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UPGro - Unlocking the Potential of Groundwater for the Poor (Knowledge Broker)

Unlocking the [Potential of Groundwater for the Poor](#) (UPGro), is a seven-year international research programme (2013-202) which is jointly funded by UK's Department for International Development (DFID), Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). It focuses on improving the evidence base around groundwater availability and management in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) to enable developing countries and partners in SSA to use groundwater in a sustainable way to benefit the poor.

Project Facts

Country:

UK, Sub-Saharan Africa

Project Period:

2013 to 2021

Name of Partner Organisation(s):

[Richard Carter & Associates](#)

[British Geological Survey \(BGS\)](#)

Name of Client(s):

Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)

Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)

Department for International Development (DFID)

Our Services:

[Knowledge Sharing, Networking, Training & Capacity Development](#)

- **Knowledge Management:** Knowledge Exchange Strategy development and execution to maximise learning and sharing between research partners.
- **Programme coordination:** Chair of Programme Coordination Group comprising leads from the 5 Consortium Projects
- **Communications & promotion:** website, newsletter, social media, face-to-face networking, webinars; guest lectures on post graduate courses.
- **Synthesis:** Project Summaries & Briefing Notes (English/French), catalyst synthesis, overview presentations at events and meetings
- **Engagement & Influencing:** raising the profile of groundwater research through the [African Groundwater Network](#), the [African Ministers' Council for Water \(AMCOW\)](#), [Sanitation & Water for All \(SWA\)](#) partnership, [RWSN](#).
- **Organising & facilitating events, workshops and conference side events:** including [SIWI World Water Week](#), [Africa Water Week](#), [WEDC Conference](#), [IAH Congress](#), [7th RWSN Forum](#)
- **Attracting additional funding and collaborative partners:** including

[UNICEF](#), [BGR](#), and other UK-funded programmes such as [Future Climate for Africa \(FCFA\)](#) and [REACH](#)

- **Monitoring & Reporting:** Re-development of programme Logical Framework and reporting against it.

[UPGro website](#)

Name of the Staff involved and functions performed:

[Sean Furey](#): Project Manager, main contact point, communications, brand and media management, UPGro online presence management, international event management,

[Dr Kerstin Danert](#): Chair of Programme Coordination Group (PCG). Lead on programme Log Frame. Contact point with UNICEF, BGR and AMCOW.

[Bertha Camacho](#): Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

Prof. Richard Carter: UK event, liaison with UK Academia, synthesis of overall Catalyst Grant programme.

Dr Kirsty Upton, BGS: internal programme coordination (since 2016)


[UPGro website](#)

Project Description

In the first year of the programme, 15 'Catalyst' projects tackled a wide range of research questions in 14 different countries. In 2015, five larger 'Consortium' projects are extending some of that research over the following 4-5 years in 12 countries.

As Knowledge Broker, Skat has a number of important roles: (a) to encourage sharing and collaboration between the research teams; (b) to publicise the papers, reports and tools emerging from the research; (c) to maximise the impact of the findings of the research by supporting the research teams in getting their findings taken up by policy and decision-makers; and to (d) support the client in their monitoring and reporting needs for the programme.

For Skat this was a natural fit because because of the close connection between the research and the strengths of the Rural Water Supply Network (RWSN), which hosts the

 Swiss Resource Centre and
Technical Centre for Africa
Secretariat and takes a lead on the Sustainable Groundwater Development theme, which is strongest in Sub Saharan Africa. For UPGro, Skat is able to use existing tools and links to run webinars, develop a bespoke website, leaflets, banners and other promotional materials, organise and run face-to-face workshops and events.

In addition to the communication expertise, the the technical expertise in the team is used to translate and synthesis the work of the academic teams so that its content and importance can be understood by a broad audience.