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## Oxford graduates launch scholarship fundraising campaign at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland

**Davos, Switzerland, 23 January 2019** – A group of Oxford University students and alumni took the floor in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Tent this afternoon, speaking on behalf of the largest philanthropic scholarship supported by the University of Oxford, the Weidenfeld-Hoffmann Trust Scholarships and Leadership Programme. The Trust has launched a landmark campaign to raise funds for its unique Leadership Programme which prepares Oxford Graduates from developing and emerging economies with the leadership skills and practical tools to make a positive, ethical and sustainable impact on their countries and regions of origin.

Since 2007 the programme has supported 276 scholars from 72 countries across 49 courses of study at the University of Oxford. The Trust endowment, spearheaded by its chairman, André Hoffmann and matched funding from the University allows for 30 scholars per year (in perpetuity) to receive a scholarship to study at Oxford. The Trust is more than a scholarship, it is a holistic programme of social support, networking and leadership training which compliments the rigors of academic study at Oxford. It was in this spirit that current scholars and alumni travelled to Davos to impress the importance of the Leadership Programme and its distinguishing qualities which have produced amongst its members no less than 3 alumni-founded social enterprises, a Minister for Youth in the Yemeni government, a Doctor who fought on the front lines against Ebola in Liberia, Afghanistan's first female Oxford postgraduate (who is currently working to create a strong civil society in her country) and the founder of a healthcare start-up which is helping millions of people across the world living with chronic disease such as diabetes.

Under the panel title, *“Young Voices of Hope: Perspectives from the Latest Wave of Emerging Leaders”*, scholars and alumni shared the most challenging issues facing their countries of origin and how their time at Oxford and within the Leadership Programme, has inspired and equipped them to be the driving force behind solutions. Joseph Ssentongo (Uganda, 2016, Oxford-Weidenfeld and Hoffmann) spoke of the youth unemployment crisis in his home county, “5 out of 6 young people are unemployed – we need to leverage this wasted potential for good”. Another scholar, Dana Qarout (Jordan, 2019, Oxford-Weidenfeld and Hoffmann) spoke about the importance of redefining womanhood as more than motherhood in Jordan - and unlocking the power of women in the labour market. Finally, alumni entrepreneurs Atherton Mutombwera (Zimbabwe, 2017, Louis Dreyfus – Weidenfeld and Hoffmann - Saïd), Cedric Maforimbo

(Zimbabwe, 2018, Louis Dreyfus – Weidenfeld and Hoffmann) and Irina Fedorenko (Russia, 2016, Hoffmann) retold their own experiences developing rapid diagnostics tests for Africa's most pervasive diseases, turning weeds in Zimbabwe into pesticides and harnessing drone technology to replant the world's forests in response to climate change. These future young leaders, who brought perspectives from Kenya, Venezuela, Argentina, Uganda, India, Russia, Mexico, Colombia, Belarus and Jordan represent only a handful of the Programme's beneficiaries who also include Oxford's first graduate students from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kosovo, Laos, Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Yemen.

While the World Economic Forum attracted global industry leaders to discuss the most pressing problems facing society, WHT scholars reminded them about the urgency and vitality of investing in young people who can together work towards a more tolerant, more understanding and more sustainable world. In the words of Trust Chairman, André Hoffmann, "I believe in supporting young, talented students through the Weidenfeld-Hoffmann Scholarship scheme as a way to make a difference in today's highly complex world through the advancement of education. Knowledgeable and skilled leaders are needed to shape more equitable and sustainable societies, particularly in trouble-stricken regions."

In order to sustain the vision and impact of the Leadership Programme, the Trust is calling on supporters and advocates across the globe to contribute to this unique educational charity which is changing the lives of Oxford graduates and their communities, across the world.

The Weidenfeld Hoffmann Trust is a Charity registered in England, No. 1158918.

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If you would like more information about this release or the Weidenfeld Hoffmann Trust Scholarships and Leadership Programme, contact Jane Baldwin at [admin@whtrust.org](mailto:admin@whtrust.org)