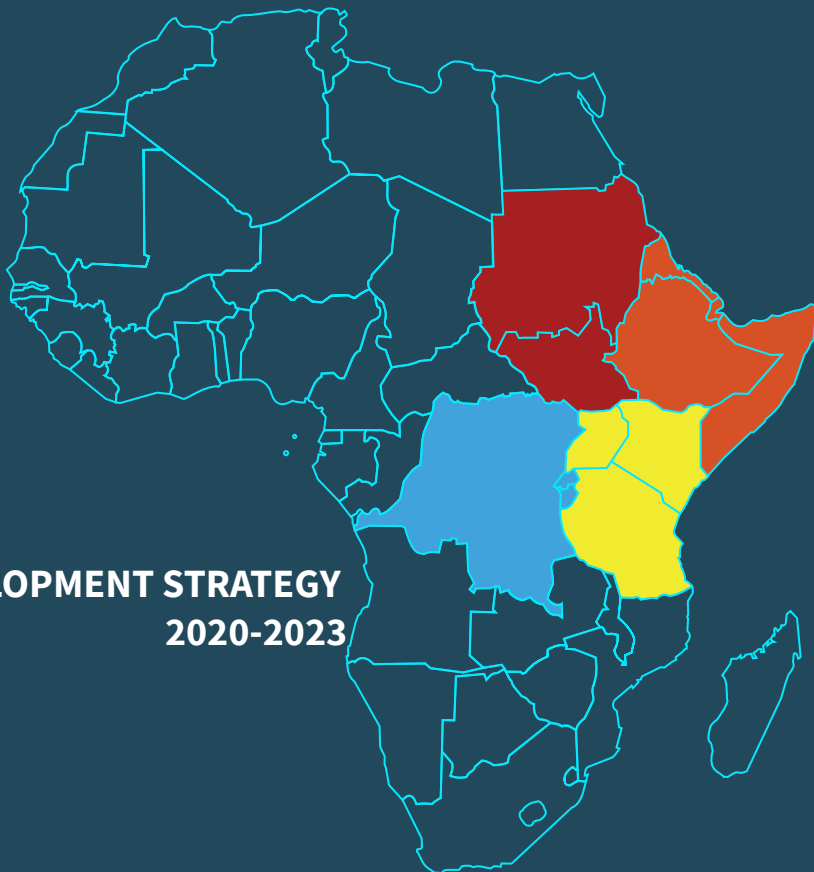




Rift Valley Institute
Taasisi ya Bonde Kuu
معهد الأخدود العظيم
Machadka Dooxada Rift
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Instituto do Vale do Rift
东非大裂谷研究院
Institut de la Vallée du Rift

RIFT VALLEY INSTITUTE



DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2020-2023

MAKING LOCAL KNOWLEDGE WORK

RESEARCH | KNOWLEDGE | PUBLIC INFORMATION | CULTURE

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FORWARD



This document constitutes the four year Development Strategy for the Rift Valley Institute 2020-2023. It is the outcome of a collective process, involving staff, trustees, Fellows of the Institute, partners and key external stakeholders. The RVI trustees acknowledge all of those who have contributed to the plan and to Maxine Clayton for nurturing the process.

The strategy was developed during several staff meetings starting in December 2018. A steering group was convened to guide and feed into the process,

comprising staff and representatives of the RVI Board of Trustees. This strategy builds on RVI's 2016-2020 Development Strategy. It reaffirms the values that drive our work, incorporates feedback from supporters and associates and summarises our approach to achieving our development ambitions by 2023.

In the two decades since RVI was founded, several of the countries where we work have experienced positive and measurable improvements in life expectancy, technological and infrastructural developments and participatory governance. At the same time poverty and vulnerability persist across the region, access to services and knowledge is uneven and many people continue to negotiate on a daily basis the insecurities of armed conflict, exclusion and climate change.

In the midst of continually changing conditions our mission, since the founding of the Institute, has been to '**make local knowledge work**'. Over the years RVI has established itself as a unique and enduring presence in a region where values of open discussion, freedom of information, neutrality and equal access to knowledge are liable to be challenged. Our deep local knowledge and mutually beneficial collaborations between African-based researchers and specialists from outside Africa has enabled us to navigate this context and to generate original research and facilitate the exchange of useful knowledge to address these persistent challenges. We believe our work is making a difference to the peoples of Eastern and Central Africa by enhancing knowledge of the region, promoting open societies and inclusive development, and influencing practice and policy.

The 2020-2023 Development Strategy is designed to sustain the Institute's strong reputation for research, public information and training. Linking the global and the local, the strategy emphasises supporting local capacities for research, to make local knowledge effective in addressing collective challenges in Eastern and Central Africa.

The strategy is ambitious in its scope and intention and is endorsed by the RVI Board of Trustees.

Comfort Ero
Chair of the Board of Trustees

VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

Our Vision

Making local knowledge work for the benefit of the people of Eastern and Central Africa.

Our Mission

The Rift Valley Institute is an independent research and educational organization with a social mission: to create a better future for the peoples and communities of Eastern and Central Africa by advancing relevant knowledge of the region through collaborative research, education and training, public information and dialogues, and promoting culture and heritage. The Institute bridges development practice and policy, elevating local voices, knowledge and action.

Our Values

The following values guide and underpin our work.

Respect: We demonstrate respect for local knowledge and the partners and the communities we work with and those who work with us.

Independence: We are independent in our thought and action and produce research and deliver programmes free from external interests.

Integrity: We work with transparency and honesty to ensure accurate and open access to information, and we are accountable for our work and to those we work with.

Collaboration: We believe respectful partnerships are the basis for successful development and we are committed to long term, mutually beneficial collaboration between indigenous institutions, local researchers and international specialists.

Excellence: We strive to produce original work and to sustain our strong reputation for research, public information and training.



Machot Amuom interviewing chiefs in South Sudan.

OUR HISTORY

The Rift Valley Institute (RVI) is an independent, not-for-profit, knowledge-based organization working in countries in Eastern and Central Africa. Founded in Sudan in 2001¹ to advance understanding of the region and its diverse communities through research, education and public information, the Institute's first project was a field investigation of war-related abduction and enslavement in Sudan during the country's second civil war. Today RVI is considered a leader in locally-informed practical research and policy analysis in the areas of human security, social development and culture.

RVI's established presence and programmes in Eastern and Central Africa is designed to enable us to have a long-term impact, shaping aid interventions, expanding space for public participation in policy, investing in local research capacity, preserving communal histories, and promoting social justice. The Institute works with government, multilateral and non-governmental organizations, communities and individuals, strengthening institutions and setting standards for social science research and public information. Our partners include social activists, writers and artists, civil society organizations, government ministries, national archives, universities and cultural associations. We publish what we research and as a signatory of the [Budapest Open Access Initiative](#) (2001), RVI makes its publications free for download from www.riftvalley.net under [Creative Commons licences](#).

Our educational courses, running since 2004, help professionals and organizations working in the region to be better informed. Through tailored trainings, we also build the skills and knowledge of African researchers and institutions. Through the Rift Valley Forum for Research, Policy and Local Knowledge, the Juba lectures and other convening spaces, we promote access to public information and facilitate dialogues on critical issues affecting communities in Eastern and Central Africa. Through our publications, public dialogues and public archives we are working to

AFRICA'S GREAT RIFT VALLEY



The Institute takes its name from East Africa's Great Rift Valley, the earth's longest rift, that extends over 6,000 kilometers from Mozambique to the Red Sea and the Middle East. Rich with the remains of the earliest hominids in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, palaeontologists have named the East African Rift the "cradle of mankind".

promote African voices in academia and policy formulation. RVI has also pioneered the digitisation of endangered archives and the creation of open-access libraries for the conservation of knowledge and communal histories. RVI staff, trustees and fellows are drawn from Eastern and Central Africa or are individuals who have a long-term engagement in these regions. RVI Fellows include practitioners and researchers in history, anthropology, political science, development economics, conservation, news media, law, governance, and human rights.

Since 2017, the Institute has been headquartered in Nairobi, with offices in Juba in South Sudan, Hargeysa in Somaliland and London. Through our history, positive reputation and capacity, we aim to further evolve a programme of research, education and training, and public events, in a region that is experiencing rapid and sometimes violent, social, political, economic and environmental change.

¹ Its founders John Ryle, Philip Winter and Jok Madut Jok remain active Fellows of the Institute.

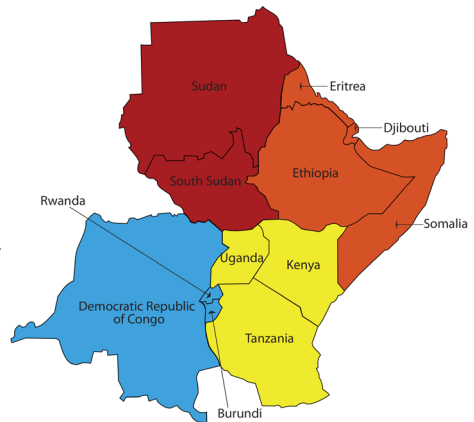
OUR WORK IN AFRICA

Eastern and Central Africa lie at a crossroads between Africa and the Middle East. For centuries, this region has been traversed by networks of people, goods and ideas. Such movement has produced a rich fusion of cultures and an array of languages and systems of governance. The long and often violently contested processes of colonisation, state formation and nation-building have also resulted in many large-scale displacements of people, long-term migrations and conflict-related deaths.

In the period since RVI was founded, several countries in the region have experienced significant positive developments, exceptional economic growth, infrastructural and technological development, improvements in life expectancy and access to services including higher education, and the space for civic engagement has expanded. However, no country in the region is entirely stable. Poverty and vulnerability persist in each, with uneven access to services and resources, including knowledge, and climate change is an increasing threat.

Many countries where RVI works are politically turbulent, in a fragile state of conflict or post-conflict. Despite some of the largest peacekeeping operations anywhere in the world, crises of insecurity continue to plague Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Significant political changes since 2018 in Ethiopia, Sudan and the DRC are cause for optimism, but these political transitions have involved serious contestation and violence, which may result in increased local instability while the political order is remade. South Sudan is slowly exiting several years of civil war, while Somalia suffers from a on-going Islamist insurgency and a fragile federal system of government. Non-state armed groups in several countries have successfully tapped into the grievances of marginalized communities, and in particular a burgeoning youth population, to aid their own causes.

WHERE WE WORK



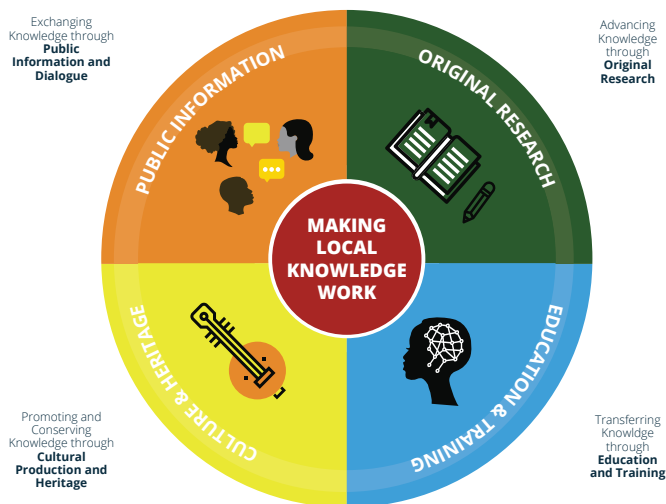
RVI works in Eastern and Central Africa

Furthermore, these developments are happening in a global context of rapid, multipolar change, with assertive economic and security engagements from China, Turkey and the Gulf states influencing the economies and politics of Eastern and Central Africa, while Western economic and ideological influence appears to be in decline.

Given this complex, dynamic context, we believe RVI's work to advance relevant knowledge of the region and underlying long-term drivers of change is needed more than ever. Rooted in the region and informed by local knowledge and concerns, RVI's research, training and promotion of public discourse and debate, brings a nuanced understanding of contemporary and historical developments and seeks to enhance African-led solutions to local, national and regional challenges.

OUR APPROACH

The Rift Valley Institute was founded to create a better future for the peoples and communities of Eastern and Central Africa by improving understanding of these societies and cultures. We strive to do this by combining original practical research with education and public information through four strategic areas of work:



Advancing Knowledge through Original Research: We generate and share knowledge of the region and its communities through high quality research undertaken with and by people in the region.

Transferring Knowledge through Education and Training: We provide high quality education and training on relevant issues within and on the region, to increase understanding, enhance research skills and to inform more effective engagement and policies.

Exchanging Knowledge through Public Information and Dialogue: We expand, protect and facilitate the right to information, creating neutral convening spaces for inclusive and critical public dialogue on key political, economic and social issues within and on the region.

Promoting and Conserving Knowledge through Cultural Production and Heritage: We support cultural production and the conservation of historical knowledge and access to it through support to public archives and cultural organizations.

The Institute believes exclusion from knowledge, resources and decision-making perpetuate marginalization, vulnerability and poverty and that advancing and sharing knowledge is integral to equitable development and peaceful, open and inclusive societies. A better understanding of local knowledge and local concerns enables more accountable and better informed decision making. Amplifying the voices of people and communities in Eastern and Central Africa is central to RVI's ambition. As a knowledge-based organization, we believe:

- Accurate information is an indisputable good.
- Respect for local knowledge informs equitable development.
- Learning is continuous.
- Improved public information and open debate can generate positive social change.
- Research and education encourage the free exchange of knowledge.
- Integrating research with training and dissemination adds social value.
- Accountability and transparency are the key to effective collaboration.

Promoting public engagement in research and policy and building capacity and collaborative networks of researchers and research institutions is key to achieving long term development and security in Eastern and Central Africa. Our work contributes to the achievement of several Sustainable Development Goals. RVI training and support for archives and cultural centres contribute to SDG4 (Quality Education). Our research on gender, violence, peace and political participation, and support to female researchers contributes to SDG5 (Gender Equality). Supporting and strengthening African research capacity contributes to SDG9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure). By promoting public information, elevating local voices and representation RVI contributes to SDG10 (Reduced Inequalities). Our research in conflict settings on governance and security and support to locally-led solutions to regional insecurity contributes to SDG16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions). Working in partnerships is fundamental to the Institute's long-term approach and sustainable impact and aligns with SDG17 (Partnerships).



A forum presenting findings from the *Security On The Move* Research Project

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN PEOPLE'S LIVES

As a leader in practical research and policy analysis our work is making a difference to the peoples of Eastern and Central Africa, influencing debates, policy and practice in critical areas. The Institute's development over the next four years will build on our past achievements around four strategic goals:

Advancing Knowledge through Original Research

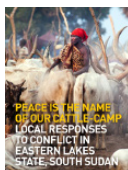
RVI was founded to pursue field-based research that brings locally generated knowledge and perspectives to bear on development. Conducting original, practical research remains core to all that RVI does. The countries where RVI works have a structural deficit in social science research capacity. Consequently, important knowledge gaps exist and essential qualitative and quantitative data is often missing, inaccessible or inaccurate. The views and insights of the people living in those regions are also insufficiently represented in the formulation of social policies. Despite the expansion of higher education across the region, university education and research capacity remains weak in most countries. Many of the best students and teachers are attracted by opportunities in the non-governmental and private sectors. In many places, issues of access and insecurity complicate research, which means that much of the knowledge produced is hidden in commissioned studies that are rarely made public.

Through a combination of large multi-year participatory research projects and shorter policy-oriented studies, we strive to make research publicly accessible in accordance with the Institute's commitment to the freedom of information and open-access publishing. By including training in our research outputs we also invest in capacities to generate analysis of local concerns and enhance locally-led solutions to regional and global challenges.

RVI disseminates its research through reports, field studies, briefing papers, blogs and films. These are accessible through the RVI website: www.riftvalley.net

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

PEACE IS THE NAME OF OUR CATTLE-CAMP



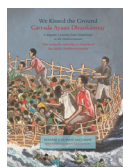
An analysis of the communal resources brought to bear on conflict resolution in Eastern lakes State, South Sudan.

STRENGTHENING THE LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCE OF WOMEN IN POLITICS IN KENYA



An examination of the role of women in politics in Kenya in light of the Gender Principle in the country's 2010 constitution.

WE KISSED THE GROUND



A first-hand account of a young man's attempt to migrate to Europe from Somaliland and the hardships of the journey, a journey attempted by many young Somalis and commonly referred to as *tahriib*. Also in English.

EXPECTATIONS AND BELONGING IN DIRE DAWA



This report considers the current state of land governance and the nature of continuing land disputes in Ethiopia.

LAND MATTERS IN MOGADISHU



This report considers the current state of land governance and the nature of continuing land disputes in Mogadishu, Somalia.

A STABLE INSTABILITY



This report analyses the stability, inclusivity and levels of violence of both the political settlement of the Congo as a whole and of political settlements in the conflict-ridden east. Also in French.

While remaining adaptive to respond to new research gaps and needs, we will cluster our research endeavour around four broad themes:

Contested Ground: Research on land governance, environmental change, borderlands, rural economies, urbanisation, displacement, migration, mobility, and humanitarian crises, will generate a better locally-informed understanding of conflict, peace and security dynamics in the region.

Gender and Generations: Research on how women and men and youth are differentially affected by development change and conflict will generate insights on governance practices, political processes, social justice, and the dynamics of armed violence and its mitigation.

Politics and Governance: Research on political systems, elections, constitutions, legal systems, institutional development and nation-building will improve understanding of political and governance trends.

Transnational systems: Research on the flows of people, goods and ideas across borders will generate understanding of the interconnectedness and transnational nature of the social, political and economic challenges affecting local development and systems of governance.

Over the next four years RVI will:

- Produce high quality, original and useful research, generated with the region's communities.
- Expand our support for the development of research capacities in the region.
- Double the number of publications authored by African researchers.
- Ensure a gendered and generational analysis in all our research.
- Refine practical and participatory social research methods that we have pioneered, like oral history.
- Integrate new cross-disciplinary approaches and methodologies into our research.
- Pay greater attention to listening and capturing feedback from communities on our research outputs.
- Enhance dissemination and influencing strategies.

Transferring Knowledge through Education and Training

RVI's field-based education and training courses aim to inform influential constituencies in Eastern and Central Africa about the people, communities and countries where they work. Since 2004, RVI has organized annual week-long **field courses** on Sudan and South Sudan, the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes regions that are designed to provide historical and contemporary understandings of these regions to policy makers, aid workers, and diplomats who work in and on them.

We also run **bespoke country courses** for a range of institutional partners, including UN agencies, donors and civil society organizations.

A third strand is **training for African researchers** from the region, which has included working with Somali and South Sudanese universities to develop local research capacities. South Sudanese have been trained in oral history research, Congolese researchers have been trained in writing skills and university teaching staff in Somaliland and Puntland have been trained in research methodologies.

Over the next four years we intend to expand the Institute's networks of local, regional and international research partners, with the aim of building sustainable partnerships between African researchers and activists and non-African academics and institutions.

Over the next four years RVI will:

- Annually run three regional field courses and five bespoke courses for international professionals working in the region, to inform and influence policy-makers and practitioners.
- Review and improve the design and teaching methodologies on all courses to ensure they remain relevant and provide the best learning opportunities.

- Explore the opportunity of additional courses for other actors in the region such as the private sector.
- Expand the number and type of training courses offered in research methodologies and thematic courses, including on gender and climate change.
- Invest in the professional development of early career researchers from Africa, including those who lack formal education opportunities, through training and mentorship programmes.
- Ensure that we work with equal numbers of female and male researchers and teachers.
- Grow the **Shading Tree Fund** as scholarship fund for early career African researchers.
- Develop strategic partnerships with universities and research institutes in the region to deliver training courses.

COURSES



RVI has organized 37 regional field courses since 2004. Various held in South Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Burundi, they have hosted 1,374 participants. We have also run 47 bespoke courses.

Exchanging Knowledge through Public Information and Dialogue

Freedom of information and access to accurate public information is essential for open societies and supports positive, long term social change. With the growth of digital media, opportunities to access information and to exchange knowledge have expanded hugely across the countries where we work. But, biases in information infrastructure, regulation by governments or manipulation by private and non-state actors can adversely affect facts and access to and use of information. RVI promotes access to information and public dialogue through the **Rift Valley Forum for Research, Policy and Local Knowledge**, which takes place in the region and London, and by convening other public forums such as the **Juba Lectures** in South Sudan. Information generated through our own research and partners is disseminated through Forums, **RVI publications**, our website and social media platforms. RVI has pioneered open access publishing and everything published by RVI is free to download and redistribute in digital form.

Over the next four years, RVI aims to:

- Support greater public access to relevant information on Eastern and Central Africa through the Forum, the Juba Lectures and regular conferences, meetings and public events.
- Create more opportunities for the voices of people and communities in Eastern and Central Africa to be heard by ensuring that knowledge generated through RVI research projects is publicly available through publications and public engagements.
- Ensure all research projects have publicly available outputs, and are resourced to support engagement and dissemination.
- Ensure outputs from RVI research projects are available in a meaningful form to the communities where research is

undertaken.

- Increase the range of public outlets for RVI's own research, and that of its research partners and trainers.
- Increase fora in the UK and other countries in the global north to ensure the voices and knowledge of people and communities in Eastern and Central Africa is available to global research and policy communities.
- Invest in the Institute's staff communications skills and communication infrastructure to increase access to and dissemination of information.

SELECT PHOTOS FROM FORUM



Since 2012, the Rift Valley Forum has provided a public venue in east Africa where researchers, practitioners, officials and activists can meet on equal terms to examine critical political, economic and social issues. RVI's Forums have been organized in Kenya, South Sudan, Somalia, the DRC, and the UK.

Promoting and Conserving Knowledge through Culture & Heritage

Culture is integral to the generation and transmission of knowledge. Culture can be both a driver of social cohesion and fragmentation. Intolerance of cultural rights and diversity can deepen marginalisation, repression and generate communal violence that destroys culture and heritage. Working with cultural institutions and individual artists and activists is necessary for a shared understanding of the region's historical and contemporary development, relations between generations and gender and the way that local knowledge works.

RVI pursues this through different projects. In Somaliland, RVI has supported the establishment of the Hargeysa Cultural Centre which works with youth and their elders to make culture and art central to development and to give women opportunities for artistic and public expression. In South Sudan, we work with cultural groups to facilitate dialogue between youth and older generations. In Kenya, the Rift Valley Forum provides a platform for artists to express their political and social ideas through creative writing, music and drama.

Conserving historical knowledge and access to it is core to RVI's support to the South Sudan National Archives and the RVI's digital Sudan Open Archive (www.sudanarchive.net). For the international aid sector, where retention of knowledge is poor, the conservation of knowledge has practical utility in constructing post-conflict societies and informing contemporary actions and decision-making.

Over the next four years RVI will:

- Support social recovery and renewal in post-conflict societies and the dissemination of local knowledge by championing the work of artists and artisans through cultural centres and cultural festivals in the region.
- Continue to work with the South Sudan National Archives to conserve historical

knowledge and memory and extend the experience gained there to other countries.

- Publish a minimum of two multi-lingual publications each year.
- Establish a dedicated **Local Voices Fund** to support publications that give expression to regional authors and distinctly local concerns.

HARGEYSA CULTURAL CENTRE



Established in 2014, the Hargeysa Cultural Centre is a vibrant space in the heart of the city where young people can enjoy a library, theatre, gallery and training spaces, and where the annual Hargeysa International Book Fair is organized.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF SOUTH SUDAN



RVI is working with the Government of South Sudan to catalogue, preserve and digitize tens of thousands of historic documents- some as old as 1904- that were damaged by war. With the Ministry of Culture and Heritage, RVI engages the public about this crucial national resource for this new nation.

DELIVERING THE STRATEGY

Building an Africa-centred Institute with a Global Reach

Firmly establishing the Institute in the African region from which it takes its name will be key to delivering our strategy. Since 2012, the Institute has expanded its operational presence in Eastern Africa, with offices in Nairobi, Juba and Hargeysa, managed by people recruited from the region working with and supported by UK-based staff. A strong regional presence will enable the Institute to better invest in partnerships, and to develop a work agenda and approach that is locally generated and responds to the ideas and needs of people in the region. This will better position the Institute as a bridge between research, practice and policy, and enable it to work with funders investing in the development of these regions. A continued presence in the UK will be a crucial part of our strategy to both expand and deepen our work in Africa and to maintain a global reach, by informing northern-based policy makers, accessing northern-based academic knowledge, technology and funding, and through skills transfer and knowledge exchange.

Over the next four years our goal is to transition RVI to an African-based transnational Institute that produces research, education and public information on Eastern and Central Africa that can bring people and communities and those who invest in them together to address common problems. To achieve this, we will:

- Recruit more Africans into senior staff positions.
- Invest in the professionalisation of staff from and based in our countries of work.
- Diversify RVI's Board, appointing more African trustees.
- Establish a presence in at least one more country in the region.
- Grow the Institute's regional network of activists, researchers, academics and policy makers.
- Develop more South-South collaborations and partnerships with African institutions.
- Increase our investment in the development of local organizations and individuals through training and skills transfer to regionally-based researchers and organizations.
- Make the Institute's communications and outreach more accessible to people and communities in the region by publishing in regional languages and utilizing new physical and digital forums for the exchange of knowledge.

Geographic Presence

RVI has offices and an operational presence in Kenya, South Sudan, Somaliland and the UK. Over the next four years we aim to establish an additional office and operational presence in one Eastern or Central African country. We will aim to do this in partnership with an established institution.

Governance

Board membership will increase from six to eight with more trustees appointed from Africa.

Fellows

In 2020 the structure of Fellows and their role will be reviewed to make meaningful use of this strategic resource to practically support our work and leverage influence and funding. This will involve appointing new Fellows, engaging with them on a more regular basis and allocating staff time to managing and servicing them.

Partnerships

RVI works with a range of partners which enhances the reach, delivery and sustainability of our work. Over the next four years, we will:

- Expand the number of southern partnerships.
- Develop more robust approaches for assessing partnerships.
- Invest in the development of partners.

Communications

To improve the influence and impact of the Institute's work, time and resources will be invested in developing internal and external communication methods. This will include:

- Increasing social media coverage.
- Better representation of the Institute's work on our website.
- Creating opportunities to showcase and explain our work to influential actors, donors and the public.
- Producing an annual public report.

Monitoring Evaluation and Learning

To demonstrate the impact of our work and to learn from it, we will:

- Institute changes to our monitoring, evaluation and learning systems and train staff in order to better capture and understand the evidence of the changes we are making and contributing to.

- Ensure both staff and trustees make use of this strategic plan to regularly review our implementation, outputs and impacts so as to ensure alignment and better understand progress.
- Organize annual consultations with partners and Fellows to ensure greater engagement in and feedback on our work.

Organizational Structure

As the Institute grows there is a need to ensure that the structure and the competencies are in place to effectively deliver the day-to-day work and the development strategy. Over the next four years the structure of the Institute will be reorganized and there will be a modest growth in the number of staff to bring competencies into the Institute that will enable the us to achieve our goals. Recruitment will be prioritized and dependent on the availability of funding. We will strengthen our network of Fellows and consultants to allow us to remain flexible and responsive.

In the first year of the plan, the intention is to recruit a senior member of staff and an administrator. The senior appointment will support the Institute's growing portfolio of research, education, public information and cultural programmes, identify opportunities for new programming, coordinating policies and procedures for ways of working, including monitoring, evaluation and learning. We will prioritize recruitment from Africa.

We will recruit an administrator to support programme managers in logistics and administration. Over four years we will aim to recruit additional competencies in training, research, communications and fundraising.

Investing in Staff

Changes to the organizational structure of RVI will necessitate modifications to ways of working and investment in personnel development. An organizational learning and development policy will set out what constitutes learning and development pathways for employees, criteria for training and what is expected from employees in terms of applying and transferring the learning to their work.

In 2019 RVI completed a compensation review and introduced a salary structure intended to support the evolution of the Institute. New safeguarding policies were also adopted. As the Institute evolves there will be a need to review and enhance other human resource policies, including for recruitment, job descriptions, performance management and training.

FINANCING THE STRATEGY

Our Financial Approach

RVI enjoys the confidence and financial support from of a range of governmental and private philanthropic funders who share a commitment to its mission of making local knowledge work for the benefit of people in Eastern and Central Africa.

The Institute classifies its income into two broad categories:

Restricted funds: These monies are designated for projects or programmes and must be accounted for according to donor conditions, which can vary.

Unrestricted funds: These are generated from various sources ranging from training and consultancy work, to sales and donations and legacies to the Institute which are used in furtherance of the Institute's objectives.

Despite operating in an uncertain and competitive funding environment, the Institute's income has grown incrementally since 2015. It is our assessment that governments and development agencies will continue to value and fund professional, locally-informed and policy-relevant research, education and public information in the countries where RVI works.

Income and Expenditure

The strategy envisages an annual growth in income of five per cent per annum from USD 2.9 million in 2019 to USD 3.2 million by the end of 2023.

The organization is committed to investing in its goal of becoming an Africa-based and African-led organization and will seek specific support to realise this ambition. As a result, organizational development costs are expected to grow in the first two years to finance the organization structure, new hires and another country office to support the strategy.

Financial and Funding Strategy

Our fundraising strategy over the next four years will involve two main approaches.

A. Efficient Finance and Budget Management

- Ensure all indirect support costs are built into budgets to ensure their full cost recovery.
- Ten per cent of unrestricted income will be raised from RVI courses and sales.
- Maximise income from investments such as interest on fixed deposits.
- Ensure close attention to risk management, sharing financial risks where possible with donor partners.
- Ensure full compliance with donor requirements to avoid disallowed costs.

B. Fundraising

A five per cent growth in income will be achieved by:

- Increasing the share of multi-year programme funding from 35 per cent to 65 per cent.
- Boosting unrestricted income from courses and sales.
- Raising specific organizational funds to become a leading Africa-based, African-led research and policy influencing Institute in East Africa by having a minimum of one Trust donor per year.
- Take part in collaborative funding bids which support our strategy.
- Developing a funding strategy for the Shading Tree Fund (a scholarship fund), and the Local Voices Fund (a publications fund).
- Better external communication about our work and its influence.
- Investing in staff capacity to enhance the quality of our work and expand our donor engagement capacity.
- Maintaining a mix of donor funding, where reliance on one donor does not exceed 50 per cent.



RVI Annual Field Courses are taught by African and non-African scholars and practitioners.

RIFT VALLEY INSTITUTE

The Rift Valley Institute (RVI) is an independent, non-profit education, research, and publishing organization working in the Sudans, the Horn of Africa, East Africa, and the Great Lakes. RVI works with communities, institutions and individuals to furnish in-depth local knowledge to inform policy, aid interventions, and development. RVI activities include training, field-based research, public events, digital archiving, distance learning, and open-access publishing. Fellows and instructors of the Institute are specialist academics and practitioners drawn from academic and research institutions in the East Africa region and in Europe, Asia, and the Americas.



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