













Biographies (alphabetical order)




Name	Photo	Biography
<p>Kerry Albright Principal Adviser/Deputy Director, UNICEF Evaluation Office</p>		<p>Kerry Albright is Principal Adviser/Deputy Director of Evaluation at UNICEF and co-chair of the Global SDG Synthesis Coalition. She was previously the Deputy Director ad interim and Chief, Research Facilitation and Knowledge Management, at UNICEF’s dedicated research centre, the Office of Research-Innocenti (UNICEF-Innocenti), based in Florence, Italy. Prior to joining UNICEF in 2015, Kerry worked in various research and evidence roles at the UK’s Department for International Development, now the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, where she was head of the Evidence to Action Unit and also co-founded the Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition initiative.</p>
<p>Hon. Simplex Chithyola Banda MP, Minister of Finance & Economic Affairs, Government of Malawi</p>		<p>The Hon. Simplex Chithyola Banda MP is Malawi’s Minister of Finance & Economic Affairs and Member of Malawi Parliament for Kasungu South and Government Deputy Chief Whip. Hon Simplex Chithyola Banda is an Expert on International Trade & Developmental Economics, Carbon Financing and Climate Change Management. He is a renowned Human-rights Activist with over 20 years in NGO Management. At the Ministry of Finance & Economic Affairs, he has developed a Strategy to address the 4Fs which are crippling Malawi’s economy and these are (1) Forex, (2) Fuel, (3) Food and (4) Fertilizers. He has focused much on doing Structural Reforms i.e, Fiscal disciplines through expenditure controls, Economy Diversification, Sustainable Debt Management & Resource Mobilization.</p>



<p>Andrea Cook Executive Director, United Nations Sustainable Development Group System-Wide Evaluation Office</p>		<p>Andrea Cook was appointed by the Secretary-General in 2023 as the first Executive Director of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group System Wide Evaluation Office. She has over 30 years of experience in development, humanitarian assistance and evaluation, including roles in the United Nations and the United Kingdom government. She served as Director Evaluation for the United Nations World Food Programme in Rome from 2017 to 2023 and as Director Evaluation at UNFPA in New York from 2014 to 2017. Before joining the United Nations, she worked in Cambodia, the Caribbean, India, Kenya, Malawi and the United Kingdom. From 1993-2013 she held a variety of positions spanning policy, programmes and evaluation with the United Kingdom Department for International Development. She has also served on expert advisory groups and scientific panels for evaluation and research initiatives at global level.</p>
<p>Ambassador Ana Jiménez de la Hoz Deputy Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations</p>		<p>Ana Jimenez is a career diplomat from Spain with extensive experience in the United Nations, both at the Permanent Mission of Spain to the United Nations and in the UN system. Prior to her appointment as Deputy Permanent Representative of Spain to the UN in August 2022, she worked at the UN Alliance of Civilizations, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Permanent Mission of Spain to the UN as Counsellor and First Secretary and the UN Department of Political Affairs.</p>


<p>Ambassador Martin Kimani Executive Director, Center on International Cooperation, NYU and former Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations in New York</p>		<p>Ambassador Martin Kimani, PhD, is the Executive Director of New York University’s Center on International Cooperation (CIC). From 2021 to 2024, he served as the Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations (UN), where he held the positions of President of the Security Council in October 2021 and President of the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) Executive Board in 2023. Prior to this role, he was Kenya’s Special Envoy for Countering Violent Extremism and the Director of the National Counter Terrorism Centre. Earlier in his career, he served as Kenya’s Permanent Representative to the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and UN-Habitat. Additionally, he directed the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) and has experience in political risk analysis, bond and currency sales, and trading.</p>
<p>John Lavis Co-lead, Global Commission on Evidence to Address Societal Challenges</p>		<p>John supports efforts to address health and broader societal challenges using the best-available research evidence and experiences and insights from citizens, professionals, organizational leaders, and government policymakers. He is co-lead of and lead report writer for the Global Commission on Evidence to Address Societal Challenges, as well as co-lead of Rapid-Improvement Support and Exchange (RISE). He led the development of the ‘SHOW ME the evidence’ features of an approach for reliably getting research evidence to those who need it. He was co-lead of the COVID-19 Evidence Network to support Decision-making (COVID-END). He is the Director of the McMaster Health Forum and Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Evidence-Informed Policy. He is a Professor in the Department of Health Evidence and Impact at McMaster University and the Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Evidence-Support Systems.</p>

<p>Justine Germa Nzweundji Africa Chapter of the International Network of Government Science Advice and Deputy Director of Research, Valorization and Innovation of the Institute of Medical Research and Medicinal Plants Studies (IMPM) in Yaoundé, Cameroon.</p>		<p>Dr. Justine Germa Nzweundji is a Plant Biotechnologist and Science Policy expert. Born in Cameroon, she received a UNESCO-I’Oreal Fellowship for her PhD research at the University of Florida and Alabama A&M University in the US, where she studied the Tissue culture of <i>Prunus africana</i> for its domestication and conservation in Cameroon’s agroforestry system. She was a TWAS-DFG Postdoc Fellow at the Geisenheim Hochschule University in Germany, working on molecular tools for characterization of <i>Prunus africana</i>. Over the past few years, she has been increasingly working on Science, Technology and Public Policy issues as well as the interface of traditional knowledges and empirical scientific knowledge. She therefore received an African Presidential Scholars (UMAPS) Fellowship at the University of Michigan in the US to work on Science Policy. She is a champion of young girls and females in STEM. Currently, Justine Germa is Deputy Director of Research, Valorization and Innovation of the Institute of Medical Research and Medicinal Plants Studies (IMPM) in Yaoundé, Cameroon, and Member of the Executive Committee of the Global Young Academy (GYA).</p>
<p>Isabelle Mercier Director, Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP and Co-Chair, Global SDG Synthesis Coalition</p>		<p>Isabelle Mercier is a professional evaluator who has spent 18 years of her working career in the public sector providing evidence-grounded, strategic advice to senior leaders. As an executive at Global Affairs Canada, she helped transform the evaluation function, strengthening its leadership in key strategic areas linked to sustainable development and international affairs. Previously, she held senior positions in monitoring and evaluation working in Canada for Shared Services Canada, Public Works and Government Services Canada and the Canadian Institute of Health Research. She has also performed in key leadership functions at the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) which assesses multilateral organisations to strengthen results and promote accountability, and in the international development evaluation community, as Vice-Chair of OECD-DAC EvalNet.</p>

<p>Emran Mian Director General for Digital Technologies and Telecoms at the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT)</p>		<p>Emran was Director General for Regeneration at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, from September 2021 to July 2023. Prior to this he was the Director of Strategy and then a Director General at the Department for Education. Before returning to the Civil Service in 2017, Emran ran the Social Market Foundation, an independent public policy think tank that works across a range of economic and social policy issues. Earlier in his career Emran held senior roles at BEIS and Cabinet Office.</p>
<p>Will Moy CEO, Campbell Collaboration</p>		<p>Will Moy is the Chief Executive officer (CEO) of the Campbell Collaboration, an international social science research network. Campbell groups coordinate the production and promote the use of high-quality, policy-relevant evidence syntheses such as systematic reviews and evidence and gap maps which are published in our open access journal, Campbell Systematic Reviews, and used by policymakers around the world. He was previously Chief Executive of Full Fact – a role he held from 2010. Full Fact is a UK-based charity that works to inform and improve public debate and reduce the harm done by misinformation through fact checking, campaigning and technology. Will has led it from the beginning to become a trusted voice whose work is used by millions of people, from voters to the most senior policymakers, and a world leader in artificial intelligence in its field.</p>

<p>Krishna Kishore Pandalaneni Master of Public Administration Candidate, Columbia University</p>		<p>Krishna is pursuing a Master of Public Administration at Columbia University and has been elected Academic Chair for the SIPA Student Association, representing over 1500 students and advocating for their needs. Before transitioning to the policy field, he earned a Master of Technology in Mechanical Engineering and is a certified Project Management Professional. His commitment to sustainable development, acting as a bridge between science, technology, and policy, with a focus on uplifting marginalized communities, is unwavering.</p>
<p>Ruben Pohle MS Student, Yale University</p>		<p>Ruben Pohle is a medical student at the University of Oxford, UK. He is taking a year-out from medicine to complete MS Personalized Medicine and Applied Engineering at Yale University funded through a German Academic Exchange (DAAD) scholarship. He holds an MSci in Cell Biology from University College London, UK. His research centres on extracting actionable insights from big data across biomedical and engineering applications and is currently working on enhancing deep-learning-based artificial intelligence algorithms for medical images. He is passionate about affecting systems and social change; especially on how data can be leveraged for effective decision-making. At UCL, he led the students' Friends of Médecins Sans Frontières society, advocating for equitable global health strategies and development.</p>
<p>Ambassador Bob Rae President of the UN Economic and Social Council and Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations in New York</p>		<p>Bob Rae is the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations in New York. Since assuming this role, he has been active in all aspects of the work of the UN, culminating in his election to the Presidency of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for 2024-25. He served as Premier of Ontario from 1990-1995, interim Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada from 2011-2013 and was appointed as Canada's Special Envoy to Myanmar (2017) and Canada's Special Envoy on Humanitarian and Refugee Issues (2020). From 1996 to 2008, he was a partner at Goodmans LLP and wrote government reports on the Air India bombing and higher</p>

		<p>education in Ontario. He also served as Chair of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Conservatory of Music, the Institute for Research in Public Policy and the Forum of Federations. Mr. Rae taught law and public policy at the University of Toronto and in the VicOne programme at Victoria College and was a partner and senior counsel to the law firm OKT LLP from 2014 to 2020, specializing in indigenous law and constitutional issues. Bob Rae is a Privy Councillor, a Companion of the Order of Canada, and a member of the Order of Ontario.</p>
<p>John-Arne Røttingen CEO, Wellcome Trust</p>		<p>John-Arne joined Wellcome as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in January 2024 and leads the charitable foundation’s mission to support science to solve the urgent health challenges facing everyone. John-Arne has held many international roles in health and research, including most recently as Ambassador for Global Health at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Norway. Prior to this, he was founding CEO of CEPI (Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations), which Wellcome helped to launch, and has been the Chief Executive of the Research Council of Norway. He has held academic positions at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and the University of Oslo. He is a member of the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters and the US National Academy of Medicine.</p>
<p>Karla Soares-Weiser <i>Editor-in-Chief, Cochrane Library</i></p>		<p>Dr. Karla Soares-Weiser is a leader in global health care with a proven track record in evidence-based health care. As the Editor-in-Chief of Cochrane, she has led transformative changes in the development and publication of evidence syntheses, significantly reducing the time to publication and focusing the organization to prioritize systematic reviews relevant to tackle global challenges. Dr. Soares-Weiser, a Board-certified Psychiatrist, holds a Master's in mental health epidemiology and a Doctorate in evidence-based health care. Her career spans over 30 years, marked by significant contributions to health care research and strategic adaptations during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, she has held academic positions and founded a consultancy business focused on evidence</p>

		<p>synthesis for government and non-profit sectors around the world, demonstrating her commitment to global health equity.</p>
<p>Lord Patrick Vallance Minister of State for Science, Research and Innovation, UK Government</p>	 <p>A portrait of Lord Patrick Vallance, a man with glasses wearing a dark suit and tie, standing in front of a Union Jack flag.</p>	<p>Lord Vallance was appointed Minister of State for Science, Research and Innovation on 5 July 2024. He was previously Government Chief Scientific Adviser from April 2018 to April 2023. He was also National Technology Adviser and Head of the Government Science and Engineering Profession. Lord Vallance was President, R&D at GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) from 2012 until 2017. Prior to this, he was Senior Vice President, Medicines Discovery and Development. He joined the company in May 2006 as Head of Drug Discovery. He was a member of the GSK Board and the Corporate Executive Team. Prior to joining GSK, he was a clinical academic, Professor of Medicine and led the Division of Medicine at UCL. He has many years' experience of basic science and clinical research, and was a consultant physician in the NHS.</p>