

Following increased Israeli settler violence in the West Bank, Heads of Mission and likeminded countries visit Beita Village near Nablus

Heads of Mission and representatives from Belgium, Denmark, EU, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the UK visited Beita in Nablus Governorate. Ireland also attaches itself to this statement.

The visit took place in response to increasing concerns – across the West Bank and in Beita in particular – about the rising levels of settler violence. The visit also touched upon the worrying establishment of an illegal settlement outpost on top of Jabal Sabih, on the outskirts of the village, which is causing regular clashes between Palestinian residents, Israeli settlers and the Israeli Security Forces (ISF). According to UN OCHA, since the beginning of May, six Palestinians, including two children, have been killed around Beita as a result of live fire from ISF.

During the visit, participants heard from local residents, WBPC partners, and the Colonization & Wall Resistance Commission about the developments on the ground, which often result in violent incidents as the residents live in close proximity to a settlement outpost. Palestinian residents told attendees how they feared losing further land and being exposed to more settler violence. Members of the WBPC and likeminded countries also heard about the lack of effective preventative measures and sufficient protection against the perpetrators of settler violence.

According to UN OCHA, the total number of settler attacks across the West Bank that have resulted in injury and/or property damage in 2021 has increased by 46 percent compared to the same period in 2020. Meanwhile, Yesh Din report that 96 percent of investigations by Israeli authorities into alleged acts of settler violence do not lead to the filing of an indictment.

All participants reiterated their continued strong opposition to Israel's settlement policy and actions taken in this context. They recalled how Israel, as the occupying power, was obliged to protect the Palestinian population from attack. Under international law, Israel has an obligation to maintain public order in an impartial manner and to protect Palestinians and their property. Settlers and others who are responsible for crimes against Palestinians must be held accountable, criminal activity must be thoroughly investigated and reports brought to the attention of Israeli authorities by Palestinians followed up on. Israel should take all necessary measures to ensure effective prevention and protect Palestinians against violence committed by settlers.

Visiting Beita, British Consul General Diane Corner said: "We condemn any

incidence of violence by settlers against Palestinians. We urge the Israeli authorities to address settler violence and to thoroughly investigate every incident to bring those responsible to justice and end the culture of impunity.” Corner added “The UK’s position on settlements is clear: They are illegal under international law, present an obstacle to peace, and threaten the physical viability of a two-state solution.”

European Union Representative Sven Kühn von Burgsdorff also stated via his representative: “For months, the people of Beita have been exposed to serious incidents of settler violence and the building of an illegal Israeli outpost on Mount Sabih, which risks capturing up to 30 % of Beita’s land. These developments have left many families suffering. Several Palestinians lost their lives, including two children. The policy of settlement construction and expansion in occupied Palestinian territory, including in East Jerusalem, is illegal under international law, and Israel must protect the Palestinian population from these violent attacks.”

Financial modelling expertise

News story

GAD provided financial modelling to support HM Treasury in the production of its Annual Report and Accounts.



The Government Actuary’s Department (GAD) has supported HM Treasury (HMT) in the production of its recently published [Annual Report and Accounts 2020 to 2021](#).

EU exit

Among the accounting disclosures that GAD worked with HMT on is the provision for the UK’s pension liabilities around EU exit.

Under Article 142 of the UK EU Withdrawal Agreement, the UK remains responsible for a share of the EU’s payments for pensions accrued by EU

employees up to the end of 2020.

HMT used GAD's financial modelling as part of its work in calculating the accounting provision for these liabilities.

Checks and balances

Actuary James Pepler led on this project for GAD. He said: "The National Audit Office (NAO) chose the EU financial settlement as one of their key audit matters, so it was important to work closely with them.

"We followed our processes in our model development and were able to provide justifications for the assumptions in our model.

"The NAO and their actuaries reviewed our model, looked at the version control log and checked the references for all the input data and assumptions. We responded quickly to their queries. This helped HMT publish their accounts to a significantly faster timetable than last year."

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[Environment Agency encourages landowners to introduce natural flood management techniques in the River Aire catchment](#)

White Rose Forest partners are now available to work with landowners or farmers to identify potential opportunities for natural flood management work on their land and guide them through the design and practical support they need to complete each project – all of which is fully-funded.

Natural flood management measures can help to reduce flood risk by mimicking natural processes and slowing the flow of water. These measures are generally divided into three main categories: river and floodplain management; woodland management; and run-off management. Some examples include: tree and hedgerow planting; buffer strips (which trap sediment and slowing water flow); leaky barriers (which enhance floodplain storage); woodland creation; and sediment traps.

Fiona Sugden, Environment Agency Project Manager, said:

There is a long history of flooding in the Lower Aire catchment which has a huge effect on local residents, the environment and wildlife. The Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme's Natural Flood Management Programme plays an important role in reducing flood risk and bringing wider environmental and social benefits to the area.

The project has seen huge successes so far and we are keen for more landowners to get in touch to find out more about the benefits of introducing natural flood management measures on their land.

This scale of natural flood management will provide several wider environmental and social benefits to the area, such as: increasing biodiversity, tree canopy cover and creating habitat for wildlife, capturing and storing carbon, improved land management, better water quality and helping to regenerate rural and urban areas.

Ian Coldwell, Project Manager for the White Rose Forest said:

This natural flood management project is important for nature, our environment and everyone living in the River Aire catchment. We are working with our network of local White Rose Forest partners to invite interested landowners across the Aire valley to find out more about the support available for natural flood management projects on their land.

A complete package of design, funding, and delivery is available to make each project as simple and straight forward as possible for landowners. Although the scheme runs throughout the year, we would encourage landowners to register their interest early via the White Rose Forest website to ensure timely delivery, particularly for popular projects such as tree planting.

Councillor Helen Hayden, Leeds City Council's executive member for infrastructure and climate, said:

Natural flood management techniques can play a key role in improving our area's resilience to climate change. In conjunction with the engineering work being carried out also through the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme it could significantly reduce the flood risk to previously affected residents and businesses in Leeds.

The council has an ambitious target of planting up to two million trees, which will contribute significantly to our area's resilience and we know natural flood management also has environmental benefits, which is why it is so important.

As well as reducing flood risk, landowners or land managers could benefit from;

- improved soil fertility and reductions in soil loss, pesticide and fertiliser runoff
- reduced effects of dry weather
- improved drainage of waterlogged areas
- bankside fencing can reduce the risk of waterborne disease and lameness in stock
- hedges and tree planting can provide shelter and shade for stock
- reduced erosion of tracks and river banks
- less need for gravel management
- potential income generation from commercial woodlands and short rotation willow coppice

This initiative follows on from natural flood management projects recently undertaken by the Environment Agency as part of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme's Natural Flood Management Project on behalf of Leeds City Council. Funded by Leeds City Council, this is one of the UK's largest natural flood management schemes which aims to use natural processes to slow the flow and build a more resilient river catchment that can respond better to extreme weather.

Broughton Hall Estate near Skipton is one of the sites where natural flood management techniques are currently being used with support from the White Rose Forest and funding from Defra's 'Nature for Climate' fund. Work so far this year has included restructuring several areas of woodland, installing leaky barriers and land restoration, as well as the creation of up to 110,000 cubic meters of storage space for surface water.

If you have land and would like to know more visit the White Rose Forest website on www.whiteroseforest.org/aireriver or email whiteroseforest@kirklees.gov.uk.

For more information about the LeedsFAS visit www.leeds.gov.uk/fas.

Hidden costs of poor data quality

Why is data quality important?

High quality data is essential for policy and decision making and underpins your organisation's strategic outcomes. Poor quality data, including data that is inaccurate, incomplete, or out of date, is data that is not fit for purpose. Poor quality data increases risk and can cost you time and money. This article looks at the costs and risks associated with poor quality data.

The costs of poor data quality

Poor quality data costs the government, businesses, and society every single

day. The DAMA Data Management Body of Knowledge states that estimates differ, but experts think that organisations spend between 10-30% of revenue on handling data quality issues. However, there are also direct and indirect costs associated with poor quality data that are more than just monetary.

The direct costs of poor quality data are often seen in short-term operational issues. We may send staff to the wrong place, pay the wrong amount, fail to provide services correctly, or spend extra time on verification or re-entering data.

Indirect costs caused by poor data quality can include the costs of poor or wrong decisions or the costs of reputational damage. These often have strategic costs or risks that can have a longer-term, negative impact in the future.

There are costs involved in improving data quality, such as training, monitoring, IT and planning costs. However, the benefits of high quality data will always outweigh the costs of poor data quality.

The impact of poor data quality

Decision making

Indirect costs can be harder to measure. You may not immediately realise the true cost of poor data quality. It may be a longer-term consequence, such as a damaged reputation. Poor data quality can weaken evidence, create mistrust, and lead to poor decision making. This in turn can lead to poor outcomes for society.

Evidence based decisions and policies are only as good as the data they are based upon. Missing or duplicate data could result in you over or undercounting and then in poor decisions being made, leading to negative outcomes.

Reputational risk

Poor quality data also poses a reputational risk. This could include negative media exposure and GDPR issues, with data quality being a requirement of GDPR. Duplicated data could result in you contacting the same person multiple times. This can lead to feelings of frustration and mistrust, as well as wasted time and resources.

Incorrect or missing personal information could also have significant impact on the individual. For example, they could miss important deadlines or not receive necessary information. Unreliable and contradictory data can make it difficult to know what is correct. Users may then question the accuracy of your data, and this may create mistrust towards your organisation.

Missed opportunities

Data that is poor quality may also lead to you missing vital opportunities, or cause failures in service provision. For example, inaccurate or out of

date data may result in an unnecessary service provision in one area, whereas high quality data could outline more valuable opportunities.

Poor data quality can also lead to organisations being unable to assess their own effectiveness and whether money and resources are used in the best way possible. High quality data can lead to more targeted organisational strategy, better spend of public money and increased operational effectiveness.

Planning for data quality

High quality and trustworthy data can improve efficiency, help mitigate risk and reduce costs. Understanding the importance of data quality and having procedures to tackle the root cause of problems will ensure your organisation is able to use data to make effective decisions. High quality, reliable data will enable you to have confidence in your decisions. Analysts and policy makers can spend more time using the data to drive insight, and less time trying to figure out if the data is fit for purpose, or what the consequences of poor data quality are on their results.

The cost of getting data quality right the first time is cheaper than the costs of having poor quality data and having to fix it further down the track. Producing high quality data requires planning and commitment. Developing a data quality plan with achievable and measurable goals that everyone can commit to can be a good place to start. Remember that data quality is everyone's responsibility, as poor data quality can occur at any stage of interaction with data.

Preventative measures and effective data quality management should be embedded into your organisation. It is a continual process, and everyone should be aware of the risks and have procedures in place to account for data quality. Ensuring data quality throughout all stages of the data lifecycle and being able to identify data problems proactively and as they occur is more beneficial and cost effective than retrospectively trying to fix poor quality data.

The Government Data Quality Hub (DQHub) is developing tools, guidance, and training to help you with your data quality initiatives. You can find the [Government Data Quality Framework](#), tools and case studies on the [DQHub website](#).

We also offer tailored advice and support across government. Please contact us by emailing dqhub@ons.gov.uk.

Ghana: applications for the UK Government's Chevening Scholarships

Introduction

Chevening Scholarships are awarded to individuals from all backgrounds who can demonstrate that they have the commitment and skills required to create positive change, and can show how a UK master's degree will help them do that. The scholarship offers full financial support for scholars to study for any eligible master's degree at any UK university whilst also gaining access to a wide range of exclusive academic, professional, and cultural experiences.

Since the programme was created in 1983, over 50,000 professionals have had the opportunity to develop in the UK through Chevening. There are more than 1,500 scholarships on offer globally for the 2022/ 2023 academic year, demonstrating the UK's ongoing commitment towards developing the leaders of tomorrow.

New applications are to be submitted via www.chevening.org/apply.

Head of Scholarships at the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), Naomi Rayner, said:

As the world continues to tackle major global issues such as COVID-19 and climate change, international cooperation is more essential than ever. Chevening seeks to build an international community of people who are committed to working together to drive positive change. We do this by bringing together incredible people from around the world and supporting them, through education, to achieve their goals.

In the UK we are proud of our world class universities and we know that our learning environments are enriched by the wide diversity of cultures, experiences and viewpoints represented on our campuses. Chevening scholars make a significant contribution to these communities, as well as becoming an important part of our network of over 50,000 alumni.

Chevening represents the very best of the UK, welcoming people from across the world to study, grow, and thrive. Being a part of the Chevening network instils a strong sense of pride and responsibility. I am consistently inspired by the passion and commitment of those in the Chevening community and I look forward

to hearing from this year's applicants.

Chevening's Director, Duncan Barker, said:

The Chevening experience is so much more than a master's degree. As well as an academically challenging and fulfilling university experience, we'll immerse you in UK culture and bring you together with incredible people from around the world.

We organise an exclusive programme of events and activities, so you can experience Britain's heritage and history, discuss international policy, and interact with thought leaders at a range of academic, cultural, and social events. Previously, scholars have visited the UK prime minister's residence at 10 Downing Street, hiked up Mount Snowdon in Wales, exhibited art in London galleries, interned at the BBC and sat in the home dressing room at Anfield.

You will learn by interacting with people from all over the world, travelling around the UK and getting involved in the communities you live in. You will be expected to take control of your own learning, show independent thinking and chase new experiences. Those who get the most out of Chevening are the ones who put the most into it.

Your scholarship will last a year, but you will be a part of the Chevening community for life. Our hope is that you will leave the UK inspired, motivated and better equipped to bring your own ideas to life.

Spokesperson of the British High Commission, Accra said:

If you are someone who is passionate about driving change, whether on a local or global scale, if you want to be the best at what you do and if you have the imagination to inspire others, then a Chevening scholarship could be the perfect opportunity for you.

There is no such thing as a 'typical' scholar. Your age, race, gender, religion and cultural background do not matter to us. We want to see that you have energy, curiosity, compassion, a clear vision for your future and the ability to achieve your goals. If this sounds like you, then you are very likely to fit in with our community of over 50,000 alumni worldwide.

Our alumni network is full of dynamic individuals who have shared the same experience that you will. They can offer encouragement, mentorship, advice, and contacts. When you return home after your studies you should feel well-equipped to start making a real difference professionally or socially.

There is a lot to gain from submitting an application, so if you have what it takes to be a Chevening Scholar, I would encourage you to apply before the 3 November deadline.

The call for new applicants follows the selection of 18 scholars from Ghana, who won an award to study at a UK university this year. Successful applicants have been sharing their stories through the #ChosenForChevening hashtag on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

More information

Visit www.chevening.org/scholarships for detailed information on the eligibility criteria and scholarship specifications.

Contact

Contact the Chevening Officer (British High Commission, Accra) at high.commission.accra@fcdo.gov.uk or 030 221 3200.

Further information

Chevening Scholarships are the UK Government's global scholarship programme, funded by the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and partner organisations. The scholarships support study at UK universities – mostly one year taught master's degrees – for individuals with demonstrable potential to become future leaders, decision-makers and opinion formers.

Chevening began in 1983 and has developed into a prestigious international awards scheme. Chevening Scholars come from over 160 countries and territories worldwide, and over the past five years we have awarded almost 10,000 scholarships. There are over 50,000 Chevening Alumni around the world who comprise an influential and highly regarded global network.

The name 'Chevening' comes from Chevening House in Sevenoaks, Kent – currently the joint official residence of the UK's Foreign Secretary.

More information is available at www.chevening.org.