



CHEVENING

CHEVENING **ANNUAL REPORT** **2019-20**



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Coventry University	Queen Mary, University of London	University of Surrey
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		Yayasan Khazanah



FOREWORD

As the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's (FCDO) Minister for Scholarships, I am proud of Chevening's story. Chevening transforms the lives of its global participants, changing their perceptions of the world and of their own role within it.

The Annual Report sets out Chevening's latest chapter. While Covid-19 has disrupted lives around the world, I was heartened to hear of so many Chevening Scholars and Alumni rising to this challenge through their resilience, perseverance and leadership. Examples of the Chevening community excelling when faced with this unexpected adversity feature within this report.

International scholarships bring together bright and creative people from all over the world to address global challenges. There has never been a more important time for international collaboration.

Also in the Report are examples of scholars and alumni tackling issues using the skills gained from their studies, including a scholar promoting green technologies in Botswana (p.12) and an alumnus in Bangladesh who has contributed thousands of recycled, biodegradable face masks to the government's free face mask programme during the pandemic (p.10).

Bringing the best minds together to create positive change, scholarships help break down cultural, social and economic barriers. Scholars discover an academic discipline, discover their global neighbours, and – most importantly – discover who they are and what kind of leader they want to be.

Where brilliant people from a diverse range of backgrounds converge, ideas blossom. Backed by world-class learning institutions, innovative businesses and some of the best global minds, together we are a global Chevening community capable of shifting the boundaries of our imaginations.

Finally, I'd like to extend my thanks to our Chevening Partners – from UK universities to corporate partners – whose support makes so many scholarships possible.

**NIGEL ADAMS MP
MINISTER OF STATE**



INTRODUCTION

It has been an extraordinary year for the Chevening programme. When I took over as Head of the Scholarships Unit at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office at the end of 2019 I was excited about what my first year overseeing this prestigious programme would bring. I can't say it turned out as I had imagined!

It would be strange to introduce this report without acknowledging some of the challenges of running international scholarship and fellowship schemes during a pandemic, a scheme which brings scholars from around the world together, to embed scholars in their wonderful Chevening community.

There has been some reimagining to do. In March 2020, we changed our policies to allow current scholars to complete their degrees from home. We also postponed several of our fellowship schemes to 2021. In July 2020, we held our first full-cohort fully-online Farewell event, which you can read about in the following pages. Our new cohort have jumped through many hoops to make it to the UK to start their courses. For those scholars prevented from travelling, we have supported remote learning until they are able to make it to the UK.

It has been a delight to see how our scholars, fellows, staff and partners have overcome the hurdles this situation has put in our way. Our scholars have done some incredible things to support each other and their communities, and many contributed their skills and experience on the frontline of the Covid-19 response.

The impressive Chevening cohort in the UK in 2019-2020, nearly two thousand strong, has shown how it can be a force for good from the very beginning of the Chevening journey.

Which brings me to our partnerships. The scale of the Chevening community is increased significantly by our partners. The 2019-2020 Chevening cohort was supported by 45 university and 82 corporate or public-sector partnerships. These partnerships allow us to offer more scholarships to more deserving candidates, with 1 in 5 scholars supported by a partner in 2019-2020. They also add value to our programme by exposing scholars to new organisations which they can learn from, and offering fantastic add-ons such as work experience and mentoring.

The Chevening Partners contribute to a life-changing experience for the individuals they fund, and we want to thank you for your generous support.

I could not be prouder to be associated with the Chevening programme this year.

NAOMI RAYNER
HEAD OF THE SCHOLARSHIPS UNIT AT
THE FCDO



THE 2019-2020 CHAPTER IN THE CHEVENING STORY

In September and October 2019, 1700 new Chevening Scholars arrived in the UK, most of the 160 Chevening-eligible countries and territories, with over 50 scholars each from Mexico, Brazil, China, Nigeria and Indonesia. Scholars adapted to their life in the UK quickly.

At the orientation event in October scholars were given guidance to help them settle in. They were inspired by keynote addresses by Rita French, Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva and Ambassador for Human Rights and Vivienne Stern, Director of Universities UK International. Most importantly, this provided the first opportunity to network with Chevening Scholars from different universities, and to meet Secretariat and FCDO staff.

SCHOLARS SUPPORTED ONE ANOTHER

The bonds formed at these early events proved invaluable to Chevening Scholars when the coronavirus pandemic came to the UK in early 2020. Completing a one-year postgraduate degree in the UK in 2020 turned out to be challenging in ways nobody had imagined in September 2019, but Chevening Scholars rose to the challenge in extraordinary ways.

In a survey of scholar satisfaction and wellbeing in July 2020, a high proportion of our scholars said they had provided emotional or practical support to other scholars during the lockdown period, through starting support groups and running wellbeing activities, among other things.

One scholar said:



Some of my best Chevening friends and I decided to form a support system during which we set aside one day every week during lockdown [to]...catch up on everything that we've been doing, in addition to sharing some emotional, educational and social coping strategies that we discovered during lockdown (banana bread recipes featured quite heavily).... If anything, Covid-19 brought us closer together as Cheveners.



Pictured: Orientation 2019

SCHOLARS ADAPTED TO ONLINE LEARNING

As well as adapting to life in lockdown and all the personal demands this brought, scholars also had to transition from a primarily in person university experience, to an experience which was largely, or even entirely, online.

In July 2020 most of the Chevening cohort felt that the transition to online learning had gone well. 88% of our scholars felt they were building skills and knowledge in their specialist subject area. Of course, there were disappointments. Some scholars were not able to prepare the dissertations they had hoped to write, due to being unable to do the necessary fieldwork or laboratory work, or not being able to access libraries or archival materials.

Scholars frequently described the Chevening network as having been really important in helping them through the difficult times. Scholars created working groups, virtual study groups or support groups.

EVENTS AND POLICY CHANGES

Despite the overall resilience and adaptability of Chevening Scholars, they were not immune to the general challenges of the pandemic and lockdown, which many of us experienced. Some scholars reported difficulties concentrating, mental health concerns, lack of motivation and a difficult working environment.

The Chevening Secretariat responded by offering scholars flexibility regarding their

award, with scholars allowed to return home early where this was possible, to continue their studies from home.

We also provided personal support, in the form of phone calls from their dedicated Programme Officer, and an events programme designed to support wellbeing and ensure the second half of the Chevening journey was as stimulating as the first half.



Wellbeing events included supper clubs, 'Staying Positive' workshops, yoga, meditation and a mindfulness session, which in total 200 scholars attended. There was even a comedy improv workshop called 'Learning British Improv' with **Hoopla**, to keep things lively!

There were special one-off events, such as 'Night at the Museum,' a private online tour of the Victoria and Albert museum with Vernon Rapley (Director of Cultural Heritage). Over 150 scholar attendees explored the exhibitions and unique artefacts, and found out about the running of the museum. There was also a 'Pandemic Prevention' workshop with Professor James Wood (Head of department of veterinary medicine at the University of Cambridge) and Dr Ayako Ebata (Research Fellow at the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex).

Two key events in the annual Chevening events programme were held online – the two-day Chevening Scholar conference and Farewell event.

The Chevening conference was originally planned to be held at the University of Edinburgh, and was themed 'Big ideas: Global leadership in 2020'. Scholars shared their ideas and ambitions to lead and inspire change on a local, national and global level.

CHEVENING CONFERENCE KEY STATS



400

VIEWERS TUNED
IN EACH DAY



22

SCHOLARS
PRESENTED THEIR
WORK AND STUDIES



TOPICS

INCLUDED DEVELOPMENT,
TECHNOLOGY, HEALTH, THE
ENVIRONMENT, AND MORE

FAREWELL

While the Covid-19 pandemic brought uncertainty and significant challenges, it also brought new opportunities to innovate. Each year, at the end of their award, Chevening Scholars come together from across the country to celebrate and discuss their future plans. Restrictions on large-scale gatherings due to Covid-19 resulted in the first large-scale online Chevening event.

At Farewell, scholars attended inspiring talks and were able to chat to each other in designated areas for networking. The programme included a keynote address and Q&A with journalist and BBC diplomatic correspondent James Landale (pictured), and an inspiring speech from Dr Anne-Marie Imafidon, MBE.

Here is what some scholars had to say about the digital Farewell event, and their reflections on the start of their Chevening story.



‘My advice to Chevening scholars who want to make a difference locally or globally, is to stay international in your focus and to stay aware of what is happening in the world. If you do this, then you can engage more with the world and shape the political, economic and business environments back home.’

James Landale



As a Chevenor you’ve already had to step out of your comfort zone a few times. The Farewell event empowered me to make staying out of my comfort zone a habit, the new normal. We have amassed such a wealth of knowledge throughout the year, coupled with great networks. Use these to impact your society and never lose sight of thinking globally. Engage in those uncomfortable conversations! The pandemic drove us out of our comfort zones and left us with only two choices: adapt or react. Your choice determines the outcome.

Zanele Sikhondze



I was a bit doubtful at first, but I have to say that of all the virtual events and meetings I have attended since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Chevening Farewell event was by far my best experience. Why? Surprisingly, I was more open to engaging with strangers than I would be in real life[...] It gives me hope that maybe digital interactions could bring a powerful change to the workplace... A big shout out to the Chevening Secretariat for overcoming adversity and reminding us that “where there is a will, there is a way!”

Maimouna Mbacke





A GLOBAL NETWORK OF LEADERS

The alumni community also reacted to the Covid-19 pandemic with swift and positive action. Like Chevening Scholars, Chevening Alumni reached out to each other to offer emotional and practical support.

Alumni describe using social media – especially Facebook and Whatsapp – and their personal networks to keep in touch with their fellow Cheveners and to offer support and share information. A number of alumni also described providing support to current scholars who were on award in the UK. This support varied ranging from academic support, career advice, emotional support and providing information about the outbreak in their home countries.



The alumni in Haiti have been in constant communication with current Haitian Cheveners to provide guidance and support through WhatsApp group and Zoom.



I have mostly kept in touch with current Cheveners using social media platforms like Facebook and Skype and have offered my support to students in my field currently completing their final months of study in the UK.





Through Chevening, I gained the academic training necessary to work in peacebuilding at an international level.



INDIVIDUAL AND GROUPS OF ALUMNI HAVE BEEN DOING INCREDIBLE THINGS TO TACKLE THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 IN THEIR HOME COUNTRIES

Here are just a few stories from within the Chevening Alumni network.

CHEVENING ALUMNUS ACHALEKE CHRISTIAN

In 2018 Achaleke Christian won the Outstanding Youth Peaceworker category at the Luxembourg Peace Prize.

He developed a new campaign at the outset of the pandemic, manufacturing and donating hand sanitiser to communities in Cameroon. The One Person One Hand Sanitizer initiative is a youth-led initiative that adopts a peace building approach to the prevention of the spread of Covid-19, and builds community resilience in Cameroon, focusing particularly on vulnerable communities.

Achaleke transformed his offices into a Covid-19 Rapid Response Laboratory and formed a coalition with young bio-medical scientists to facilitate the production of the hand sanitizers. He recruited volunteers to serve in the different areas of production, distribution and sensitization.

The initiative also works to improve understanding of how to stop the spread of the virus, prevent panic using different local languages, and counter misinformation and hate speech.



CLASS OF: 2017

FROM: CAMEROON

STUDIED:
MSC INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

CHEVENING ALUMNA AND PART OF GLOBAL SHAPERS COMMUNITY CRISTINA GUTIERREZ

The community has worked to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on the most vulnerable in their society with an innovative solution – partnering with Uber Eats to deliver essential items.

They began considering how best to get food and essentials to the elderly and children while exposing them to minimal risk, and Cristina initiated the involvement of Uber through a contact from previous work on social projects, a contact who helpfully had their own contacts in the supermarket world.

A couple of Costa Rica's main supermarkets became involved. They decided that through an app, people would select whether they wanted to donate food or cleaning products. The information would then go through to the supermarket, who would compile the package, and Uber Eats would deliver it. Within the first week they had 140 packages of food and cleaning supplies delivered to 18 different homes for the elderly.

The project, now named 'Solidarios' ('Solidarity' in English), took some time to get off the ground. They persisted through the layers of bureaucracy, and the project went live in early June.



CLASS OF: 2018

FROM: COSTA RICA

STUDIED:
MSC IN HUMAN
RESOURCES AND
ORGANISATIONS
AT THE LONDON
SCHOOL OF
ECONOMICS

CHEVENING ALUMNUS MAMUNUR RAHMAN

Mamunur Rahman is the inventor of a low-cost sanitary towel made from leftover clothing materials, Ella pad, which supplies more than 50,000 women, as well as providing employment opportunities. It has already won awards including the British Council's Study UK Global Alumni Award for Entrepreneurship in 2019.

In 2020 the Ella garment factory alliance decided to respond to the pandemic and produce biodegradable general-use masks from surplus fabrics to distribute for free among the poor in Bangladesh.

Determined to offer a different, more environmentally-friendly solution to the problem, Mamunur galvanised workers at a number of factories which are part of his Eco-friendly Low-Cost Liquid Absorbent (Ella) alliance, to create and distribute their masks in all 64 districts through the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA).



The unique approach at Sussex was that they encouraged me to take ownership of my work. I was always inspired to use my own initiative when devising solutions for social problems I'd encountered.



CLASS OF: 2007

FROM: BANGLADESH

STUDIED:
MA IN GENDER AND
DEVELOPMENT FROM
THE UNIVERSITY OF
SUSSEX

Alumni have shown their leadership and influencing power outside of the pandemic response too. The Chevening Alumni Project Fund (CAPF) seeks to support the most innovative and positive ideas from Chevening Alumni and Alumni Associations. It helps ambitious alumni get projects off the ground. Below are two CAPF projects from the last year.

EMPOWERING WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY IN TURKEY

Two alumnae from Chevening's 2017 cohort, Feriğül Gungören and Özge Yıldız (alumnae of UCL and University of Sussex) champion women working in technology, an industry where women are currently under-represented.

They formed the Tech Women's Club to bring women in the sector together to address issues of diversity and gender equality, and to inspire women and girls in Turkey to consider technology as a career path.

CAPF supported two Tech Women's Club events in 2019, a panel discussion at the British Ambassador's residence in Ankara and a seminar in Istanbul. In Istanbul panellists from companies such as Google, Vodafone and Arcelik presented on how they adopt good practices for gender equality.

Since these events, the alumnae who initiated the project have started an online platform to continue to engage on the topic of empowering women in science, technology and engineering.

RAISING AWARENESS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN BHUTAN*

Chevening Alumni in Bhutan started Project Gakyid ('happiness' in Dzongkha), supported by CAPF, which advocates for an end to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Bhutan. To tackle this issue the alumni produced an evidence-based 25-minute documentary titled 'Nang gi Taam - A Private Matter' based on interviews with survivors of domestic violence, and used by local NGOs.

The documentary is intended to sensitize viewers to the complexities, prevalence and prevention of domestic violence in Bhutan, and to encourage those in situations of violence to seek help.

As part of the project, the alumni also coordinated a forum on the topic of 'Eliminating Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)' in collaboration with a local NGO, RENEW, to facilitate dialogue between key stakeholders on the subject and to premiere the documentary.

*text adapted from a blog written by Yangchen Dolkar Dorji – class of 2015, University of Sussex - and published on the Chevening website

GREENING THE WESTERN BALKANS*

The Western Balkans countries are increasingly facing environmental challenges, with implications for the health of citizens and the economies of the countries. In response, the Macedonian Chevening Alumni Association (MCAA) organised the 'Greening Western Balkans Environmental Conference', in Skopje in October 2019.

Chevening Alumni and other speakers from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria and Croatia were invited. The conference was opened by the Minister of Environment and Physical Planning for North Macedonia, as well as the British Deputy-Ambassador and the audience heard from expert speakers from Belgium, the United Kingdom, and Mexico. The MCAA's influence was demonstrated by their ability to secure experts; this was the first time a Greenpeace speaker had presented in the country.

The conference helped raise awareness about the key drivers of environmental degradation, and ended with reflections on the responsibility of individuals and societies to tackle environmental challenges and build a more sustainable future. MCAA led by example in reducing the environmental costs of the conference by going paperless. The conference opened an important dialogue for the region and MCAA are determined to keep pushing forward by designing a follow up event.

*text adapted from a blog written by Gjakush Kabashi – class of 2011, University of Westminster - and published on the Chevening website

DRIVING SUSTAINABLE CHANGE WITHIN THE CHEVENING COMMUNITY

Chevening Scholars are proactive about pursuing positive change, and there are many stories in this report of the projects they are pursuing in their home countries. They do not put this on pause whilst they are in the UK studying for their degrees.

One of the most impressive statistics to sum up key values embodied by Chevening Scholars are the hours they spend volunteering whilst in the UK; 3420 hours to be precise. Seven scholars were presented with a gold award for contributing more than 100 hours of volunteering alongside their studies during their time in the UK.

Below, we hear from two scholars about their volunteering experiences.



I volunteered with the Canal & River Trust, which is a charity organization that looks after around 2000 miles of waterways and canals across the UK. This has given me the opportunity to not only contribute to my community but also allowed me to meet and chat with friendly and amazing people and this, in turn, has positively affected my mental wellbeing. So, it's a win-win situation.

Omar Elarbi



I've had a very rich volunteering experience in the UK, with two full-time roles mentoring a teenager and reading with children respectively, and several one-off opportunities assisting organisations with activities for children and the elderly, helping bring smiles to their faces!

Nashwa Naushad



3,420

HOURS OF VOLUNTEERING WERE GIVEN BY THE 2019-2020 CHEVENING COHORT



129

SCHOLARS GAVE THEIR TIME TO 329 ORGANISATIONS AROUND THE UK



PROJECTS INCLUDED EVERYTHING FROM CONSERVATION TO TEACHING DIGITAL SKILLS, AND MORE

Being selected for a Chevening Scholarship is highly competitive, and one thing that really sets apart successful candidates is their vision for creating long term, positive, sustainable change in their home countries.

Fortunately, our university partners also look for this attribute in their students, so selecting co-funded university partner scholars is an easy task.

University partners generously co-fund Chevening Scholarships through tuition fees waivers, meaning more individuals benefit from the scholarship programme.

The University of Sussex, a partner since 2017, is a leading institution in Development Studies, amongst other fields, and is a popular choice for Chevening Scholars. In 2019-2020 there were 119 scholars at Sussex, from 55 countries. Sussex is home to countless prestigious Chevening Alumni, not least Carlos Alvarado Quesada, the current President of Costa Rica, who completed an MSc Development Studies at Sussex in 2008, and Bogolo Kenewendo, Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry in Botswana and the youngest minister in the country

This partnership is summed up perfectly by Richard Follet, Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor and Associate Vice President (International) at the University of Sussex:

Richard Follet was speaking in August 2020 to Chevening – University Sussex 2019-20 Partner Scholars and Chevening staff. The scholars at the meeting spoke about the highlights of their year at Sussex.

The stories of our Chevening Scholars encapsulate in so many ways what Sussex is all about. We believe in our mission of changing the world and creating change leaders. [B]eing a Chevening-Sussex alum is about making an impact in society. That's important in the way we have positioned the University of Sussex globally: it is a leading centre for sustainability. Our core values are Collaboration, Kindness, Integrated Inclusion and Courage. Our Chevening Scholars represent these values and their experiences are in so many respects emblematic of what we stand for as a University.



Studying at Sussex has given me a strong theoretical background of the debates and discussions around sustainable development. At Sussex you experience learning in real time and are encouraged to link academic discussions with events that are happening around you. This has been not only an academic learning experience but a practical learning [experience] of a lifetime. (Sumit Kumar, India, Sustainable Development)

As a student with a disability, studying at the University of Sussex has been amazing. The level of support I received prompted me to start an online programme to provide mental health support for girls in Nigeria during the pandemic. It has always been my dream to have a UK degree and Chevening and the University of Sussex made that a reality. The knowledge and skills that I've gained will help me to enhance my work back home in Nigeria and make the change that the world needs.

**Ejiro Okotie, Nigeria,
Development Studies**

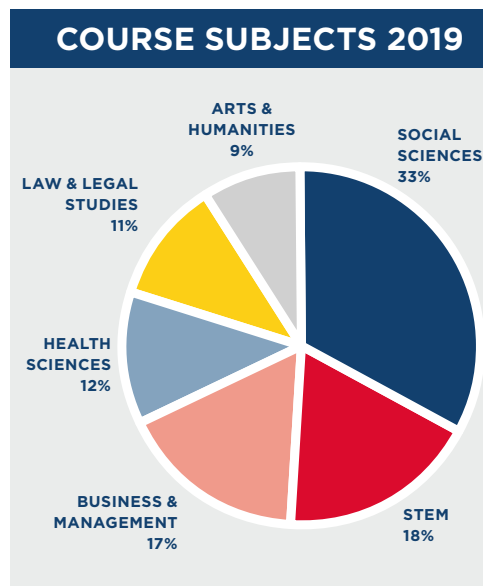


SCHOLARSHIPS TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS

Chevening Scholars study a wide range of master's courses, shown below, from engineering to education and teaching, at the UK's best universities. In 2019, one third of Chevening Scholars studied a course in social science, with STEM subjects and business management being the next two most popular disciplines.

As part of their Chevening application and interview, scholarship candidates have to demonstrate how pursuing their chosen course will help to advance their career, but also how the knowledge and skills they gain will help them to make a positive impact in their home country. The strongest applications articulate how the chosen course will allow them to respond to the issues that they are passionate about addressing in their home country.

Chevening Scholar Laura Thato Bafaletse, from Botswana, who studied for an MSc in Environmental and Business Management, at Bangor University, explains her own ambitions to drive change in Botswana, and support the need for more research on environmental management.



My degree in environmental and business management focused on integrating environmental management with business practices [to] achieve sustainable development.

The key principle is the balance of environmental, economic and social development drivers. Sustainable development is key in policy developments for major institutions and governments.

The course offered many interactive features such as seminars and conferences [and visits] to some of the star organisations flourishing in sustainability and green technologies [including] attending the very first Institute of Environmental Management and

Assessment (IEMA) North Wales event which took place in Bangor University.

The government of Botswana is striving for a knowledge-based economy, which is my biggest driver in improving the availability of information about our country through publications [...] that will inform global environmental treaties and agreements that the country is party to.

I intend to start up an environmental consultancy and research company that will engage with private and government organisations to research and develop reports, especially in the renewable energy sector.



2019-2020 Scholar Frank Tianyi, supported by partner GSK, talks about his chosen course at the University of Oxford, and what it will enable him to do in future.



Prior to starting my MSc degree in Global Health Science and Epidemiology at Oxford University, I spent five years providing primary healthcare services in rural areas in Cameroon. There is a real need for public health professionals in remote rural areas in Cameroon, especially the northern parts of the country, where social insecurity caused by the Boko Haram insurgency, extreme weather events and the Covid-19 pandemic have disrupted the provision of healthcare services and compromised the health outcomes of inhabitants in these areas. [...]

My [Global Health] course has helped me to acquire the skills, knowledge and practice on how to conduct and interpret studies on important areas of human health.

I'm looking forward to transferring the skills that I've gained and using them where I think it would be relevant, especially during these challenging times. I would like to thank GSK for sponsoring my Chevening Scholarship and for enabling me to pursue my area of interest. I'm proud to have been sponsored by a company who is giving back to the community.



HIGH LEVEL ENGAGEMENT WITH THE FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

British Embassies and High Commissions play a crucial role in the delivery of the Chevening programme. They market the programme locally, select new scholars, support returning home scholars, and have a strategy for life-long engagement with Chevening Alumni.

Despite dealing with a global pandemic, in early 2020 FCDO missions shortlisted candidates from among 60,000 applications received for awards in 2020-2021. They then set about completing nearly 6000 interviews globally in March and April 2020.

The Chevening interview period was disrupted in most Chevening-eligible countries by the global pandemic, and interviews that were initially scheduled to be held in-person, at Embassies or High Commissions, were postponed and transferred online. However, both candidates and interviewers adapted to this new format, and FCDO missions were able to conditionally select new scholars for awards.

Embassies and High Commissions also engage with local partners and run events to funders develop the networks that will support their future ambition.

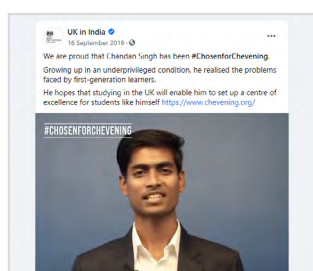
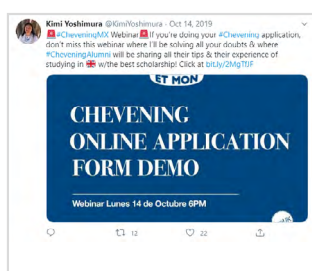
ANII PRESIDENT JOINS SEND-OFF FOR 2020 URUGUAYAN SCHOLARS

On August 2020, Ambassador Faye O'Connor held her first event at the embassy, bidding farewell to the seven brilliant Uruguayans selected for Chevening Scholarships this year, studying degrees as varied as public policy, architecture, law, engineering and entrepreneurship. The Ambassador thanked the National Research and Innovation Agency (ANII), Cone Marshall and Pfeffer Family Foundation, all partners of the programme in Uruguay.

ANII president, Flavio Caiafa, the Director of Education of the MEC, Gonzalo Baroni, and the president of the British University Graduates Association, Joaquín Bazzano, were all present at the meeting and are themselves all Chevening Alumni. Caiafa told how this scholarship was a fundamental milestone in his life, giving the scholars tips for the exciting year ahead:



20 years ago I was standing here to take a photo of myself as a scholar. What you are going to build this year are relationships with friends, with fellow students, with teachers and that is the most valuable thing.





PRUDENTIAL THAILAND SIGN RENEWED MOU DURING PRE-DEPARTURE EVENT FOR 2020 SCHOLARS

Alexandra McKenzie, the Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy in Bangkok, hosted a pre-departure reception for 2020/2021 Thai scholars.

The Embassy were delighted to develop longstanding partnerships with businesses through Chevening. Prudential Thailand renewed their partnership with the British Embassy to fund Chevening Scholarships. They were equally delighted to partner with CIMB ASEAN who sponsor five Chevening Awards in SE Asia



CHEVENING PARTNERS IN BRAZIL

In December 2019 the UK Ambassador to Brazil, Dr Vijay Rangarajan, hosted a lunch reception to thank longstanding Chevening Partners for supporting Brazilian scholars, law firm Pinheiro Neto, and charitable foundations Fundação Lemann and EDUCA.

Fundação Lemann, founded by Brazilian philanthropist Jorge Paulo Lemann, have partnered with Chevening since 2017 to support scholars studying public policy at the UK's top universities, while Sao Paulo-based Pinheiro Neto have supported law scholars for the last 5 years. EDUCA, an educational charity founded by Chevening Alumnus Gui Silva, has supported scholars for several years pursuing studies in international relations. Both have renewed their support for the programme for 2020/2021.

CHEVENING INTERNATIONAL PEOPLE AND POSTS



160

CHEVENING OPERATES IN OVER 160 COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES



34

FULL-TIME CHEVENING OFFICERS, CHEVENING ASSISTANTS AND ALUMNI MANAGERS IN COUNTRIES ABROAD



380+

PEOPLE IN BRITISH EMBASSIES & HIGH COMMISSIONS ABROAD HELPING TO DELIVER THE CHEVENING PROGRAMME



7

NEW PARTNERS WERE POST SECURED FOR CHEVENING AND 32 PARTNERS WERE RENEWED LAST YEAR

CHEVENING'S INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE





Chevening Scholarships are available to candidates in 160 countries and territories, so it's reach is truly global.

During the application window British Embassies and High Commissions sprang into action to make sure that candidates from across their country were made aware of the opportunity Chevening provides. Their activities include many of the things you would expect to see, such as sharing information on their social media channels and at events, but many go the extra mile to find harder-to-reach audiences. In 2020 FCDO missions largely relied on online promotion to reach potential applicants, but expanding digital outreach provided an effective means to reach a wider audience.

Chevening has thousands of follows on its central social media platforms, as shown below.

On Facebook the total global reach of our posts in 2020 exceeded 6.5 million, on Twitter our posts have been shown to nearly 8 million people, and on Instagram over 1.2 million people.

TOTAL FOLLOWERS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

 505.8K INCREASE +39K	 114.7K INCREASE +43.4K
 96K INCREASE +26.5K	 83.8K INCREASE +25K

GUATEMALA 2020

The British Embassy Guatemala City made sure their digital outreach efforts were as impactful as face-to-face alternatives.

In July 2020 the Embassy published a **two-page article** on Chevening in the national newspaper, El Periódico, as part of their special higher education 'Campus' edition, which targets students and professionals looking for academic opportunities.

The spread included an interview with Chevening Alumna Gabriela Guzman, who recently co-founded a data lab to better inform Covid-19 decision makers in Guatemala.

MIDDLE EAST & NORTHERN AFRICA

Conducting outreach to promote Chevening Scholarships in 2020 was largely a digital affair. In September 2020, posts in the Middle East and Northern Africa region, including the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt, organised a joint launch event on Zoom.

The British Consul General Jerusalem, Philip Hall OBE, opened the session and guidance on the application process was shared by Chevening Officers. There were also talks from alumni, and a live Q&A on Facebook with the Chevening Officers, which was viewed by over 26,000 people.

RUSSIA 2019

The British Embassy Moscow took a creative approach to raising awareness of Chevening with university staff and students. To promote the 2020/2021 application window, they supported an English Language Olympiad for the students of 20 regional technical universities. The Embassy also represented Chevening at an event on academic mobility held at the National University of Science and Technology MISIS (Moscow), where they were able to share information with faculty working in the student mobility departments of different universities across Russia.

VIETNAM

The British Embassy Hanoi has been promoting the fantastic new University Wales partnership, through which an additional ten Vietnamese scholars are funded to study at a Welsh university. Amongst other activities, they created a video of Tracey Marengi, Universities Wales' Marketing and Communications Manager, announcing additional scholarships for Vietnamese students.

They also organised workshops in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, for over 300 participants in both cities, to allow would-be applicants to find out about applying and interviewing and to meet alumni.

In March 2020 the Embassy ran a 'Wales Video Contest', where competitors were asked to record a video answering the question 'If you could have lunch with any famous Welsh person in history or in our current times, who would that be?' The campaign generated thousands of social media interactions (as of March 2020, 2,600 likes, 3200 comments, 3000 shares), as participants posted their videos on social media. The winner, Pham Huynh Thuy Hien, received a gift pack and the opportunity to have lunch with Welsh British Ambassador to Vietnam, Gareth Ward.

This is a promising start to promoting these scholarships, as well as Welsh universities.





FORWARD LOOK

I'll start by echoing the words of Naomi in the introduction to this Annual Report; this year has been extraordinary. However, as I write this, it is hard not to feel a growing sense of optimism for the year ahead, despite the knowledge that we still have a way to go before we see the other side of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The vast majority (at the time of writing over 90%) of the 2020-21 scholars have made it to the UK to start their courses in person.

We allowed scholars who were not able to travel and unable to start their courses online from home to defer to next year, and we look forward to welcoming these individuals next year. For those who could travel, many had to quarantine for two weeks when they arrive, and we've not been able to run any face-to-face events with these scholars as we normally would. But a year is a long time and we hope that we'll be able to celebrate in person by summer 2021.

In the meantime, technology is everyone's best friend in facilitating new friendships and professional connections, at universities and within the Chevening network. We held the orientation event for new scholars online, with addresses from three FCDO speakers; Dr Vijay Rangarajan, the Director General for the Americas and Overseas Territories, Nick Bridge, Special Representative for Climate Change and our very own Naomi Rayner, Head of the Scholarships Unit.

Our first survey of new scholars shows a great sense of optimism and anticipation within the cohort, as they make the best of this situation. In September 2020

the survey showed that well over 90% of scholars agreed or mostly agreed they were equipped emotionally and practically to begin their studies, and we hope these number have increased since then.

I also want to echo Naomi's thanks to our partners. This year we have a slightly smaller cohort, partly due to a number of scholars working on the frontline of the pandemic deferring their places. It is a sign of how valued Chevening Scholarships are that so many university and corporate partners have renewed their commitment this year and are supporting scholars. Indeed 23% of scholars are supported by a partnership in 2020-21.

My hope for the next year is that we'll see a cohort stronger and more determined than ever, to make connections, to experience a new country, and to make lifelong friends.

**MIRANDA THOMAS
DIRECTOR
CHEVENING SECRETARIAT**



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Chevening Awards

CHEVENING