



HUMANITARIAN INNOVATION FUND Early Stage Innovation Final Report

– Please try not to exceed 5 pages (Arial, 12pts) excluding attachments –

Organisation Name	University of Leicester
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Project Title	Self-examination intimate DNA swabs to enhance victim-centred responses to sexual violence in humanitarian contexts
Partner(s)	Wangu Kanga Foundation
Problem Addressed / Theme	Responses to sexual and gender based violence
Location	Kenya
Start Date	1 May 2018
End Date	31 December 2018

Total Funding	Total HIF and other contributions to this project £79,793 (total cost) £49,784 (HIF contribution)
Total Spent	£74,895.19

Innovation Stage	Problem recognition
Type of Innovation	Self-administered DNA evidence collection kits to support survivor-focused responses to sexual violence in low-resource environments



Project Impact Summary	<p>Our innovation aims to impact on the criminal justice sector, survivors of sexual violence, and wider communities through enhanced capacity for the collection of forensic DNA evidence. In low-resource environments and humanitarian emergencies the ability to collect forensic evidence to support prosecutions for sexual violence is limited by a lack of infrastructure, trained medical professionals, and facilities. Our self-administered DNA evidence kits would enable survivors to collect and document forensic evidence without requiring a full medical examination, thus preserving valuable evidence which can identify the perpetrator.</p> <p>The ultimate impact of this innovation could be enhanced reporting rates by survivors, an increase in successful prosecutions (supported by high-quality forensic evidence), valuable intelligence for investigators (e.g. the ability to link crimes committed by the same perpetrator), and a deterrence effect on perpetrators.</p>
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ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT

1. Describe all the activities carried out. Please attach a workplan or log frame, if these were used.

This funding enabled our project team to spend time working in Nairobi, consulting with a range of stakeholder organisations about the current forensic DNA workflow in Nairobi, the limitations/barriers to the use of forensic DNA in cases of sexual violence and gather views about our innovative self-administered DNA collection kits by demonstrating a prototype kit.

During our time in Nairobi we carried out in-depth consultations, interviews and focus groups with the following organisations, in collaboration with our project partner Wangu Kanja:

FIDA Kenya (women's rights organisation)
Physicians for Human Rights
Grace Agenda
International Justice Mission
International Development and Law Organisation
Kenya National Commission on Human Rights
National Council on Administration of Justice
Directorate of Criminal Investigations
Government Chemist
Nairobi Women's Hospital
Kenyatta University
University of Nairobi
National Gender Based Violence Working Group
Forensic Pathology Services
Human Rights Watch
International Centre for Transitional Justice

Kenya Human Rights Commission
UN High Commission for Human Rights

In addition to the consultation activities, we also completed work (in collaboration with the Government Chemist, Directorate of Criminal Investigations, and Kenyatta University) focusing on the technical aspects of the benefits of male-specific (Y-chromosome) profiling for the criminal justice sector in Kenya. This work involved the collection of a sample database from Kenya (obtained with assistance from collaborator at Kenyatta University) and analysis of these samples at the University of Leicester. The results of this work will assist with the robust interpretation of DNA profiling results in the Kenyan context, and is especially timely given that discussions are on-going in Kenya about the establishment of a National DNA Database.

2. If you have made changes or amendments to the planned activities and objectives that have not been detailed in an *Agreement Amendment Form*, please list them here.

N/A

ACHIEVEMENTS

3. Has the project demonstrated the success of the innovation or idea?

By 'success' we mean that the innovation has achieved the planned positive impact/outcome, or that the idea has proven effective.

- ☒ Completely successful
- ☐ Significantly successful
- ☐ Partially successful
- ☐ Completely unsuccessful

Please explain further:

4. Please describe how the project achieved the planned objectives, and describe all of the results achieved through the activities indicated in Question 1.

The first objective of this project was to conduct consultations, interviews and focus groups with key stakeholder organisations in Nairobi in order to determine the feasibility of our innovation and better understand the local context of forensic science infrastructure and associated challenges. This was a crucial first step to understanding whether our innovation is likely to be impactful in the Kenyan context, and how it might be integrated into the forensic workflow.

As outlined in section (1), we met with a range of stakeholder organisations and obtained valuable insight and feedback from all participants. Our meetings with the Nairobi Women's Hospital, Forensic Pathology Services, Government Chemist and Directorate of Criminal Investigations provided the project team with a deeper understanding of how forensic DNA is currently utilised in the Kenyan criminal justice context, and the barriers to successful use of DNA in cases of sexual violence. We also learned about their current capacity for DNA profiling as well as plans that are currently under discussion for expansion of their labs and the establishment of a National DNA Database. These

developments made discussions about our innovation particularly timely, and the response from these organisations to the self-administered kit prototype were very positive.

We also had in-depth discussions with the various human rights organisations and criminal law organisations (outlined in section 1), which focused on the benefits of our innovation to survivors and the logistics of making such kits available to survivors whilst also maintaining chain of custody of evidence. This feedback was extremely useful for the development of our longer term project plans, because these considerations are crucial to ensure the kits have impact on the criminal justice sector. Through these discussions it was agreed by most participants that the best route to distribution of the kits would be for NGO clinics and other 'safe places' where women report sexual violence to make kits available for use in their facilities (to be submitted to police by the organisation rather than the survivor directly). This process would maintain chain of custody and continuity of evidence, and avoids issues of corruption at police stations (e.g. where women are sometimes charged money for paperwork and collection of evidence).

The only challenges to this innovation which were raised during our interviews and focus groups relate to issues that the project team has already identified, and which can be overcome through effective implementation of the innovation and training for key organisations. The main challenge related to a general scepticism about false allegations of sexual violence and concerns that women could 'frame' men using our self-administered DNA kits. This is an unfortunate issue, but one that we had anticipated, as it demonstrates the deeply-rooted mistrust of survivors of sexual violence which is common in many countries. However, we believe that this is an issue that can be overcome through training of investigators and prosecutors in the context of our innovation, as forensic DNA is mainly useful evidence in cases where the perpetrator is unknown to the victim (e.g. they are strangers, not acquaintances). Forensic DNA does not assist in determining issues of consent, and after discussion about this with the participants the conclusion reached by all was that this could be easily understood and applied appropriately by organisations if training was offered on this topic.

The results of the DNA profiling of samples obtained from Kenya is still on-going, as these procedures take time to complete, so we are not able to report the final results here. However, we have obtained some GCRF Impact Acceleration funding to support a visiting technician from Nairobi to assist with this lab work at the University of Leicester in March 2019.

APPROACH

5. Describe how the approach, project design or methodology you used was OR was not appropriate to carry out the planned activities or to achieve the planned objectives.

As this project was focused on identifying and understanding the local context of forensic science in Nairobi, and gather initial views on the feasibility of our innovation, the use of interviews and focus groups was effective for completing our planned activities. Our approach to working closely with our project partner to identify and engage with appropriate stakeholders was essential for the success of this project.



MAJOR OBSTACLES

6. Please list the three most significant obstacles faced during the project and describe how they affected the planned activities and results.

Obstacle	Impact of Obstacle
1. Securing engagement of stakeholders	Ensuring sufficient range of stakeholders for our consultations
2. Obtaining understanding of local context	Project team not fully appreciating the local context and challenges
3. A key obstacle to the success of our innovation is overcoming the logistical issues of distributing the kits	Kits potentially not available where needed

7. Please indicate what steps were taken to address these obstacles and whether the solutions were effective.

Solution	Effective?
1. Partnership with local collaborators to obtain participation from stakeholders	Yes
2. Enable the entire project team to spend a substantial amount of time immersed in the local context	Yes
3. Engaging with a range of criminal justice stakeholders at the development stage of the project to ensure that issues are effectively identified and addressed by the design of the innovation	Yes

OPTIONAL: PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

If you received HIF funding with partners or collaborators, please answer questions 8 and 9.

8. How and why did the partnership change during the course of the project?

Our project team has been working with our partner (Wangu Kanja) for the past two years, so we have developed an equitable working relationship prior to this project. So, although our partnership didn't change much during the course of this project, we did find spending time with Wangu's organisation

in the Mukuru kwa Reuben informal settlement gave us a much deeper appreciation for the work that they do in that context.

9. Are there plans to continue your partnership, either while continuing this innovation or on other projects?

- ☒ Yes, with this innovation
- ☒ Yes, with another project
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ No

Please describe further:

Wangu Kanja Foundation is currently establishing a national survivors' network across Kenya, and together we are planning to engage with this network to ensure survivors voices are represented in this project and beyond.

DISSEMINATION

10. Please describe any steps taken to disseminate the outcomes of the project.

Please include all completed and forthcoming, as well as all planned and unplanned products (for example, research and policy reports, journal articles, video blogs, evaluations).

The project team published an article in The Conversation (Africa), and is in the process of drafting a journal article for submission.

We were delighted to be awarded the Times Higher Education Research Project of the Year (Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences) in November 2018 which generated a press release and some media coverage for the project.

<https://theconversation.com/innovative-dna-recovery-techniques-could-help-victims-catch-rapists-in-kenya-107618>

<https://le.ac.uk/news/2018/november/30-the-award>

NEXT STEPS

11. Will the project, idea or innovation be replicated, carried forward or scaled up?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

Please describe further



As a result of this funded project, the project team and our partners have confidence that this innovation can be successfully implemented and have substantial impact on survivors of sexual violence and the criminal justice system in Kenya. We therefore intend to carry forward the project to the next stage, which involves the manufacturing of the DNA kits for field testing (which many of the organisations involved in this project are keen to work with us on).

Beyond field testing and validation of the DNA kits, the next stage would be embedding these kits in the criminal justice process in Kenya to assess the impact on investigations and prosecutions of sexual violence. In addition, there is potential to scale the innovation up to other low-resource environments once the concept has been tested and demonstrated.

12. If the project or innovation could be carried forward, replicated or scaled up, please list the three most important issues or actions that will need to be considered (*where 1 = most important and 3 = least important*)

Suggestion/issue	1	2	3
1 Funding is required to support the next stages of the project – manufacturing and field testing of the innovation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Continued, and expanded, partnerships are required in Nairobi to ensure that field testing can be successfully completed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Training of key stakeholders to ensure appropriate use of the innovation, and development of the National DNA Database in Kenya to ensure due consideration of privacy and human rights issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>