



# Breaking research boundaries to address global mass displacement

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## Archive

[2018](#) [February](#)[January](#)[2017](#) [2016](#) [2015](#) [2014](#) [2013](#) [2012](#) **14 Feb 2018**

The Royal Academy of Engineering, together with [The Academy of Medical Sciences](#), [The British Academy](#) and [The Royal Society](#), is this week bringing together 60 of the world's leading early and mid-career researchers to address the challenges caused by global mass displacement in the first *Frontiers of Development* symposium.

The symposium, to be held in Kigali, Rwanda, on 12-14 February 2018, provides a unique opportunity for researchers from engineering, social sciences, natural sciences, humanities, biomedical sciences and medicine to share their expertise and develop ongoing research collaborations to ensure those who have been displaced can live in an inclusive and prosperous environment.

The event, which is co-chaired by Professor Dame Henrietta Moore FBA, Director of the [UCL Institute for Global Prosperity](#), UK and Professor Dilanthi Amaratunga, Head of the [Global Disaster Resilience Centre](#), University of Huddersfield, UK, will focus on three main themes; what drives mass displacement; the challenges that are created by it; and how we can prevent, adapt and work towards better inclusion of displaced persons into society.

Professor Dame Henrietta Moore said: "Mass displacement is now one of the main challenges to global prosperity. As the impacts of global warming increase over coming decades, growing numbers of people will be displaced. It's crucial that we develop ways for societies impacted by mass displacement to flourish."

"The global nature of mass displacement means that it requires cross-disciplinary cooperation to fully address the causes; to mitigate the effects; and to successfully adapt our social, economic and political systems."

Although mass displacement is not a new phenomenon, extended conflict situations and hazards caused by climate change mean that it is becoming a more frequent occurrence. The World Economic Forum's 2016 Global Risk Report listed large-scale forced migration and displacement as the first most likely, and the fourth most impactful, current risk to humanity.

Professor Dilanthi Amaratunga said: "To understand, and work towards solving, the challenges created by mass displacement it's important that we also understand its root causes. Natural disasters, war and conflict, and climate change all force people to leave their homes. Identifying the scale and impact of each of these triggers is essential for developing effective and clear policy, and actions, to help vulnerable people and populations.

"It's also vital that we consider specific regional and national contexts. Creating a symposium that enables researchers from across the world to share their views and to work together means that we stand a much better chance of addressing the complex issues arising from mass displacement."

2011	▼
2010	▼
2009	▼
2008	▼
2007	▼
2006	▼
2005	▼
2004	▼

Based on the Royal Academy of Engineering's successful *Frontiers of Engineering for Development* symposia, *Frontiers of Development* aims to bring together outstanding researchers from a range of disciplines, based in both the UK and the Global South, to build the necessary networks and relationships needed to support high-impact research around development challenges. The programme encourages the next generation of research leaders to collaboratively work across multiple subjects to address the issues faced by developing countries.

The symposium is part of the Resilient Future Initiative, a collaboration between all four UK Academies under the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF). The GCRF is part of the UK government's Official Development Assistance funding and aims to address the problems faced by developing countries through challenge led, disciplinary and interdisciplinary research.

Follow the symposium on Twitter at [#FrontiersDev](#).

## Notes to editors

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**We have four strategic challenges:**
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  - Address the engineering skills crisis
  - Position engineering at the heart of society
  - Lead the profession
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3. **The British Academy** is the voice of humanities and social sciences. The Academy is an independent fellowship of world-leading scholars and researchers; a funding body for research, nationally and internationally; and a forum for debate and engagement. For more information, please visit [www.britishacademy.ac.uk](http://www.britishacademy.ac.uk). Follow the British Academy on Twitter @britac\_news.
4. **The Academy of Medical Sciences** is the independent body in the UK representing the diversity of medical science. Our elected Fellows are the UK's leading medical scientists from hospitals, academia, industry and the public service. Our mission is to advance biomedical and health research and its translation into benefits for society. We are working to secure a future in which:
  - UK and global health is improved by the best research.
  - The UK leads the world in biomedical and health research, and is renowned for the quality of its research outputs, talent and collaborations.
  - Independent, high quality medical science advice informs the decisions that affect society.
  - More people have a say in the future of health and research.

Our work focusses on four key objectives, promoting excellence, developing talented researchers, influencing research and policy and engaging patients, the public and professionals. [www.acmedsci.ac.uk](http://www.acmedsci.ac.uk)

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