



You've undertaken work in various countries - how did you get involved in such internationally-based projects?

My work in different countries arose as a result of other people. Dr Helen Forde was key, as was Michael Roper, both very involved with the ICA. Michael came to me with the project in Vietnam. Then another one came up in Kenya and since then I've worked in a lot of African countries. At that time there were a number of different projects being funded by organisations like the World Bank and the case was made that you need to consider preservation if you're going to secure records. That led me to the International Records Management Trust, who acted as an agency bringing together consultants and projects. I was in the right place at the right time and had enough expertise to be thought of as right for those kind of projects.

What role do you think the ICA plays in the international community?

The ICA plays a hugely important role, because without that focus then the international community wouldn't know that it had a voice of any kind. As an organisation that focuses on the reason for archives, the ICA has played an immeasurable role in showing that it's important and not something that just exists in the west, it exists everywhere. The role of a professional body is to establish standards and benchmarks and provide an integrated

network of support. It's also the training, so a lot of my international work has had a strong training element. It's also important to build champions in those countries as typically you'd find lots of enthusiasm when the consultant is in-country but no support from higher-up or the resources to continue the work once they've left. So we're getting much better at enabling rather than just telling people what to do and that's a very important role of the ICA.

What do you think should be the biggest concern for the archival profession at this time?

I think sustainability. How are we going to keep going in a world where expertise is not trusted and where resources are being moved away from citizens and their rights? We need to be fully behind the promotion of archives as key to establishing rights. Preservation is key to that but also is a luxury and we need to make people understand they need to have records in the first place and hope that the importance and integrity of those records make people care enough to keep them.



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Jonathan Rhys Lewis awarded ICA Fellowship by David Fricker at Yaounde General Assembly, 26 November 2018.



ICA/CARBICA "Archives @ Risk: Regional Solutions for Archival Development" Workshop in Grenada, February 2017.