

# [Press release: £50 million for satellite solutions to help developing countries](#)

The Agency's International Partnerships Programme (IPP) is a five-year, £152 million programme, designed to partner UK space expertise with overseas governments and organisations. It is part of the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF), which aims to support cutting-edge research and innovation that addresses the challenges faced by developing countries.

More than £70 million in funding has already been given to projects in partnership with the UK space industry, applying inventive satellite solutions to a range of areas such as deforestation, illegal fishing, marine pollution, disaster recovery, drought and flooding. The latest tranche of funding will focus on issues around health and education.

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Universities and Science Minister Jo Johnson said:

“The UK space sector is thriving with innovative developments and technologies that can be used to solve some of the most pressing global challenges of our time.

“The International Partnerships Programme has already harnessed Britain's world-leading expertise in analysing satellite data to make a real difference to a number of countries. The latest round of funding is exactly the sort of project our Industrial Strategy is looking to support – boosting the UK space sector and delivering benefits to millions around the world.”

Call 2 for funding opens today (11 April 2017) and will close on 5 September 2017. The assessment is due to take place in October 2017 and successful projects will begin by the end of the year.

During the first round of funding, announced in January 2017, 20 projects were selected to provide solutions for local issues in countries across Africa, Asia and Central and South America. All of the projects will have a

sustainable impact in the country they are working with, which is a vital element of IPP.

The programme's current projects include providing communications in remote areas for education in Tanzania, improving maritime safety for small fishing vessels in South Africa and Madagascar and reducing illegal logging in Guatemala.

## **Projects funded in Call 1 included:**

1. Forests 2020: A £23.8 million project led by Ecometrica UK in conjunction with a large consortium of national and international partners to protect and restore forests across the globe.

The Forests 2020 project aims to help protect and restore up to 300 million hectares of tropical forests by improving national forest monitoring systems for the use of governments, universities and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in the 6 partner countries: Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Ghana, Kenya and Indonesia. By using freely available Earth Observation data to address critical gaps in current systems, Forests 2020 will improve partners' capacity to:

- measure forest change
- provide information on the risks and drivers of forest loss (such as forest fires)
- map suitable areas for restoration

It will also build in-country capacity for the international partners by improving digital infrastructure to manage forest data more effectively and establishing a network of Earth Observation Labs.

1. Satellite connectivity for Nigerian healthcare: A £6.1 million project between Inmarsat UK, InStat and the end customer, Nigerian Federal Ministry of Health, to extend health services to remote populations using satellite communications.

This project addresses a key development need for Nigeria by extending the reach of basic medical services into remote areas of the country (84 clinics in 3 states) using a satellite-based system. This will deliver professional training, data collection and disease monitoring in areas which are inaccessible by conventional methods.

It aims to reduce the mortality rate in rural Nigeria by providing access to better health information and training for health workers by:

- providing video-based training to health workers to an agreed government standard
- improving health systems management and governance using an information system application
- improving disease surveillance capabilities