

# Report 2018



## Statistics for Sustainable Development

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# Stats4SD

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# Stats4SD Report 2018

Welcome to our first [Stats4SD](#) report. The aim is to provide an overview of the organisation and the type of work we do.



Stats4SD is now two years old! We have grown in size from 12 initial staff members to 19, including employees, associates and collaborators in the UK and abroad. We have grown in experience as a small not-for-profit team, and have established a financial base to ensure that our operations can continue in to the future.

Our challenge for the immediate future is to work towards increasing capacity in our team by developing the skills of our staff, and to bring in new, talented colleagues who share the principles and goals of the company.

Other challenges include diversifying our portfolio of activities to reduce risk and maintain interesting areas of work; and ensuring we create a rewarding work environment for our team. We also face exciting demands from one of our key clients: the [Collaborative Crop Research Programme](#) (CCRP) of the [McKnight Foundation](#). They have challenged us to find ways to better support research, by sharing the knowledge and experience of our team with CCRP grantees. Our input aims are at supporting the programme and its researchers to be more effective, and to further develop methods for research that involves farmer participation at all levels, whilst promoting productive, resilient and long lasting agroecological principles.

The main risk we face is related to economic uncertainty in the UK. A weak Pound reduces our ability to match international levels of pay and attract people with the skills and language capabilities that are important. While the outcome of the Brexit process is still difficult to predict, a weak UK economy may affect Stats4SD. In particular, if the participation of the UK government in funding development projects is reduced, we may face a reduction in the demand for technical support for the evaluation of development aid initiatives. As a result, part of our strategy is to not be limited to UK funded M&E work.

Brexit may also affect our ability to retain and replace staff. Over the last 4 years (including our time at the [University of Reading](#)), 4 out of 5 recruitment rounds for technical staff resulted in offers to citizens of other countries within the EU. This may not be possible in the future.

Stats4SD is working to meet these challenges and we believe we are in a good position to continue the work we started, and to be successful at an international level.

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## What is keeping Stats4SD busy?

### Long term projects and partners



- Our work includes day-to-day support to the researchers funded by [CCRP](#), contribution to the programme at all levels, and many trips to work alongside our colleagues in Africa and Latin America. Here is a small sample of the trips - to give a flavour of what the team has been up to:
  - Alex and Carlos led a workshop on '*Analysis of data from experiments with farmers*' in Cochabamba, Bolivia.
  - In October, Ric and Nuru joined the CCRP meeting on Farmer Research Networks (FRNs) in Singida, Tanzania to exchange what they had learnt.
  - Nicolas went to three African countries, in three weeks, as part of the Research Methods Support of the CCRP, for his first trip abroad with Stats4SD. This involved a data clinic for multiple projects in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; a direct support for the data analysis of a project in Kisumu, Kenya; and attending the Southern Africa Community of Practice (CoP) meeting in Arusha, Tanzania.
  - Jane supported a CCRP workshop in western Kenya to work on FRN projects to further develop their research designs and analysis.
  - Ric, Sam and Nuru provided support at a writing workshop in Arusha, Tanzania where 28 McKnight funded researchers were aiming to write, and ultimately publish, papers highlighting their key findings over the past 5 years of research.
  - Carlos was at the leadership team meeting for the CCRP of the McKnight Foundation in the USA, which was hosted by Professor Rebecca Nelson from [Cornell University](#).
- **Aga Khan Foundation**
  - Carlos and Dave went to Geneva to meet with colleagues from the Quality of Life unit at the [Aga Khan foundation](#), where discussions were held to strengthen our existing collaboration.
  - Alex contributed to Aga Khan Foundation's '1 Million Lives Unlocked' project through his high quality, robust, end-line research study, and by helping the client to understand the impact their work has had.

### Short term assignments

- Andrew was in Nairobi co-presenting the results of a panel impact evaluation, conducted by Monitoring and Evaluation for the Somalia Humanitarian, Health and Resilience Programmes of DFID MESH 1, assessing the impact of [DFID's Somalia Humanitarian Resilience Program](#) (SHARP), before, during and after a severe drought that hit Somalia in 2017.
- Sam and Shiphar attended an end line evaluation research methodology workshop for [Living Water International](#) in Kampala, Uganda.
- Roger went to Benin to attend an [ICRAF](#)-led project on climate services for agriculture. He also travelled to Haiti to do similar work.
- In October, Dave and Emily helped to finish the last pieces of the [Data Tree](#) course in advance of the course's official launch covering all areas of data management from ethics to connecting with

policy makers. They also assisted with the Data Tree workshops that took place across the UK for PhD students and early career researchers.

- Ric and Carlos carried out an evaluation of research methods support at [ILRI](#), Kenya.
- We had a visit from Professor Dankmar Böhning, Director of [Southampton Statistical Sciences Research Institute](#), to discuss continuing our association with S3RI and Southampton. Carlos also gave a seminar there.
- Ric and Carlos were invited to the [British Antarctic Survey](#) to discuss research and development.
- Chris was at a workshop in Malawi training extension officers to use the [PICSA](#) App approach with farmers. Chris's role in the project involved the ongoing development and training of the app.

## Staff updates

In 2018, we had 6 new members of staff join our team. For the first time Stats4SD offered Internships; one for statistics and one for data engineering. We aim at providing an opportunity to promising people to gain experience in those areas, as well as to make a contribution to the work of Stats4SD.

Full details on our staff bios can be found here: [www.stats4sd.org/our-team/](http://www.stats4sd.org/our-team/)

	<p><b>Nicolas Greliche:</b> Joining the team as a Statistician, Nicolas has a PhD in biostatistics and 10 years' experience in conducting research, analysis, support and teaching in Statistics. Before moving to Stats4SD, Nicolas has had varied experience in the field of Statistical science, working in Economics, Genetic Epidemiology, Psychology and Medical Statistics.</p>
	<p><b>Jane Poole:</b> For the past 20 years, Jane has supported multi-disciplinary research and development projects across a wide range of topics and speciality areas. Jane works for us part-time as a Senior Statistician, while also working for the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) in Nairobi, Kenya where she has been leading their Research Methods Group since 2009.</p>
	<p><b>Lucia Falcinelli:</b> Having joined the team as a Data Engineer Intern, Lucia has a Master's in Computer Engineering and a keen interest for problem-solving and taking on new challenges. Lucia intends to use her time at Stats4SD to improve her skills, for instance in software development and supporting customers with apps.</p>
	<p><b>Faheem Ashraf:</b> Working as a Statistics Intern, Faheem is driven by a deep interest in reconciling the gaps between the academic statistics taught in his Mathematics Bachelors and Statistics Masters with the demands of real-world data analysis. Faheem intends to use his year at Stats4SD to explore the breadth of socially pertinent problems that can, and cannot, be meaningfully approached using statistics.</p>
	<p><b>Shannon Mullen:</b> Working across the whole team in supporting and managing administrative tasks, Shannon joined the team in November and is also a third-year student at Reading University studying History and International Relations. The role has enabled Shannon to develop her administrative skills and to apply them to a business and finance-based role.</p>
	<p><b>Emily Nevitt:</b> Working as a Graphic and Instructional Designer, Emily helped develop an e-learning course and has since been involved in creating educational multimedia resources for a variety of projects, as well as providing graphic design support for the team.</p>

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## Changes in the way some work with us

Chris Clarke wants to enjoy freedom from employment and made the decision to become a freelance consultant. He continues to contribute to Stats4SD on an ad-hoc basis as a contractor. Ian Fitzpatrick has come back to support the work for CCRP working two days per week.

## Goodbyes

	Loredana Horezeanu left in February 2018 to work for the World Bank.
	Sebastian Steinmüller left Stats4SD in summer 2018 for the UN.
	Chris Gould left after finishing his BA at Henley Business School to pursue a career in business.

... to all of them; many thanks, keep in touch! And all the best in your career!

## Stats4SD at two years old

### Are we following our principles?

At the start of 2019, Stats4SD published its [principles](#) by which it aims to operate. These were discussed by our team and eventually approved and adopted. They guide our conduct as a not-for-profit social enterprise, committed to supporting sustainable development, and are the basis for our efforts towards achieving our goal of *'promoting better use of statistical methods for decision-making to benefit society and the environment'*. In future annual reports, we hope to have some indicators of how well we are doing. This year we can say that our work so far is in line with the aim of working with those who are striving toward sustainable development goals. We are aware of the environmental consequences of air travel and are making efforts to maximise the number of interactions with colleagues via long distance communications.

### What is Stats4SD understanding of being a not-for-profit?

For Stats4SD to be a 'not-for-profit' means that from the start we decided to legally restrict how any surpluses made by the company could be used. In practice this means that there are no owners of the company, and no one can make personal financial gains from the work of the organisation. At Stats4SD:

- Our Directors are employees of the company. They are employed to contribute their technical skills in the work to achieve our goals. They also take responsibility for the performance of the company, but they don't own Stats4SD.
- Any surpluses made from our work must be used for the following purposes:

- To ensure the financial stability of the company, and with that; our long-term future. This happens through the building of financial reserves for times when the going gets tough, and through growth in the form of recruitment of new colleagues and capacity development of our team.
- To contribute to promoting our goals: this happens through work that our team carries out at zero cost for initiatives that we choose to support, or through financial contributions to those initiatives.
- Donations to good causes proposed by our team.

Our principles can be read in full at [www.stats4sd.org/who-we-are/](http://www.stats4sd.org/who-we-are/)

## Contributions to good causes

As a result of making small surpluses in our first 2 years of operation, Stats4SD was able to make donations to good causes nominated by our staff. These donations are made to people or organisations that are connected in some way with sustainable development, data and information or our local community.

In 2018, £16,500 were donated, while an additional £3,500 allocated, but not yet disbursed. We are very pleased to announce that 2018's funding has gone to the followed well-deserved causes:

Médecins sans Frontiers	<a href="http://www.msf.org.uk">www.msf.org.uk</a>
Support for the African Maths Initiative (SAMI)	<a href="http://www.samicharity.co.uk">www.samicharity.co.uk</a>
Managing erosion in Tanzania	<a href="http://www.liana-ry.org/liana-news-blog">www.liana-ry.org/liana-news-blog</a>
Compass Children's Charity	<a href="http://www.compasschildrenscharity.org.uk">www.compasschildrenscharity.org.uk</a>
St Mungos - homeless charity	<a href="http://www.mungos.org/">www.mungos.org/</a>
Reading-San Francisco Libre Association	<a href="http://www.sanfranciscolibre.org">www.sanfranciscolibre.org</a>
Reading Refugee Support Group	<a href="http://www.rrsg.org.uk">www.rrsg.org.uk</a>

The not yet disbursed donations include support to a young Kenyan Mathematics student to attend a training course in Cameroon - though sadly he was unable to obtain a visa to travel. Also support for a North-South exchange with colleagues from the University of Colombo in Sri Lanka, which has not yet taken place, but we hope will happen later in 2019.

## Money in and out

Below we summarise our main sources of income and what we spend it on.

Sources of income	2018	2017
Grants	26%	18%
Sale of services	74%	82%
<b>% with respect to total income</b>		

Our main grant comes from the CCRP project, funded by the McKnight Foundation. It is awarded to enable Stats4SD to support CCRP activities on the use and evolution of research methods.

Main structure of costs	2018	2017
Personnel costs	79%	77%
Other costs	10%	13%
Travel and reimbursables	11%	10%
<b>% with respect to total expenditure</b>		

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Since our salaries represent such large proportion of our costs, we have included an explanation of our rewards policy at the end of this document.

Our full set of accounts are in the public domain at Companies House UK:

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/companies-house](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/companies-house)

## Staff community news

In September, Stats4SD celebrated its two-year anniversary of being in the Reading office, and followed this up in December with a tree-planting excursion with the Woodland Trust in Epsom. We had a great day out (in pouring rain and strong wind, no less!) and it felt like a lovely way to commemorate our two-year anniversary.



2018 was the first full year of running our [blog](#), which received contributions from various team members. The aim is to showcase and share our work in more detail, as well as exploring learnings from projects and reflections on statistical techniques we use. Here is a rundown of the posts from the year:

- ✓ *An Insight into the World of App Development* by Chris Clarke
- ✓ *Lessons learnt from a multi-country survey* by Alex Riba
- ✓ *Beyond ANOVA – Big Data and Large-N trials* by Ric Coe
- ✓ *Beyond ANOVA – the Layers and Loops of Analysis* by Ric Coe
- ✓ *Measuring Resilience in Somalia* by Sebastian Steinmüller
- ✓ *On-Farm Trials to Farmer's Trials – How Evolving Perspectives Drive Evolving Methods* by Ric Coe
- ✓ *Team Remote: Working Together from all over the World* by Chris Clarke and Nuru Kipato
- ✓ *Do the means justify the Ns? Our thoughts on sample sizes* by Ric Coe
- ✓ *Happy 2nd Birthday to Stats4SD!* By Tina Bhati
- ✓ *Reflections of my interview experience in the villages of Singida, Tanzania* by Nuru Kipato
- ✓ *One Statistician's Musings on our Company Name* by Nicolas Greliche

In addition to our blog, we continue to provide frequent updates on our social media platforms [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#). We're continuing to grow both in terms of the number of followers and reach.

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## Stats4SD rewards policy

Our rewards policy in the UK includes a wide range of benefits, as well as salaries comparable to the UK charity and voluntary sector. We are a small not-for-profit that works within the context of the UK labour market, which guides what we do to attract and retain staff in terms of rewards. We also strive to offer members of our team a work environment that supports a satisfying professional practice, and a sensible work life balance.

As a not-for-profit, Stats4SD does not distribute the surpluses of our operations to the directors of the company. Everyone who receives payment from our company does it in the form of a salary or payments for services contracted by the company.

## Our staff's benefits package

### Salary

Our salary levels aim to be fair to employees within the context of the UK labour market. Our salaries compare well with the average salaries paid by the voluntary sector in the UK. See:

- <https://www.thirdsector.co.uk/charity-sector-salaries-2018-next-job-pay/careers/article/1454845>
- <https://jobs.theguardian.com/article/charity-sector-salary-guide/>

A pay review takes place annually. It is subject to our ability to afford salary increases. Our review normally includes an increase linked to inflation, and discretionary individual staff increases related to career progression.

### Pension

Eligible staff are automatically enrolled into the company's pension provider ([www.nestpensions.org.uk](http://www.nestpensions.org.uk)). We comply with statutory requirements with respect to the level of contribution by both the employee and employer. After one year with us, if a team member chooses to increase his/her personal contribution to at least 6%, Stats4SD may be prepared to increase its contribution up to 16% of the gross salary.

### Hours of work and flexible working

We have developed a culture of work that emphasises trust within our team. Start and end times at the office are flexible, and we'll consider the specific circumstances of each team member. We have colleagues who work full-time, part-time, and variable times. We do not offer zero hour contracts.