Curriculum Vitae

NAME
James Keeley

NATIONALITY
Not specified

LANGUAGES
Not specified

SUMMARY OF EXPERIENCE
Food systems and agricultural development specialist with over 25 years' experience as researcher, project manager and analyst. James's work covers climate smart agriculture in Africa (particularly Nigeria, Ethiopia, Uganda and Malawi) and China, and China as a global development actor. He has led Gates Foundation and CGIAR programme evaluations, and managed the £10 million DFID-funded AgriTT UK-China-Africa/South East Asia triangular agricultural technology transfer programme. An Associate of The Policy Practice since 2008, he provides regular political economy analysis inputs to the FCDO Propcom+ climate smart agriculture market systems development programme in Nigeria. He is an Honorary Associate of the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, and was previously Senior Researcher and China lead at IIED.

COUNTRY EXPERIENCE
Africa: Nigeria, Ethiopia, Uganda, Malawi, Tanzania, Burkina Faso, DRC, Ghana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Sudan, Mali, Kenya, South Africa. Asia-Pacific: China, Papua New Guinea, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka. Latin America: Brazil, Argentina, Mexico. United Kingdom.

EXPERTISE
- Climate smart agriculture in Africa (particularly Nigeria, Ethiopia, Uganda and Malawi) and China
- Market systems development; agricultural science, technology and innovation processes
- China as a global development actor: geopolitics and supply chains, South-South engagement, UK-EU-China engagement on development
- Political economy analysis (completed The Policy Practice PEA training course); GEDSI analysis
- Evaluation, including leading Gates Foundation and CGIAR programme evaluations
- Project management, including the £10 million UK-China-Africa/South East Asia triangular agritech transfer cooperation programme (AgriTT)
- Qualitative and participatory research methods, including key informant interviews and focus groups

QUALIFICATIONS
1997 MPhil Development Studies, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex (ESRC-funded). Thesis on Policy Processes for Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management in Ethiopia

1990 BA Politics, University of York

EMPLOYMENT / SELECTED ASSIGNMENTS

- **Independent consultant** (2010 – present)
- **Senior Researcher, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)** (2006 – 2010)
- **Independent consultant** (2003 – 2006)
- **Research Officer, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex** (1999 – 2003)
- **Research Assistant, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex** (1997 – 1999)
- **Voluntary Service Overseas, China** (1991 – 1994)

Other roles

- **Associate, The Policy Practice** (2008 – present)
- **Honorary Associate, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex** (2022 – present)
- **Governor, John Watson Community Special School, Oxfordshire** (2021 – present)

Selected assignments

FCDO Propcom+ Nigeria, The Policy Practice for Palladium (ongoing)

- Quarterly political economy portfolio review inputs; inputs to political economy deep dives on climate smart agriculture themes (including seeds, fertiliser markets, large-scale commodity sourcing and political, economic, climate and security risks).

EU-China International Development Platform, through GOPA (Sep – Nov 2026)

- Lead analyst for research report on agricultural commodity supply chains and deforestation risk linked to Chinese trade and consumption, with analysis of sources of evidence for deforestation linked to agriculture commodities in priority countries (Brazil, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos, and central and west Africa), Chinese trade and imports, and Chinese supply chain investment and financing.

Gates Foundation, IGNITE evaluation, through Landell Mills (November 2025 – present)

- Team leader for retrospective evaluation of Gates Foundation funded Impacting Gender and Nutrition through Innovative Technical Exchange (IGNITE) programme on strengthening gender equality and improved nutrition outcomes in agriculture through capacity building, gender mainstreaming, institutionalisation of nutrition in African agricultural institutions (with country case studies in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Tanzania).

EU-China International Development Platform, through GOPA (Sep – Oct 2026)

- Review of priority issues in relation to China and food and agriculture in developing countries for the EU-China International Development Platform.

Institute of Development Studies, UK-China Track 2 Development Dialogue, for British Embassy Beijing (January 2026)

- Participant in Track 2 development dialogue exploring dialogue and cooperation options with Chinese counterparts (China Institute for Knowledge on Development, CIKD), with a focus on climate and energy and global health.

FCDO Propcom+ Nigeria: Macro PEA of the food and agricultural sector (Dec – Jan 2026)

- Review of macroeconomic trends, political and policy dynamics shaping climate-smart agriculture programming options in Nigeria.

FCDO Propcom+ Nigeria, The Policy Practice for Palladium: Large-scale domestic agricultural commodity sourcing political economy analysis (Oct – Dec 2025)

- Team Lead for the Policy Practice political economy study of factors shaping options for investment in domestic large-scale commodity sourcing for barley, cassava and groundnuts in Nigeria, coordinating fieldwork in Bauchi, Plateau and Jigawa states, and informing Propcom+ programme design.

Cochrane Collaboration (March 2025 – June 2025)

- Consultant for Evidence Synthesis Infrastructure Collaborative Governance Planning Group, developing options for governance of future global, multi-sectoral evidence synthesis initiative (Wellcome Trust funded, with participation of Chinese partners), and participant in Cape Town Consensus conference in June 2025.

Great Britain China Centre: FCDO China Capabilities Study (Oct 2024 – Mar 2025)

- Co-lead for capabilities analysis, and analysis of UK China research and analysis capabilities, feeding into UK HMG China Audit.

Chemonics, Green Growth Programme (Nov 2024 – May 2025)

- Climate smart agriculture technical consultant for proposal development for FCDO Green Growth Programme, with scoping mission in Kinshasa.

FCDO Propcom+ Nigeria (Oct – Nov 2024)

- Co-lead on Food and Agriculture Macro Political Economy Analysis study analysing Federal and state government and private sector responses to macroeconomic changes and the food security crisis in Nigeria, including gender and inclusion dimensions, and nutrition issues.

FCDO Propcom+ Nigeria: Political economy analysis of digital extension in Nigeria (July 2024)

- Team Leader for PEA study of Nigerian extension system and status and prospects for public and private digital extension.

Solidaridad: Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy design consultancy (July – Oct 2024)

- Team member contributing knowledge on inclusion and agricultural commodity supply chains to inform design of GESI policy for the organisation.

British Embassy Beijing: China, Global Challenges and Security: Engagement in a Contested World (Jan 2024 – ongoing)

- Member of Institute of Development Studies and RUSI team researching engagement with China on global challenges. Responsible for food and agriculture component, covering digital agriculture and advanced biotechnology.

Oxford Analytica (Feb – April 2024; Nov 2024; Feb 2025)

- Policy and drivers of change analysis for digital agriculture, seeds and inputs for Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and South Africa.

Natural England, District Level Licensing External M&E Technical Expert (Jan – April 2024)

- Redesign of Theory of Change, Evaluation Framework and Monitoring Strategy for Natural England Great Crested Newt District Level Licensing Scheme (through Evidence and Impact Oxford), a major UK biodiversity conservation scheme.

World Green Economy Summit, Dubai (Nov 2024)

- Presentation on climate change and agriculture.

Landell Mills, EU TRUEFISH Programme (Feb – Dec 2023)

- Design, facilitation and coordination of a China study tour for African aquaculture specialists, for capacity building and lesson learning on aquaculture value chain development to support fish farmer livelihoods.

FCDO UK-Brazil-Africa Agricultural Research, Development and Innovation Triangular Cooperation Mechanism Scoping Study (managed by Landell Mills) (Oct 2022 – April 2023)

- Team leader for a scoping study for FCDO on the design of a UK-Brazil-Africa Triangular Cooperation mechanism for agricultural research, development and innovation for people, nature and climate. Consulting with African and other stakeholders on strategic partners and priorities, technical entry points and modalities for the mechanism with DRC, Nigeria and Ghana country focus.

International Institute for Asian Studies (part time) (Sep 2021 – Nov 2023)

- Member of three person team carrying out a scoping study and networking for Rockefeller Brothers Fund grant held by International Institute for Asian Studies, University of Leiden, on collaboration with China on shared challenges, global public goods and international development. Responsible for work on food and agricultural systems, identifying priority issues and modalities for collaboration.

Innovate UK Knowledge Transfer Network (KTN): Design of India-South Africa-UK Agri-tech Transfer Trilateral Pilot (Feb 2022 – Sep 2023)

- Consultancy inputs to design trilateral cooperation facility for agri-tech transfer program between India, South Africa and the UK for UK FCDO, Department of Science and Innovation, South Africa, and Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), India, focusing on development of neglected and underutilised crops for climate, nutrition, food security.

Great Britain China Centre (Mar – Apr 2022)

- Design of high-level dialogue series for key UK stakeholders on strategic engagement with China on public goods and shared challenges, including on sustainable food and agricultural systems.

Australian High Commission, Papua New Guinea, Agricultural Strategy Review, The Policy Practice (Nov 2020 – Feb 2021)

- Part of two-person team for strategic review of Australian Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade partnership with Government of Papua New Guinea on agriculture for rural development. The consultancy assessed agricultural development priorities and opportunities in PNG, including for food crops and key export crop value chains through use of certifications; reviewed the current Australian agricultural investment portfolio for PNG, and identified opportunities for a strategic, inclusive, gender-aware, nutrition and livelihood oriented agriculture program.

Oxford Analytica (June 2020 – ongoing)

- Presentations on biodiversity, food security and China to corporate clients. Contribution to report for the EU on use and regulation of pesticides banned in the EU in Africa informed by understanding of rural development contexts (particularly in Kenya); regular author of Daily Brief articles including on sustainability, biodiversity and development issues and Chinese politics.

Adviser, Mobility for Africa (part-time) (Jan 2018 – Dec 2020)

- Adviser and part of the founding team for a start-up company introducing Chinese electric mobility and renewable energy solutions to rural Africa, with pilot in Zimbabwe. Mobility for Africa seeks to promote rural development, particularly for women, by piloting three-wheeler tricycles powered by batteries using off-grid energy (www.mobilityforafrica.com), and linking these to livelihood opportunities and improved service delivery.

Team Leader, End of Project Evaluation of WorldFish Africa Fish Trade Project, Landell Mills (Dec 2019 – Mar 2020)

- Team Leader for Fish Trade evaluation, a CGIAR WorldFish multi-country project with AU partners designed to understand the scale and importance of informal fish trade in Africa for rural development and livelihoods, and to deliver institutional and policy innovations and capacity building to support development of the trade. The evaluation involved a remote multi-country survey, document analysis, key informant interviews, review of work on fish trade and food safety, gender analysis, and case studies in Zambia and Malawi, using focus groups and interviews to assess the project theory of change, delivery of results, and contribution to outcomes and impact.

Trilateral Cooperation and MEL Expert, Design of China-Australia-Papua New Guinea Health Security Project Phase 2 (July – Aug 2019)

- Contributed expertise on partnering with China and trilateral cooperation to project design for this health security project, including outline design of program logic, indicators and other MEL aspects of the project design document.

Lesson-learning Facilitator, EU Sudan Smallholder Food Security Programme (Jan – Feb 2019)

- Designed and facilitated an end of project learning and communication event for key sector stakeholders for a five year EU program on conservation agriculture, value chain development and food security in Sudan.

Team Member, Evaluation of DFID Global Health Support Programme, ITAD (Jan – July 2018)

- Evaluation of UK-China trilateral cooperation pilots with capacity building components on maternal and child health in Myanmar (improving service delivery outcomes in a complex environment) and malaria control in Tanzania (developing a model for active case management service delivery) as part of the DFID Global Health Support Programme evaluation (for ITAD), with field work in China, Myanmar and Tanzania. As part of wider GHSP evaluation recommended opportunities for partnership with China in health in these countries, including within the context of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Team Leader, DFID-China Trilateral Cooperation Lesson-learning Review, IMC and Landell Mills (Sep – Nov 2017)

- Review of UK DFID China's Trilateral Cooperation and donor approaches to partnership with China in third countries, assessing achievements and lessons, and making recommendations on future strategy. The review focused on the pilot component of the Global Health Support Programme, Community Based Disaster Management and Agricultural Technology Transfer. This consultancy was well-received and has helped shape strategy for the next phase of UK work with China on international development.

Head of Programme Management Office, AgriTT (March 2013 – May 2017)

- Led delivery of £10 million UK Department for International Development (DFID) funded trilateral agricultural cooperation programme, developing strategy and coordinating implementation and results management for technology transfer and capacity building pilot projects for value chain development in Malawi (aquaculture) and Uganda (cassava, including consideration of food safety aspects).
- Responsible for managing PMO team in China, UK, Uganda and Malawi, and coordination of African implementing partners and Chinese technical assistance, and overseeing project monitoring, procurement and reporting on outputs and outcomes.
- Managed £3m Research Challenge Fund with Chinese, UK and developing country teams in Africa and South East Asia testing agricultural innovations in a range of sub-sectors (including in Laos and Cambodia); also delivery of a range of communication initiatives on effective agricultural technology transfer, including engagement with the FAO South-South Cooperation Programme.
- Regular engagement with government ministries and agencies, including Ministries of Commerce and Agriculture in China, Ministry of Agriculture, Uganda, and Department of Fisheries, Malawi. AgriTT won the British Expertise award for Best International Collaborative Project in 2017.

Consultant, Irish Aid (2011 – 2013)

- Provided long-term agricultural analyst and project management inputs to Irish Aid for a smallholder agricultural research and extension programme in Tigray and SNNPR regions of Ethiopia, focusing on climate resilience and priority nutrition crops, developed implementation plans in participation with government partners, designed the project M&E system, and produced lesson learning products.

Consultant, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and others (2010 – 2013)

- Project manager and lead author for study on large-scale land investments in Ethiopia for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and IIED. This involved leading a small team conducting field work in different regions and working effectively with the Ethiopian government to secure support for the study and access to government datasets. The study included case studies in lowland regions including Somali region, Bench Maji zone, SNNPR and Benishangul and Gambella.

- Team Leader of review for the Ford Foundation and IIED on pro-poor agricultural certification schemes including organic certification and sustainability standards in China, Vietnam, Indonesia and India, as a tool for market access and impacts on rural livelihoods.
- Contributor to UK Food and Climate Research Network study on using a sustainable food systems approach in China.
- Edited 'Green China' book for the Ford Foundation and IIED sharing lessons from China's environment and development experiences.
- Reviewer for DFID Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN), managed by ITAD.

Senior Researcher, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) (2006 – 2009)

- China lead at IIED, responsible for developing IIED's China engagement strategy. Managed research on China-Africa development, as well as on many other food and agriculture and China related themes, including developing a strategy for engagement with sustainable agriculture in China for the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).
- Research on value chains and certification for Ford Foundation, and on social and environmental impacts of animal protein production for Oxfam-Novib. Led consultancy study for DFID China identifying opportunities to work with China on global public goods including in global public health, agriculture and climate change.

DFID China Country Programme Evaluation (2009)

- Member of DFID China Country Programme Evaluation team (managed by ITAD), responsible for inputs on climate change and the Sustainable Development Dialogues.

Independent Consultant (2003 – 2006)

- International expert working on a consultancy for UNDP on Rights Based Approaches to development in China, with fieldwork in Jiangxi. Consultant on two studies on the DFID project portfolio in China, focusing on health and education sectors among others. China lead for UK think tank Demos Atlas of Ideas project mapping China's science innovation capacity.

Research Officer, Institute of Development Studies (IDS) (1999 – 2003)

- Research on science policy processes for new agricultural technologies, particularly GM crops and biotechnology, in China and Africa (with funding from DFID, ESRC and Rockefeller Foundation).
- Designed and delivered training on public participation and biosafety management for UNEP in South and South East Asia, led government capacity building workshop in Sri Lanka (including for ASEAN country stakeholders).

Research Assistant, Institute of Development Studies (IDS) (1997 – 1999)

- Researcher working on institutions, policies and processes for soil fertility, agricultural intensification and natural resource management in Africa, with a focus on Mali, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe and international development partners such as the Food and Agriculture Organisation and World Bank. In Ethiopia worked closely with SOS Sahel, Mekelle University College, and Hawassa University and the links between local implementation and higher level policy strategies. Research on poverty in China for DFID.

VSO Volunteer Teacher, Guangxi, Henan and Guizhou Provinces, China (1991 – 1994)

- Teaching English and teacher training in three colleges in Guangxi, Henan and Guizhou Chinese provinces.

SELECTED REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

Keeley, J. and Husain, L. (2024) *Foreign Secretary has opportunity to reset UK-China relations on global challenges.* IDS Opinion, August.

Husain, L. and Keeley, J. (2023) *Engaging China on global challenges: responding to the Integrated Review 2023.* IDS Opinion, March.

Keeley, J. (2017) *Review of DFID's Trilateral Cooperation with China.* Report for DFID-China. Landell Mills and IMC World Wide.

Keeley, J., Wondwosen Michago Seide, Abdurehman Eid and Admasu Lokaley Kidewa (2014) *Large-scale land deals in Ethiopia: scale, trends, features and outcomes to date.* London: IIED.

Blackmore, E. and Keeley, J. with Pyburn, R. and Lu Chen (2012) *Pro-Poor Certification: assessing the benefits of sustainability certifications for small-scale farmers in Asia.* IIED Natural Resource Issues Paper No. 25.

Keeley, J. and Zheng Yisheng (eds) (2011) *Green China: Chinese insights on environment and development.* London: IIED.

Cotula, L., Vermeulen, S., Leonard, R. and Keeley, J. (2009) *Land grab or development opportunity: agricultural investment and land deals in Africa.* IIED/FAO/IFAD.

Blackmore, E. and Keeley, J. with Garnett, T. (2009) *The Meat and Dairy Revolutions: mapping social and environmental impacts.* Paper for Oxfam-Novib.

Wilsdon, J. and Keeley, J. (2007) *China: the Next Science Superpower?* Demos Pamphlet, Atlas of Ideas Series. London: Demos.

Keeley, J. (2006) *Balancing technological innovation and environmental regulation: an analysis of Chinese agricultural biotechnology governance.* Environmental Politics, Vol 15, No. 2, April.

Keeley, J. and Scoones, I. (2003) *Understanding Environmental Policy Processes: cases from Africa.* London: Earthscan.

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