of time through the movement of inevitably busy people between locations and institutions, and with the imperfections of memory. Much of the knowledge of the early days comes into the category of 'oral history', and much of that which was recorded on paper has been lost or mislaid. For more recent years there is information available in the form of computer files recording minutes of the Council meetings, of the Annual General Meetings, annual reports to the

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<sup>1</sup> The Development Studies Association is registered as a charity in England and Wales (number 283670).

<sup>2</sup> This 'history' has been compiled from a variety of information sources. Particular thanks are due to Richard Jolly for providing a considerable amount of the material on the period prior to the formation of the DSA and for generosity with comments throughout the latter part of the drafting. Thanks also to Barbara Harriss-White who kindly provided detailed annotations on the first widely circulated version of this document. Other acknowledgements will be found throughout the document. Nothing in this document should be regarded as representing the views of the DSA as an institution or of its individual members.

Charity Commissioners, and special reports to the Council. The existence of recent documentation in electronic form is a mixed blessing within the dense web of computer file directories. In addition to memory and reference to some DSA Council minutes and reports, this history has been based on comments and recollections provided by a significant number of key members of the association through electronic mail exchanges and discussion.

Invaluable information about the early period, before the formal establishment of the DSA in 1978, has been provided by Richard Jolly. The minutes of the inaugural meeting of the DSA were available simply because the ever thoughtful Walter Newlyn (who chaired the meeting) passed a copy to one of the members of the Council from the late 1990s. Ray Bromley, the first Honorary Secretary, was able to supplement this information from his location in New York at Albany College, and other former members of Council were happy to provide additional nuggets of information.

It is to be hoped that this document will give an insight into the disinterested study of international development on the one hand and the firm commitment to the objective of lifting millions of the world's population out of poverty on the other by the association's members over the years.

## **Origins and the Early Years**

The process of de-colonisation in the late 1950s to early 1960s was associated with the international rise of development studies, the rapid growth of universities in newly independent countries, a substantial increase in the number of expatriates working overseas<sup>3</sup>, and expansion of scholarship programmes and courses in the UK university system focused on developing country nationals. The decolonisation process also signalled a need for UK institutional realignment, notably with the creation in 1964 of a new Ministry for Overseas Development with Barbara Castle as the first minister (with Cabinet status), Sir Andrew Cohen (a former Governor General of Uganda) as the Permanent Secretary and Dudley Seers as the first Director-General<sup>4</sup>. In 1966 the Institute of Development Studies (at the University of Sussex) – the IDS – was created with substantial UK government funding as a focus for socio-economic research on development. Dudley Seers, a highly regarded economist with high-level experience in the UN Economic Commissions for Latin America and for Africa, moved from the new ministry to the IDS in 1968 as its first Director. While there had been a modest amount of socio-economic research supported by the former Colonial Office in earlier years, from the 1930s to the 1950s, the onset of the post colonial order also led to the establishment of new research funding programmes in the Ministry for Overseas Development.<sup>5</sup>

By 1970, several hundred development research projects were underway in universities or institutes throughout the United Kingdom. It was in this context that the need for a National Development Research Conference (NDRC) was perceived as a means of disseminating research results and encouraging networking within the Development Studies community. The origins of the conference were closely linked to the IDS role as a national

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<sup>3</sup> Many of the expatriates working in the universities of the newly independent countries were either on leave or secondment from developed country universities, or returned from their 'international duties' to work on their home university sectors, in many cases as development studies specialists.

<sup>4</sup> The new Ministry was referred to as the 'Elephant and Castle' (a famous London landmark), Sir Andrew Cohen being rather large and having a good memory, and Barbara Castle being the 'Castle' of course.

<sup>5</sup> While the Development Studies community has often been mainly associated with socio-economic research it needs to be re-called that much 'development' activity involves technical/physical science – such as agricultural, medical and civil engineering inputs into projects and programmes. The recent reorganisation of research funding in DFID recognises this, as does the creation of the new UK Collaborative on Development Sciences.

institute. Some of the senior members of the IDS, and others outside, perceived a need for the IDS to encourage development research within the UK more broadly, so that the generous government-provided core grant enjoyed by the IDS implied that it ought to be making a greater contribution towards the UK development research more generally through a process of decentralisation. Another influence was the annual meeting of Directors of 'Special' (Training) Courses which was already in existence. Research issues were sometimes raised there and some members thought that something similar was needed for development research

A first step was for IDS to prepare a register of all development research in the UK, which was first done by the IDS library in 1970. This was linked to the idea of IDS organising a development research conference, the first of which was held in September 1971. There were 200 participants at this first NDRC, invitations having been sent out based on entries in the fairly comprehensive information contained in the development research register. Following this first conference, a second and more complete edition of the register was prepared (listing some 400 ongoing social science research projects in the development area) and the initial register was issued to participants as a conference handbook. Further NDR Conferences were held in 1973, 1976 and 1978. The Glasgow Conference in 1978 was the occasion when the Development Studies Association (DSA) was formally established and it was after this that the DSA moved to holding annual conferences.<sup>6</sup>

Richard Jolly was responsible within the IDS for organising the first National Development Research Conference in 1971 with the support of Dudley Seers and some others, notably including Tommy Gee. A few others from outside the IDS were consulted and it was Frances Stewart who suggested it would be good to invite one of those involved with the recently published MIT *Limits to Growth* Study. Consequently Dr Jorgen Randers came from the MIT as one of the keynote speakers and others were Barbara Ward, Celso Furtado and Dudley Seers.

In the first NDRC, apart from keynote addresses, parallel sessions involved individual researchers making ten minute presentations about their own research.<sup>7</sup> These sessions were organised so that conference participants could follow all of the presentations in one geographical region or disciplinary area or could pick and choose throughout the conference. Ten minutes is not very long of course, but the purpose was to give participants an overview of what was being done, of the broad results, and to indicate the people who were active in that area of research.<sup>8</sup> Breaks between sessions were long enough to give people time to follow up through further discussion with individual presenters.

The second conference was held in the University of East Anglia in 1973. Athol Macintosh, the director of the Overseas Development Group, handled the 'local' side of the organisation, with the IDS making a significant contribution. Again, about 200 UK participants attended and, in addition, there were about 30 researchers from elsewhere in Europe. At this second NDRC the programme was based on what was to become a more 'conventional' structure, with fewer papers presented in parallel sessions and with more time for each.

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<sup>6</sup> These remarks draw on the IDS Annual Report No 5 of 1970-1 (p 86-7), No 7 of 1972-3 (pp 4-5), No 10 of 1975-76 (p73& 89) and No 12 of 1977-78 (entry under John Oxenham in the centre section).

<sup>7</sup> This was an idea contributed by Alison Jolly based on her own professional experience. Since the first of the 'development research' conferences the time allowed for parallel/break-out session presentations has typically been about 20 minutes with a further 10 minutes for discussion of each paper.

<sup>8</sup> Tommy Balogh chaired the session at which Barbara Ward spoke. He jiggled some keys for the first few minutes of her talk to her intense irritation – until she memorably slapped his wrist with the rebuke "Oh, do behave yourself Tommy." His keys were put sharply back in his pocket and Tommy looked a bit shame-faced, perhaps for the only time in his life!

There was a Saturday afternoon meeting at this 1973 conference during which the links and foundations for what became the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes (EADI) were laid. The EADI was formally established in 1975, three years before the DSA, and regional development research associations for Africa, Latin America and Asia later complemented the DSA's more global concerns. It is noteworthy that even today, there is no equivalent in the United States (though some Americans in the early years of EADI asked if they could join and it was politely suggested that they should form their own association).

Less information is available about the 1976 and 1978 meetings. John Oxenham and Martin Boodhoo organised the 1976 meeting in Manchester. According to the IDS Annual Report, John Oxenham was also the IDS convenor of the 1978 NDRC in Glasgow working with a group from Strathclyde University.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, a core of those later involved with the DSA were already active in these earlier conferences, including Deryke Belshaw, Walter Elkan, Ian Livingstone, Athol Macintosh, Helen O'Neill, James Pickett and Emil Rado.

The DSA was formally established during the 1978 NDRC at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow. The Chair of the Inaugural Meeting was Professor Walter Newlyn (Leeds University), and the initial membership of the DSA Council consisted of Keith Griffin (Oxford University) as President, Ray Bromley (University College of Wales, Swansea) as Secretary, Tommy Gee (Institute of Development Studies at Sussex University) as Treasurer and Membership Secretary together with Charles Cooper (SPRU, Sussex), Vince Cable (Glasgow), T. Scarlett Epstein (Sussex), Richard Feacham (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine), Aidan Foster-Carter (Leeds), Alec Fyfe (Advisory Teacher in Development Studies with Northamptonshire LEA), Ian Livingstone (East Anglia), Helen O'Neill (Dublin), James Pickett (Strathclyde), Emil Rado (Glasgow), Patrick Vaughan and Rudy Vis.<sup>10</sup>

From 1978 until 1999 the annual conference of the DSA was a two-and-a-half-day event (Plan A – starting after lunch on Day 1 and ending after lunch on Day 3) based around plenary presentations with keynote addresses. Notably in 1979 Amartya Sen presented his initial paper on the application of the 'entitlement approach' to the analysis of famines (published in *World Development* in 1980). In addition parallel 'break-out' sessions were run which allowed researchers to present preliminary results and 'ideas' papers for discussion with conference participants. This 'Plan A' model is still used in alternate years (2001, 2003, 2005, 2007 etc) as the basis for the conference structure. In 2000 the conference adopted a one-day format (Plan B on a Saturday in London – although in 2006 the conference was held at Reading University), still with plenary speakers and parallel sessions.

## Publications

One of the principal objectives for researchers presenting papers at DSA conferences has always been the prospect of publication. In the mid-1980s an arrangement was made with Macmillan for the publication in book form of an edited collection of papers which had been selected and edited by the academic member of the conference organisation team (a 'bonus' which can be seen as a form of 'compensation' for the hard graft involved in managing the conference) and the then current DSA President. The details of this series are shown in the table which appears below.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Recollections are that Amrit Bhat of the David Livingstone Institute was the key Strathclyde contact, with James Pickett (Director of the Institute) providing the basic institutional connection.

<sup>10</sup> Of these Council members Vince Cable was, of course, later to become a Liberal MP with responsibilities as Treasury spokesman, and Rudy Vis became a Labour MP in 1997 moving out of academic life at that time.

<sup>11</sup> Thanks to Renee Prendergast for most of this information.

1989	Renee Prendergast and Hans Singer	Development Perspectives for the 1990s
1990	Anthony Carty and Hans Singer	Conflict and Change in the 1990s – Ethics, Laws and Institutions
1991	Renee Prendergast and Frances Stewart	Market Forces and World Development
1992	Oliver Morrissey and Frances Stewart	Economic and Political Reform in Developing Countries
1994	Rick Auty and John Toye	Challenging the Orthodoxies <sup>12</sup>
1995	Helen O'Neill and John Toye	A World without Famine –New Approaches to Aid and Development

More recently an arrangement was reached with the Journal of International Development (JID – badged as the ‘Journal of the Development Studies Association’) through which a selection of papers is edited as a special issue of the journal annually with a similar outcome to the book series. Thus, with few exceptions, this special issue has usually appeared regularly in the middle of the year following the conference. Reference to the JID index will reveal the themes of the successive conferences. Following the 2007 conference the European Journal of Development Research (EJDR – the journal of EADI) published a special issue, so that two sets of published papers represented an ‘institutional’ outcome from the conference. This arrangement will be repeated for the 2008 conference.

### **Institutional Concerns with Short Course Training and Research in Development**

Earlier it was mentioned that annual meetings of a Conference of Directors of Special Courses (CDSC) were held from the mid-1960s onwards, early in the process within which the DSA was created. The concerns of these annual meetings were principally with discussion of issues relating to short courses (mainly of 12 weeks duration) focussed on a variety of socio-economic issues run by specialist departments, mainly in universities. The funding of these courses (and of the departments) was based on scholarships awarded to the participants, mainly provided by the UK Government through the British Council but international agencies (including UN agencies) also provided some scholarships. Although these courses were largely funded by public sector bodies the university departments determined the course topics and content, very much on a market-place basis – courses would be started if they could attract sufficient numbers of fee-paying participants, and would be modified or closed on the basis of internal evaluations. In the 1990s the sustainability of these university-based short courses was threatened by increased competition from private consultancies within the UK aiming to retain higher proportions of project aid through direct provision of training, by increased competition in the provision of equivalent short courses by developing country institutions (‘in country’ training), by increased competition from short courses in a wider range of developed countries, and by a draconian cut-back in scholarship funding by successive UK governments (through respectively the Overseas Development Administration – ODA – and the Department for International Development – DFID).<sup>13</sup> Over the years, several of the university departments providing short courses had developed substantial programmes of one-year taught Masters degrees, and these became a major focus of the CDSC in its later years together with the larger numbers of undergraduate degrees with a Development Studies content which were being established. Significantly

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<sup>12</sup> The plenary session on the Washington Consensus was addressed by John Williamson, and was notable for the threat by John Toye, in commenting on the presentation, to roll up a trouserleg.

<sup>13</sup> The TCTD (Technical Cooperation and Training Department) of the British Council had provided a substantial number of scholarship awards based on ODA/DFID funding, and by the time that this was closed the Chevening Scholarships Programme was about to expand based on funding through the FCO (Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

several of the development studies centres had been establishing substantial programmes leading to PhD and MPhil research degrees, most of the students coming from developing countries, and this led to another DSA response in the form of a Research Students' Workshop.

A major responsibility of the CDSC was the preparation and circulation of a 'Good Course Guide' (in hard copy printed format) which was a major international marketing tool for the member institutions. With the development of more taught Masters, research and undergraduate degree courses in departments originally largely concerned with research or with the running of 12-week short courses, the 'sector' had become much more complex. Most of these university departments had also been undertaking international training on a consultancy basis, much of it funded by the same bodies which provided scholarships for the short course participants. There was also more commissioned research, as well as what is now referred to as 'proactive' or 'responsive' research, being undertaken by the same departments. Non-government organisations (NGOs) were also becoming more active players in the research and training fields. The borders between the research/academic focus of the DSA and the training focus of the CDSC became increasingly blurred, with the same individuals being involved in both to a greater extent.

It was at this point, over the period 2002 to 2005, that the DSA agreed to take over the role of the CDSC, and in particular to switch the technology of the 'Good Course Guide' from a printed format to a 'world wide web' electronic format. This was accompanied by the introduction of a subscription-based institutional membership, and of a world wide web-based 'Research Guide'. A tentative start was also made with a web-based individual directory of DSA members. The annual 'conference' of Directors of Special Courses progressed through an interim Conference of Development Studies Centres (reflecting the broader interests of the departments involved) to what is currently an annual 'DSA Centres Meeting' at which institutional members of the DSA are represented by heads of department or alternates.

In the mid-1990s the DSA started a website in order to improve communication and networking. In the first instance this was prepared informally and was located on the University of Birmingham's computer system. When the administration of the DSA was transferred from Birmingham's International Development Department (IDD – thanks to Linda Curry) to Manchester's Institute for Development Policy and Management (IDPM – thanks to Hazel Burke in particular) in 2001 the DSA's website also 'migrated'. The transformation in 2003 of the Course Guide to an electronic format provided by the DSA coincided with a major upgrade of the DSA's website and a switch from the university server-base to an independent web-provider. At the same time, for a variety of reasons, the administration of the DSA became a full-time activity provided by Findings Research, an independent consultancy body and a considerable input by Frances Hill. This was therefore a critical point in the development of the DSA with several different aspects of its activity changing within a short period.

The merging of the CDSC into the DSA, and the establishment of a substantial 'institutional' dimension of what had previously been an individual membership organisation, came at a critical time in the evolution of the development studies community. In July 1997 a delegation of heads of centres arranged by the DSA (specifically by John Harriss as President) had made formal representations on an ad hoc basis to the DFID concerning the funding of research. This type of representation was to become a regular function of the DSA and there were two particular areas relating to research where significant and effective interventions were made.

The first related to the UK Research Assessment Exercise (RAE – undertaken under the aegis of the Higher Education Funding Council for England – HEFCE). For the RAE round which reported in 2001 Development Studies did not have a 'separate' existence but was reviewed under the auspices of the Geography Panel. There was a considerable body of opinion which felt that this arrangement was not appropriate, and for the subsequent RAE round (to report later in 2008) the DSA successfully made strong representations for a separate 'Development Studies' Panel, very much based on the efforts of Allister McGregor.

Later the DSA nominated most of the team which undertook the peer review exercise, only one of whom had been involved in RAE 2001. Barbara Harriss-White, who chaired the RAE 2008 Development Studies sub-panel (“J43”), had a meeting in 2004 with Sir Gareth Roberts (President of her Oxford University college and architect of RAE 2008) in 2004, stressing the importance of broadening the RAE, but not realising at that point that “J43” would happen.

The second intervention related to DFID research funding arrangements. There had been an increasing tendency for the DFID to prefer funding large collaborative socio-economic research programmes for which institutions were required to tender, the broad nature of the research topic having been pre-determined by the DFID prior to the request for tenders. From the early days of the Ministry of Overseas Development a considerable amount of socio-economic research funding had been on what has come to be known as a ‘responsive’ basis – meaning that the institutions applying for funding decided which area of research they wished to undertake, and the function of the committee (ESCOR – consisting largely of academics from the development studies community) was to select those applications which were to be funded. From DFID’s viewpoint the transactions costs of the responsive research system were high, and there had been a proposal to end the ‘ESCOR’ channel. The DSA made very strong representations for the retention of a responsive channel of DFID research funding, with the result that a new joint DFID-ESRC<sup>14</sup> programme was started, replacing the ESCOR arrangement. It is notable that DFID directly provided the funding for half of the research submitted by university departments for the RAE 2008 exercise.

Over a number of years the DFID have provided funding support for the Development Education Association (DEA – [www.dea.org.uk](http://www.dea.org.uk)). The DEA has a role which is mainly concerned with school-level education, but has also extended in principle into issues associated with the incorporation of ‘international development’ into university degree curricula and syllabi in all disciplines and subject areas. As long as the DSA was more involved with development studies research there was limited overlap between the two organisations, but when the DSA began to extend its concern to undergraduate development studies programmes within the electronic Course Guide the area of shared interest between the DSA and the DEA increased. The involvement of the DSA in a ‘benchmarking development studies’ exercise within the Quality Assurance Agency’s subject review system for undergraduate degrees made this shared interest more explicit, but without involving any direct ‘competition’. For some time the DSA and DEA have had the intention to collaborate more explicitly, but without actually managing to formalise the form of collaboration. A recent development has been the standing down of Doug Bourn from directing the DEA in order to set up the Development Education Research Centre in London University’s Institute of Education.

## **Study Groups and the Research Students Workshop**

Since the very beginning of its existence the DSA has placed emphasis on the work of its Study Groups in facilitating the research interests of its members. Originally these Study Groups were solely concerned with the organisation of small-group meetings to discuss progress reports on research related to the subject area of the group. A small budget permitted modest reimbursement of members’ travel costs in most years, with priority given to covering the travel costs of research students. Over the years this philosophy has

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<sup>14</sup> The Economic and Social Research Council has funded a considerable amount of development studies research over the years. For example, ESRC funding support included the Development Economics Study Group (DESG), operating parallel to the DSA for several years in the 1990s and meeting in the University of Leicester on several occasions. ESRC funding for the DESG ended around the year 2000. Oliver Morrissey attempted to maintain it with support from the University of Nottingham, but this effort ended in 2002. More recently the DESG has been revived with ESRC support, with a first meeting in the University of Sussex in September 2008.

not changed, although the number of study groups has increased so that they now encompass a wider range of subjects than was originally the case. From about 10 active study groups in the 1980s and early 1990s the number had increased to 24 by 2007-8.<sup>15</sup> Each of the study groups has a convenor, and often more than one convenor, reporting annually to the DSA Council through a Study Groups Co-ordinator. Following a special meeting of the Study Group Convenors held on mid-2001 it has become established practice for convenors to meet at some point during the annual conference to discuss common issues and problems. From the early 2000s an explicit policy of devolving the running of many of the parallel sessions at the annual conference to the study groups was introduced. This had the effects of reducing the burden of conference administration on the conference organisers, and of providing greater cohesion for the study groups.

In early 1997 the Council discussed the prospect of responding to a new ESRC programme supporting 'Advanced Research Training Events' including innovative approaches to the support of postgraduate research students. It was decided that an application to the ESRC would be prepared requesting funds to enable an annual meeting (or Workshop) of research students. This meeting would involve a small number of formal presentations about specific methodological aspects of development studies research, as well as progress reports by the students outlining their experience in matching methodological principles with their research, and in data collection and analysis. Originally the workshop was largely handled by Wendy Olsen (then of the University of Bradford) but it then became a much appreciated regular feature of the DSA's programme. The funding from the ESRC came to an end in 2004 together with the Training and Development Award scheme, while the ESRC's new 'Researcher Development Initiative' had different priorities which the DSA workshop did not fit. From the outset some matching funds from the DSA were required to supplement the ESRC grant, together with some contributions from the participating students. These arrangements involved the Research Students Study Group and a co-opted research students' representative on the DSA Council.<sup>16</sup> After the end of the ESRC funding the DSA Council decided to provide some funds for the workshop from its regular budget in order to assure the continuation of this important activity.

The DSA's Research Students Workshop was started at a time when doctoral research programmes in many UK universities were being strengthened in terms of centralised institutional support and in terms of research methods training. The DSA Workshop provided some training which complemented that provided by students' home universities and also gave some much needed support to students whose home university did not at that time provide formal training. In addition the Workshop focused on specific aspects of development studies research which were not necessarily provided by the home university training, and also provided a valuable opportunity for research students from diverse backgrounds to meet together and to compare experiences. In very recent years there has been some collaboration with the Developing Areas Research Group of the Royal Geographical Society in running the Research Workshop at the University of Liverpool.

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<sup>15</sup> It is hoped that more detail on the work of the DSA Study Groups will have been assembled by the time that this paper appears in published form.

<sup>16</sup> The minutes of the Council meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 1996 show that the DSA Postgraduate Research Group already existed at that time and that Joyce Onstat was the convenor. This pre-dates discussions about the preparation of the application for funding from the ESRC for the Research Workshop.

## The DSA Forum, the Monthly Bulletin and Recent Developments

Another key aspect of the DSA's role in facilitating communication and networking has been through various forms of its newsletter, giving an insight into the way in which the association has responded to changing technology and to perceptions of the best way to circulate information relevant to members. By 1980 the DSA had a newsletter appearing three times a year, prepared by the Honorary Secretary (who had this as a key role). When Mike Veitch was Honorary Secretary in the mid-1980s this was still in the form of a periodic newsletter distributed by post in a printed format.<sup>17</sup> However, there were more ambitious plans, which led to the production of the 'DSA Forum' in the 1990s, associated successively with Ron Clarke, Mike Edwards, Marcia Doyle, Caroline Harper, Deborah Doane, and Chris Barrow,<sup>18</sup> produced in more formally printed form and distributed by post. By this time electronic communication technology was changing quickly, and in the early 2000s Hazel Burke started an email newsletter or bulletin from her Administrator's position in the University of Manchester. This electronic bulletin quickly developed in terms of its content and circulation, and Frances Hill (initially as part-time Administrator and then as full-time Executive Director) continued the process so that by mid-2008 it had an international circulation list of about 5,000 (and an implied readership of many more).

The 'newsletter' illustrates a constant problem of the DSA – namely that of which services to provide freely to members and non-members alike, and which to 'ring-fence' as for members only. With a modest membership subscription level, and with no journal subscription tied to membership, there has been a tendency for many in the development studies community to take membership for granted. Researchers and practitioners in the 'development studies community' tend to 'know' each other, and on many occasions lapsed DSA members have responded "but I thought that I was still a member" to requests for payment of the annual subscription. Many of the services provided by the DSA have tended to be freely available without payment, and it was only in the early 2000s that formal current membership was made a condition of participation in the annual conference. The annual conference is one activity which it is possible to 'ring-fence', although even this is not fool-proof so that 'free-riding' is still a problem. More recently, through a Memorandum of Understanding with the DFID, there have been external funds available to supplement membership subscription income and conference fees as a basis for running some annual conferences, and – significantly – high level Policy Fora on key development issues.

Ray Bromley recalls that by 1980, when he demitted office as Honorary Secretary, there were about 500 individual members of the DSA. This level of individual membership has remained relatively constant over the years. By early 2008 membership of the DSA consisted of about 350 full subscription members, about 80 concessionary members, and about 250 'free' student members.<sup>19</sup> In addition there were about 80 institutional members in early 2008 meaning that the institutional members were 'signed up' for either the Course or the Research Guides, or for both.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Some DSA members will remember Mike Veitch's frustration in tackling the problem of getting early personal computers and printers to print the '£' sign reliably – the version of the newsletter which Mike produced from the University of Bradford were modest but invaluable photocopied documents.

<sup>18</sup> Ron Clarke produced the newsletter/DSA Forum as part of his role as Honorary Secretary, but production later became 'devolved' with a specific member of Council taking on this responsibility.

<sup>19</sup> In the early 2000s postgraduate students were offered one year's 'free' introductory membership of the DSA, with a concessionary subscription rate following this free year. In practice it has been difficult to distinguish between postgraduate research students per se and taught Masters degree students, but this has not been regarded as raising serious problems of principle.

<sup>20</sup> A 'special' category of membership applies to small NGOs which do not have either teaching or research activity.

Two particular recent developments should be mentioned. Since it was first introduced in the mid 1990s the DSA website had experienced two major redesigns at the points where the administration was moved from Birmingham to Manchester, and again after Findings Research took over responsibility (together with the incorporation of the Course and Research Guides) in 2004. In 2007 it became clear that the software architecture of the website had serious shortcomings for what we were asking it to do, and it was decided that, in order to have the capacity required to effectively handle the growing complexity of the DSA's activities, a complete redesign was needed. This new website was intended to go 'live' in the later summer of 2008 but has been significantly delayed, but will – inter alia – significantly improve the ability of the study groups to maintain up-to-date information about their work, facilitate the handling of material associated with conferences and policy fora, and increase the effectiveness of the DSA's administration.

The second new initiative relates to the decision by the DSA Council to extend a form of associate institutional membership to development studies research and training institutions in developing countries. There have been several years recently when academics from developing countries have been given the opportunity to come to the DSA annual conference. The new category of associate institutional membership is a logical progression of an 'outreach' to development studies researchers in developing countries providing institutional capacity building, career development for younger developing country researchers, and opportunities for increased inter-action between UK/Irish and developing country research and training institutions. Maureen Mackintosh of the Open University took the lead within the DSA Council in setting out the main features of this new enterprise.

## **DSA Administration**

The initial administrative input into the formation of the DSA was provided by the IDS at the University of Sussex through its support for the NDRCs which has been outlined earlier in this document. This support continued in the early years of the DSA, particularly through the contribution of Tommy Gee as the Treasurer/Membership Secretary. However, the first Honorary Secretary of the DSA, Ray Bromley, carried the main burden of administering the fledgling association. Following the inaugural general meeting in 1978 the system for running the annual conferences consisted of administrative inputs from the institutions acting as host. These inputs were costed into the conference accounts so that the time provided by university administrators (in support of the Council member responsible for overseeing the running of the conference) was recompensed financially to a reasonable extent. This system continued until about 1990, at which point Linda Curry (at the IDD in the University of Birmingham) became the part-time Administrator of the DSA. The Administrator attended Council meetings in a non-voting role and was paid a fee for an agreed amount of time, simultaneously working part-time for the IDD. The IDD also contributed in a variety of ways to the DSA through uncosted material support, through some of the unpaid time provided by Linda, and through providing the Treasurer/Membership Secretary for a number of years.

After giving very significant support to the DSA over a period of ten years the IDD understandably decided in 2001 that the arrangement needed to come to an end. An alternative means of securing the association's administrative requirements therefore had to be found. Fortunately the IDPM in the University of Manchester agreed to a similar arrangement to that which had applied with the IDD. After a short interim period Hazel Burke was appointed to a part-time post in the IDPM which mainly assured her role as DSA Administrator, with financial provision from the DSA's budget to cover the costs. This arrangement continued for two years, by which time the DSA Council was discussing the prospect of making the post virtually full-time. By the time of the 2003 annual conference (when the web-based Course Guide came online) it was clear that new administrative arrangements were needed.

Frances Hill, and her base-organisation Findings Research, agreed to take on DSA administration with effect from early 2004. This was a completely new area of experience for

the DSA Council, involving a contract with an outside body and other elements of a more formal nature. Fortunately, through the good offices of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI – its Director, Simon Maxwell, was the DSA President at this time) the contractual formalities were surmounted with ease, and the DSA Administration has continued with its customary informal style under the guidance of Frances, first as Administrator, and then as Executive Director when the Council decided that her role had become much more substantial.

Not the least of the changes which have occurred during Frances Hill's tenure has been the adoption of a Memorandum of Understanding with the DFID through which funds have been made available – initially for a period of three years – for support of specific annual conferences and, in particular, a high-level one-day Policy Forum on an annual basis (the first of which was run in May 2007). Taken altogether these developments have given the DSA Administration (and Council) the capacity to take on the entire organisation of the 2008 annual conference (a one-day event in London) rather than to adopt the established approach of asking one of the development studies centres to take responsibility.

## **Concluding Remarks**

In attempting to round off this short history perhaps the first issue to address is that of whether the DSA has 'made a difference'. If the DSA did not exist would it have to be invented? What would the UK/Irish 'development studies' or 'international development studies' community (meaning principally those involved in research and teaching relating to international development) have looked like in 2008 if the DSA did not exist? Essentially, in a technical sense, this is asking what the 'counterfactual' would have been – the 'with' and 'without' comparison.

The annual conference and the study groups, which have been central elements of the DSA's activities throughout, have given researchers an opportunity to 'try out' ideas and to present preliminary findings to their 'peers'. The conference has had a significant role in providing a forum for the dissemination of research results, an aspect of research given much emphasis by funding bodies. Although this experience has been mixed, between different sub-groups within the community and between years, most of the Council members (and DSA members) would probably take the view that the overall impact has been positive. The association has been able to generate a degree of collegiality and an extent of networking which has contributed advantageously to the quality, quantity and range of development studies research and, to a lesser extent, teaching in the UK and Ireland. Essentially this view is claiming 'added value', much of which is probably intangible and arises due to a form of 'externality' (to use an economic concept which has much significance in a development context).

In more recent years, and particularly since the incorporation of development studies centres or institutions into the DSA, there has also been a significant positive contribution through the representation of the development studies 'community' in the negotiation of research funding, research priorities and present and future research evaluation. This has been reflected strongly in the allocation of duties within the Council.

Further evidence of the positive nature of the DSA's contribution to the community is provided by the 'view from EADI'. The DSA is the oldest and most established of the 'national' development studies bodies, and is highly regarded by development researchers in Europe. Although the USA does not have any equivalent body, the Canadians do have the Canadian Association for the Study of International Development, and although there is no equivalent association in Japan development studies are well-established in the university system and we have a significant number of committed Japanese DSA members.

There are two particular areas of concern which surface from time to time in Council discussions. The first is the extent to which those active in the development studies field, particularly in the UK, feel it necessary and/or desirable to maintain membership of the DSA and their activity within the conference and study group discourse process. The DSA 'overlaps' with a number of other bodies including the Developing Areas Research Group

(DARG – within the Royal Geographical Society) and the British International Studies Association (BISA – within the Political Studies Association). This type of overlap illustrates the dichotomy between the multi- or inter- disciplinary of the DSA and the ‘single subject area’ or ‘single discipline’ approaches of the DARG and BISA. A similar situation has applied with the economists at times over the last 30 years. Another ‘overlap’ occurs at the interface between development studies and area studies, so that many DSA members have also been active within – for example – the African Studies Association, the Society for Latin American Studies, and the British Association for South Asian Studies, all of which are linked to the Area Studies Panels of the British Academy. The particular strength of the DSA is its ‘ability’ to bring together development researchers and practitioners from diverse backgrounds into a shared discourse. It is not clear that this ‘ability’ has been exploited by the development studies community to its fullest extent. There are many development researchers and writers in the UK and Ireland who have never been members, and have never been active within the DSA, and the future of the association needs to take account of this factor. This is especially significant in the context of a higher profile within universities for ‘development’ following the recognition of development studies for the RAE 2008 and the increased exposure of ‘development’ in the humanities and natural sciences as well as the social sciences in recent years – associated, for example, with the 2004 Asian tsunami and other significant events.

The second of these issues concerns the relationship between the DSA and the DFID. This has always been a comparatively close one, with the successive manifestations of the UK government’s international development role having been represented formally on the DSA Council throughout most of the time since the association’s formation. Both ‘sides’ recognise the need for the DSA to maintain an identity which is independent of government, not least due to the need to affirm the disinterested nature of development research, teaching and practice which is the lifeblood of the DSA. Another considerable overlap has existed between the researchers in the DSA, the determination of research funding within the DFID, and the undertaking of both research and consultancy studies. Over the years the same names have tended to occur in all three categories to a considerable extent – many of them leading DSA members. More recently, however, the DFID has established a new research strategy which could suggest an even more proactive role in the undertaking of research, and in the determination of research priorities. The World Bank model for economic research is a comparator, although the extent of movement of personnel between the Bank’s research department (including its consultancy studies) and – particularly – the US university sector has always been significant. If DFID perceives itself as being engaged in a more active discourse with the UK’s development studies community with respect to the exploration of analytical methods (especially as a basis for policy-focussed research), comparative research, and the diversity of paradigms, within the context of DSA conferences, study groups and policy fora, this will be a very welcome evolution.

Taking a much broader and speculative view, the DSA and its precursors can be considered to have ‘made a difference’ through its direct and indirect effects on the formulation of policy towards the objective of reducing the extent of global poverty and deprivation – from the ‘Development Decade’ of the 1960s to the Millennium Development Goals of the 2000s.

Then there is the question of the future. In mid-2008 the DSA Council undertook a review intended to throw open the strategical issues of the objectives and activities of the association. In this context the intention was to exclude nothing from consideration. The DSA is now a much more complex multi-activity body than it was in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Its budget is larger and more complex than it was then, and the organisational and management complexity is much greater. The review sought to ask whether there are things which the DSA has currently been doing which it could do better, and whether there are things which are not being done but which should be part of the association’s set of activities. It is necessary to recognise that the capacity for the DSA to introduce and effectively manage innovatory activities is limited. However, despite this limited capacity, the amount of change which has been experienced over the years is considerable and it is certain that further significant change will follow in the coming years.

## Appendix – DSA Officers and other Historical Records

In addition to attempting to establish some of the key pieces of information in the evolution of the DSA, a primary aim of this paper has been to identify of the Presidents and other officers of the DSA, and the locations of the annual conferences in particular. The following pages consist largely of this information without any significant linking explanation, although further explanation and discussion can be added in a revised version at a later stage.<sup>21</sup>

### Presidents of the DSA<sup>a</sup>

1978-1980	Professor Keith Griffin, University of Oxford
1980-1982	Professor Amartya Sen, University of Oxford (Nobel Laureate)
1982-1984	Professor Emanuel de Kadt, Institute of Development Studies
1984-1986	Professor Lalage Bown, University of Glasgow
1986-1988	Tony Killick, Overseas Development Institute
1988-1990	Professor Hans Singer, Institute of Development Studies
1990-1992	Frances Stewart, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford
1992-1994	Martin Griffiths, Director, ActionAid
1994-1996	Professor John Toye, Institute of Development Studies
1996-1998	Professor John Harriss, Development Studies Institute, LSE
1998-2001	Professor Paul Mosley, University of Reading / University of Sheffield
2001-2005 <sup>b</sup>	Simon Maxwell, Overseas Development Institute
2005–2008	Professor Cecile Jackson, School of Development Studies, UEA

Notes relating to the Presidency of the DSA:

<sup>a</sup> For the next twenty years the period of office of the President was two years and non-renewable but in 1996, at the DSA Annual Conference/AGM held in the University of Reading, the Constitution was changed so that the Presidential term became three years with effect from the 1998 election (the next available Presidential election).

<sup>b</sup> At the 2004 DSA Annual Conference/AGM it was agreed to extend Simon Maxwell's period of office by one year due to the perceived logistical difficulties of running an election during a one-day Annual Conference.

### Conference Locations and Organisers

- 1971 – IDS Sussex – the First National Development Research Conference
- 1973 – University of East Anglia – the Second National Development Research Conference
- 1976 – University of Manchester – the Third National Development Research Conference
- 1978 – University of Strathclyde, Glasgow – the Fourth National Development Research Conference
- 1979 – University of Reading (Organiser: ??)
- 1980 – University College, Swansea – University of Wales (Organiser: ??)
- 1981 – University of Oxford (Organiser: ??)
- 1982 – University College, Dublin (Organiser: ??)
- 1983 – Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex (Organiser: ??)
- 1984 – University of Bradford (Organiser: Mike Veitch??)

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<sup>21</sup> Many thanks to the following for contributing to the verification of the information contained in this appendix: Stephanie Barrientos, Lalage Bown, Ray Bromley, Ron Clarke, Tommy Gee, John Harriss, Richard Jolly, Tony Killick, Simon Maxwell, Helen O'Neill, Renee Prendergast, Andy Sumner and John Toye. In the latter stages of the drafting of this version of the paper it has been possible to consult an almost complete set of DSA Newsletters/DSA Forum between 1984 and 2000.

- 1985 – University of Bath (Organiser: Edward Horesh)
- 1986 – University of East Anglia (Organisers: Chris Edwards, John Harriss and Gundi Daymond)
- 1987 – University of Manchester (Organisers: David Hulme/Paul Mosley)
- 1988 – University of Birmingham (Organiser: ?Development Administration Group?)
- 1989 – Queen’s University, Belfast (Organiser: Renee Prendergast)
- 1990 – University of Glasgow (Organisers: Emil Rado and Anthony Carty)
- 1991 – University College, Swansea – University of Wales (Organiser: David Marsden)
- 1992 – University of Nottingham (Organiser: Oliver Morrissey)
- 1993 – Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex (Organiser: Pramit Chaudhuri)
- 1994 – University of Lancaster (Organiser: Rick Auty)
- 1995 – University College, Dublin (Organisers: Helen O’Neill and Maureen Clinton) – Theme: Famines
- 1996 – University of Reading (Organisers: Paul Mosley and Helen Stutley)
- 1997 – University of East Anglia (Organiser: Chris Edwards, Kate Brown and Jane Donaldson)
- 1998 – University of Bradford (Organisers: Michael Tribe and Lesley Knight)
- 1999 – University of Bath (Organisers: Allister McGregor, James Copestake, Geof Wood and Mark Ellison)
- 2000 – School of Oriental and African Studies (organised directly by the DSA) – 1 day event (Organisers: Paul Mosley with John Weeks and Anne Booth)<sup>c</sup>
- 2001 – University of Manchester (Organisers: David Hulme and Debra Whitehead)
- 2002 – University of Greenwich – 1 day event (Organiser: Terry Cannon)
- 2003 – University of Strathclyde (Organisers: Mozammel Huq and Moira Devaney)
- 2004 – Church House, Westminster, London (organised by the ODI/DSA with DFID funding support) – 1 day event (Organisers: Julius Court, Simon Maxwell and Frances Hill)
- 2005 – Open University, Milton Keynes (Organisers: Hazel Johnson and Jaqueline Eisenstadt)
- 2006 – University of Reading – 1 day event (Organisers: Christine Phillips, Howard Jones and Chris Garforth)
- 2007 – Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex (Organisers: Andy Sumner, Melissa Leach and Charlie Matthews)
- 2008 – Church House, Westminster, London (Organisers: Alan Thomas and Frances Hill with a sub-committee of the DSA Council, and with DFID funding support)

Note relating to the location of the Annual Conference:

<sup>c</sup> For the 2000 annual conference a misunderstanding led to the absence of a location determined sufficiently far in advance to permit the booking of accommodation etc for the ‘conventional’ 3 or 2½ day conference. In order to avoid a situation where there was no conference, Paul Mosley – the President at that time – was the lead organiser for a 1-day conference on a Saturday. Some DSA members had been suggesting that 1-day conferences might have certain advantages over the ‘conventional’ model, and since 2000 the two conference formats have alternated.

### **DSA Honorary Secretaries**

The information which follows is not complete, and additional information would be welcomed:

Ray Bromley	University of Wales, Swansea	1978 – 1980
	(Assistant Secretary – Jocelyn Kynch, University of Oxford – 1981 – 1987)	
Mike Veitch	University of Bradford	1984 – 1987
Jocelyn Kynch	University of Oxford	1987 – 1990
	(Assistant Secretary – Linda Mayoux, University of Cambridge – 1987 – 1990)	

Ron Clarke	University of Manchester	1990 – 1993
	(Assistant Secretary – Allister McGregor, University of Bath 1990 – 1992)	
	(Assistant Secretary – Maureen Sibbons, Univ College Swansea 1992 – 1995)	
Mike Edwards	Save the Children Fund	1993 – 1996
	(Assistant to the Secretary – Marcia Doyle, Save the Children Fund 1995 – 1996)	
James Copestake	University of Bath	1996 – 1997
Jackie Charlton	Glasgow Caledonian University	1997 – 1999
Judith Randel	Development Initiatives	1999 – 2000
Mike Tribe	University of Bradford	2000 –

Notes relating to the DSA Honorary Secretaries:

Ray Bromley was the Secretary of the Steering Group for the formation of a Development Studies Association in 1976-1977.

The minutes of the Council meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> November 1996 show that James Copestake had agreed to be Hon Sec for 12 months due to another person being unable to take up the post (as had been agreed at the AGM in September). This means that JC must be 1996-97. The minutes of the Council meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1997 clearly have JC as Hon Sec.

The minutes of the Council meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November 1997 show that Rick Auty agreed to take on the role of Assistant Secretary. These minutes also show that Jackie Charlton was Honorary Secretary at that time. Was the handover from Jackie to Judith in 1998 or in 1999?

### **Treasurers / Membership Secretaries**

The information which follows is not complete, and additional information would be welcomed:

Tommy Gee	Institute for Development Studies	1978 – 1985
John Oxenham	Institute for Development Studies	1985 – 1988
Ian Blore	University of Birmingham	1988 – 1992
Mike Hubbard	University of Birmingham	1992 – 1996
Andrew Shepherd	University of Birmingham	1996 – 1999
Kate Bird	University of Birmingham	1999 – 2001
Armando Barrientos	University of Manchester	2001 – 2004
Elisabeth Wilson	University of Manchester	2004 – 2007
Brian Pratt	INTRAC, Oxford	2007 –

Notes relating to the Treasurer/Membership Secretary:

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1997 clearly show the Andrew Shepherd was Treasurer/Membership Secretary at that time.

### **Administrators (Executive Director from February 2006)**

Linda Curry	University of Birmingham	1990 – 2001
Hazel Burke	University of Manchester	2002 – 2004
Frances Hill	Findings Research	2004 –

### **Study Groups Co-ordinator** (note – this is a recently added list which needs more work)

Oliver Morrissey	University of Nottingham	1991 – 1996
Rick Auty	University of Lancaster	1996 – 1998
Elsa Dawson	OXFAM	1998 – 2000
Stephanie Barrientos	University of Hertfordshire/ Institute of Development Studies	2000 – 2001

Andy Sumner

London South Bank University/  
Institute of Development Studies  
University of Wales, Swansea

2001 – 2007

Alan Thomas

2007 –