

**Learning lessons on research uptake and use:
A review of DFID's research communication
programmes**

June 12, 2009

PART 1 – REPORT

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Acronyms

AGRIS	Information Systems in Agricultural Science and Technology
APHRC	Africa Population and Health Research Centre, Kenya
BBC WST	British Broadcasting Cooperation World Service Trust
BLDS	British Library for Development Studies
CABI	Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux International
CGIAR	Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research
CHSRF	Canadian Health Services Research Foundation
CommGap	Mainstreaming communication in development
CRD	Central Research Department (now DFID Research)
CP	(Research) Communication Programme
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee - OECD
DFID	Department for International Development
DR	Document Review
DRC	Development Research Centres
EE	Enabling Environment
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FTTG	Fostering Trust and Transparency in Governance
GDN	Global Development Network
GNet	The electronic voice of - Global Development Network
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICT4D	Information and Communication Technologies for Development
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IFORD	International Forum of Research Donors
<i>infoDev</i>	Information for Development - World Bank
INASP	International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications
ITOCA	Information Training and Outreach Centre for Africa
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MK4D	Mobilising Knowledge for Development – IDS
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisations
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PERii	Programme for the Enhancement of Research Information phase 2 – INASP
POVNET	Promoting Pro-Poor Growth - OECD
R4D	Research4Development - CABI
RCSG	Research Communication Strategy Group
RELAY	Research Communication Programme – PANOS
PRD	Policy and Research Directorate
RAPID	Research and Policy in Development
RCS	Research Communication Programme Survey
RCI	Research Communication Programme interviews
RGS	Research Generator Survey
RPC	Research Programme Consortia
RRU	Regional Research Units
RURU	Research Unit for Research Utilisation (Universities of Edinburgh and St Andrews)
RUS	Research User Survey
SARIMA	Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association
SciDev.Net	The Science and Development Network
SjCOOP	Peer-to-Peer Development and Support of Science Journalism in

	the Developing World WFSJ
SLI	Strategic Learning Initiative - IDS
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SMCR	Sender-Message-Channel-Receiver
TLC	Triple Line Consulting Ltd.
TOR	Terms of Reference
WAICENT	World Agricultural Information Network
WFSJ	World Federation of Science Journalists

Acknowledgements

This lesson learning study on research uptake and use has called upon researchers, DFID funded research communication programme representatives, and users of research from across the spectrum, including policy makers, development practitioners, NGOs, researchers and development partners. This work could not have been undertaken without the interest and willingness of all who contributed. We thank all respondents with whom we were in contact, for sharing openly their knowledge, experience and ideas.

Specifically, the Triple Line Ltd Consulting Ltd. team wish to thank staff of the seventeen research communication programmes supported by DFID for their time in completing questionnaires and for the time given for telephone interviews and follow-up. We also thank the nearly one hundred research generators and research users based in both developed and developing and emerging market economy countries, who completed our questionnaires and the twenty or so researchers and users who kindly agreed to give interviews to our team. We hope that we have captured their views, comments and opinions in a fair and balanced manner.

We thank Roger Wilson for his input in commenting on the relevant draft questionnaires to help to link our work with DFID's parallel scoping study on decentralising some of DFID's research functions. We are grateful to his team for sharing regional contact names for us to include in our surveys.

Judith Francis from CTA provided useful comments on the questionnaire surveys and the draft report, for which we are very grateful.

Finally, we thank the DFID Research, in particular Fiona Power, who led for DFID as our anchor, and her colleagues Abigail Mulhal and Megan Lloyd-Laney. The DFID team worked with us each step of the way to help to ensure we maintained focus and reflected the needs of DFID. That said this report reflects the views of the Triple Line Consulting Ltd team who carry full responsibility for the evidence presented and resulting analysis. Our findings may not reflect the views and opinions of the DFID.

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Executive Summary

DFID's new strategy places emphasis on making research available and accessible. To achieve this ambition, DFID has committed to spend up to 30% of their overall investment in research by 2013 in this area, i.e. some £60m of the anticipated overall allocation of £200m. This includes investment within research programmes themselves for outreach and communication, but also includes new programmes and increased emphasis on improving knowledge management, monitoring, evaluation and learning, a new synthesis function and decentralising some research services. This includes a dedicated investment in initiatives that specifically deliver the communication of research, which can expect to increase significantly from the current annual level of approximately £11m (2008/09).

The DFID research strategy 2008-2013 calls for a balance between creating new knowledge and technology and getting knowledge and technology – both new and existing – into use, and to make the most of DFID's ability to influence policy to make sure research makes an impact.

It is the subject of this lesson learning study to:

- Understand what lessons are emerging from across the current DFID funded research communication programme portfolio, and consider the implications for DFID to deliver commitments in the new research strategy; and to
- Examine how the current portfolio reflects and supports DFID's commitments in the research strategy, so that DFID can enhance and modify it as appropriate.

The review seeks to arrive at strategic and higher level recommendations that will assist DFID Research in defining its research communication framework and action plan, and in the allocation of resources to those areas that are most likely to result in meeting the objectives of the research strategy. It is not an evaluation of the individual programmes, but rather seeks to learn lessons from across the portfolio to inform DFID on how it might work differently in the future.

This study has reviewed the portfolio of 17 DFID supported research communication programmes (CPs); invited research communication programmes, researchers and users to complete questionnaires and undertaken key informant interviews (Sections 1-4). The Part 2 of this report provides the raw data from the review of documents and from the three questionnaires. It further provides a short profile of each of the 17 programmes. This study then explored the emerging evidence and good and innovative practice around five broad themes: the enabling environment; the communication of research; supporting researchers to communicate; knowledge management; and research in communication (Section 5). The findings are then considered in the light to the results areas defined in the DFID research strategy (Section 6). Recommendations and proposals for the way forward are given in Section 7.

Before commenting on specific findings, it is necessary to make some general observations about the portfolio as a whole.

The 17 programmes each have their own constituencies and following. Within the programmes and that of their networks is a wealth of expertise, skills and knowledge on many aspects of research communication. Much has been and continues to be achieved by the individual programmes within the framework of

their specific objectives. This review highlights many of these innovations and good practices.

This programme portfolio provides a strong foundation to build upon as DFID reflects on achievements to date and the ambitious goals set out within the results areas of the new research strategy. The programmes within the portfolio have in all cases historical origins defined and developed before the new strategy was launched by DFID in 2008. At critical points of programme renewal, performance of individual programmes needs to be reviewed against both the original goals and planned outcomes as well as their potential to adapt and adjust to the needs and demands as set in the four results areas of DFID's new research strategy.

The key findings are the following:

Overview of the portfolio

The estimated average annual spend by DFID on the current 17 research communication programme portfolio is £8.7m¹. Over 50% of the CPs have a contribution from DFID of between £100,000 - £300,000 and three programmes have a current annual budget of at least £1m/annum. Some 30% of the overall annual budget is allocated to research on issues of communication of research.

Beyond the research focussed programmes, the range of activities is broad from knowledge archiving ("knowledge attic") to the delivery of material to user groups who it is believed need the products ("knowledge pump"), to systems that allow users to request information but does not tailor the responses ("knowledge publisher") and finally to initiatives which enable users to request information and where the knowledge provider responds with tailored products ("knowledge dialogue/ wheel"). The vast majority of programmes are located in the "knowledge pump" category. Whilst more investment at for example the level of the "knowledge dialogue/ wheel" may be justified, it is important not to undervalue the other categories of work including specifically the essential need for effective and efficient knowledge archiving.

Mapping the current and planned allocation of research funds by DFID by sector against the sectoral focus of the work of the research communication programmes (CP) indicates that the health and sustainable agriculture sectors are underrepresented within the CP portfolio. This imbalance, if not compensated for through other DFID and non DFID funded initiatives, needs to be addressed.

Whilst a significant proportion of the CPs do not have an expressed geographic focus, those that do, give emphasis to users in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. This aligns well with DFID's commitment to poverty reduction. That said it is noted that users themselves are calling for more knowledge and evidence to be made available which originates in the developing and emerging economy countries.

Only two or three programmes have direct outreach to poor households; the majority are communicating research products, knowledge, etc., to policy makers or to development practitioners or other intermediaries. Many programmes have

¹ This estimate is based on the information available to the review team at the time of writing, by dividing the total budget for each programme by the programme duration, and then adding up these averages. In the Financial Year 2008/2009, the actual spend on the 17 programmes was £11m, according to information provided by DFID during an earlier review of this report.

multiple and very diverse intended target groups raising questions about the suitability of the product for a given user group.

Research quality and access

A significant barrier, which the research communication programmes have for accessing research from sources in both the North and South, is that it is not available in the public domain, not accessible in a suitable format, in the required language, in open access publications or indeed not written up. There remains concern over the quality of the work in particular where research lacks validation/peer review. Knowledge of what organisations have to offer is weak. Finally, there was concern about the lack of availability of research outputs sourced in the South.

Linkages with DFID funded research

Whilst good examples of innovation and practice exist, the portfolio as a whole is weakly linked to DFID's investment in the generation of knowledge through over 30 Research Programme Consortia (RPCs), Development Research Centres (DRCs) and other investment in research, for example through the CGIAR. Further, the portfolio plays only a limited role in supporting the DFID funded research programmes to use or use effectively their ring-fenced allocation of 10% of overall budget to communicate with users.

Reaching users

Of equal concern is the lack of demonstrable evidence that the research communication programmes have systematically identified and reached different user categories. Whilst a case can be made within the global knowledge economy for programmes such as AGRIS, R4D and SciDev.Net, to make original research outputs available to largely untargeted and undifferentiated audiences, the overall lack within the portfolio as a whole of systematic targeting to pre-identified user groups of products including synthesised analysis of research from multiple sources on key themes, policy notes and short briefings, is less than ideal. It seemed from our questionnaires to researchers and to users that few know of the DFID supported research communication programmes, although many indicated that they would welcome establishing links. The need to help both researchers and users to better link with and access the Research Communication Programmes (CPs) is evident, as is the need to raise the overall profile of the CPs.

Knowledge management and lesson learning

Good and innovative practice - whether derived through research or through research communication practice - is not being systematically collated, reviewed and adapted where applicable for scaling up. Whilst the DFID supported research communication programmes operate loose coalitions for lesson learning, this has not been institutionalised and supported to a level whereby it can enable incremental improvement in DFID supported research communication programme design and operation. Links enabling systematic learning between DFID funded CPs and the wider international community of research communication practitioners and programmes are *ad hoc*.

Strengthening demand for research

There is no systematic support given to strengthen the user demand, to help user groups - whether international development agencies and international financing institutions, or public policy makers, civil society organisations and parliamentary groups within developing and emerging market economy countries - to call for, evaluate and use research evidence. Effective links therefore between the "supply side" of research and the "demand side" - including where necessary intermediation, do not generally exist. Given the financial allocation to the CPs and their historical origins, this should not be taken as a criticism of the CPs *per*

se but an opportunity to revisit the processes of knowledge management and research communication.

Use of evidence by DFID and others

DFID itself as a user appears not to have embedded a culture of evidence based learning and policy whether at HQ level or within country offices and programmes including in the context of the latter, supporting national partners to call for evidence based on research to inform debate, policy and intervention. Many CPs indicate that donors and international development agencies are key target groups for their communication, the evidence of how such agencies – whether DFID or others - are using these services is very unclear.

Moving forward

Delivering on the results areas of the DFID 2008-2013 research strategy

The CP portfolio as a whole falls short in its current capacity to deliver the communication of research evidence, knowledge and findings necessary to support the delivery of DFID results areas. Incremental funding of the current portfolio is likely to fail to meet the anticipated needs if allocated without significant and incremental adjustments within the programmes themselves and new and additional investment beyond the portfolio.

New approaches combined with adding value to DFIDs current investment, are therefore called for. Time is short if the framework results areas of the DFID 2008-2013 research strategy are to be met.

The current portfolio, adding value and moving beyond

The current research communication programme portfolio is relatively modest in scale and, when strengthened, should be seen as one building block - along with other interventions that are supported to move towards meeting the aspirations of the DFID by 2013. We do not advise a radical reshaping of the current CPs, but the provision of support for a structured transformation process, whereby lessons and good practice can be shared and best expanded and new alliances fostered including linkages with complementary funding for example the planned Regional Research Units.

Whilst there is scope to continue and build on lines of research including those to understand better user demands and constraints, working at country or regional levels with identified user groups and within a framework of linking research - intermediaries – users, where DFID and partners can learn through action, offers the greatest potential for innovation. This study strongly endorses the DFIDs intention to work in focal countries/regions and to develop new modalities of work bringing together research – intermediaries - users in networks and within new devolved regional structures and approaches. DFID needs to work in both emerging and stable economies and as well as in fragile states where different modalities of work will need to be developed.

Further, such targeted approaches should not be limited to developing and emerging market economy country interaction. There is also a need to focus international policy networks, donor and other user groups, where the need to strengthen the “demand side” for research evidence and knowledge and its effective uptake is equally relevant.

There is a priority need to build the capacity of developing and middle income country researchers to understand their role in research communication and the opportunity it offers in contributing to the development agenda. Increased

financial and professional support is also required to build the capacity of national and regional researchers, research communication intermediaries - including the media, libraries etc., as well as centres of excellence for training and networking.

Given the DFIDs current and planned levels of funding for research this value adding may come through better use of the "10% allocation" ring-fenced within DFIDs research commitment; the provision of additional support including strengthening linkages between the Research Programme Consortia (RPCs), the Development Research Centres (DRCs) and the research communication programmes (CPs); and direct support to developing and middle income researchers including training and mentoring. Continued support is required to build the credibility of southern based researchers including the writing up of research findings and peer review.

New investments are required, additional to the current portfolio, specifically those that address building user demand, uptake mechanisms, and address issues of access, in particular for the poor, who have limited access to knowledge and information. This lack of access impacts on their capacity to develop, and to contribute to debates and influence the outcome of the development agenda which directly impacts on their lives. DFID needs to place high on the agenda "ICT for all". This requires continued support to the enabling legal and regulatory framework at country levels; capital investment in communication; and the fostering of new networks including strengthening of national intermediaries that help the poor to use research knowledge and to participate in the policy and development process.

Open access to research evidence for use by all categories of user is called for and must continue to be a wider goal of the development community. DFID can play a role in championing this agenda.

Finally, DFID needs to consider how to embed better a knowledge culture within its own organisation. This is maybe achieved by working on key landmark events and exploring how research evidence can generate options – made openly available to a wider constituency of intermediaries and users, including DFID. Increased effort should be made at country level to support national development partners, DFID country offices and sector donor groups to access and use research evidence within policy process and investment planning.

Resulting recommended interventions

To deliver an effective research communication framework and action plan, **we recommend interventions** be undertaken in the following broad areas:

- Strengthen the research communication programme portfolio and begin a process of alignment with the DFID research strategy
- Add value to DFIDs overall investment in research and research communication
- Strengthen user demand for research outputs, evidence and knowledge
- Raise the international profile of research and research communication in development change
- Build researcher and research intermediary capacity in developing and middle income countries for better research communication
- Increase support to research on research communication

These proposed areas are elaborated in Section 7

Four key early entry points are proposed for DFID to begin to take these recommendations forward. These are:

Develop a research communication framework and action plan

This study endorses the proposal by DFID to prepare a research communication framework and an associated integrated action plan set within the framework of the DFID 2008-2013 research strategy. Such a framework would bring together the key results areas with their expected outputs and required actions with the various streams of current work, including this research communication programme lesson learning study, and the review of the communication component of DFID funded research programmes² The findings from the feasibility study on decentralising some of DFID's research functions are also relevant.

Strengthen DFID as a user of research and as an international champion of research into use

This includes:

- Strengthen DFID's capacity to use research and value research communication
- Strengthen and support donor dialogue on research communication and build strategic alliances with those groups that place research communication high of their agenda such as IDRC
- Establish a multi-country investment fund to strengthen Southern research communication networks and centres of excellence
- Establish a draw down fund to service developing country needs for advisory support for legal and regulatory reform of the ICT sector.

Establish a Resource Centre on "Communication and the media"

The overall objective of such a Resource Centre would be to support:

- DFID to become a leader in the field of research communications, providing strategic support to the Policy and Research Division and to other key DFID Departments, embedding research knowledge into policy and investment
- CPs in their lesson learning and improving practices
- RPCs/DRCs in their direct communication efforts and capacity building of southern partners in research communication
- DFID investment in devolved support, taking forward better research communication at local and regional levels.

It would manage lesson learning, research and advisory service components undertaken in partnership with the research communication programmes, the DFID supported research programme consortia and the development resource centres, and any future DFID support to better research communication at local and regional levels. A challenge fund could be put in place to support innovation and learning by doing.

Strengthen selected research communication programmes

In the light of this study and the emerging recommendations, DFID should develop a detailed action plan to strengthen and support the current research communication programme portfolio and accompany its transformation as one key building block to better enable the DFID to meet the results areas given in the research strategy 2008-2013.

²

See <http://www.research4development.info/SearchResearchDatabase.asp?OutputID=179707> for details.

Preamble

DFID commissioned Triple Line Consulting Ltd in November 2008 to undertake a study “learning lessons on research uptake and use: a review of DFID's research communication programme”. The team who worked in this study are listed in Annex 1 and comprised a mix of eight international development specialists with communication specialists offering a range of specific skills including the role of media in development, research on communication, science communication practitioners, targeting communication for better gender, social inclusion and poverty outcomes, knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

This report is in two parts.

Part 1 provides the key evidence and findings of the review of 17 DFID funded research communication programmes and the recommendations for action. Specifically, Section 1 provides the background and context, noting that there will be a major shift in both DFID's spending and commitment towards the communication of research in order to deliver DFID's research strategy 2008-2013. Section 2 defines the scope and objectives of the review and Section 3 the methodology and tools used. The lesson learning process used document reviews, formal questionnaires of researchers, users and the research communication programme leaders and well as key informant interviews. Section 4 presents the key findings – primarily from the quantitative analysis of the questionnaires and to some degree the document analysis. Section 5 reflects on the more qualitative findings and draws in the wider document review and the interviews with key informants. This section is arranged to reflect on the five key thematic areas identified by DFID as elements of their future research communication framework and action plan. Section 6 reflects on the findings in the light of the DFID research strategy results areas and Section 7 presents a set of key recommendations for action.

Part 2 contains the tools used to collect information for this study, and the raw data collected. This includes all questionnaires and interview checklists, and summaries of the questionnaire analysis. Interview notes were not included, as respondents had been assured of confidentiality of responses. Key findings from the interviews have been included in the report text (Part 1) in the form of quotes, text boxes, and contributions to the overall analysis.

1 Background and Context

1.1 The DFID research strategy

DFID published its research strategy for 2008–2013 in June 2008 (<http://www.research4development.info/FeatureResearchStrategy.asp>). The strategy pledges to:

- Strike a balance between creating new knowledge and technology and getting knowledge and technology – both new and existing – into use;
- Make the most of DFID's ability to influence policy to make sure research makes an impact;
- Use different methods of funding to join up national, regional and global research efforts, so that they are more relevant to what matters most to developing countries and to achieve a bigger impact on poverty reduction;
- Redouble efforts to strengthen developing countries' capability to do and use research; and
- Help DFID's partners predict and respond to development challenges and opportunities beyond the 2015 target date for achieving the MDGs.

The emphasis on the uptake and use of research in these pledges is high, and DFID has committed to spend up to 30% of the total £1bn committed to research *'in making research available, accessible and useable through a range of means.'*

The new strategy essentially places the user of research at the centre and the communication of research as pivotal in the delivery of development outcomes. Thus DFID is clearly indicating a commitment to 'taking research to users', building on a long tradition of research communication in DFID, the recent developments of which can be conceptualised in three phases:

- (1) Prior to 2005, DFID did not have a policy that required research programmes to have an explicit communication component, and even though many programmes encouraged researchers to share and disseminate their findings (and particularly within DFID's Renewable Natural Resources Research Systems programmes³), this was not always done in a strategic and systematic way. Also, there do not appear to have been systematic mechanisms in place for DFID Research to synthesise and use research findings across programmes, and to add value to them. At the same time, as part of its endeavours to disseminate research, DFID supported several research communication initiatives.
- (2) When the 'Communication of Research: Guidance Notes for Research Programme Consortia' were issued by DFID Research in 2005, a new 'phase' began, as communication was integrated more firmly into bilaterally funded research programmes. One of the 'Golden Principles of Communication' presented in these guidance notes is that *'a minimum of 10% of the overall RPC budget should be spent on communication of research'*. DFID has recently reviewed the effectiveness of this guideline, in order to assess what changes have come about in behaviour and attitude of researchers as a result of these communication investments. The number of research communication initiatives supported by CRD increased after 2005, addressing a range of objectives – from increasing

³ See for example, leaflets on pest and disease control produced by the Crop Protection Programme (<http://www.cpp.uk.com/outputs.asp?step=6>), or uptake promotion in the Natural Resources Systems Programme (<http://www.nrsp.org/6.aspx>).

access to international journals, development of web-based resources and databases, and building capacity of media to identify and disseminate research, to improving access of decision-makers to research findings. We understand that this portfolio developed organically, as a result of challenges and priorities at the time.

- (3) From 2009 onwards, DFID Research⁴ want to ensure that both individual communication components within research programmes, and DFID Research supported research communication initiatives, add value to the new research strategy including to DFID as a whole. This requires, amongst others, a more strategic alignment of the research portfolio and research communication programmes with the strategy.

DFID seeks to use the power of knowledge and technology to fight poverty; achieve the MDGs and to look beyond them to predict and prepare for future opportunities and challenges; and to ensure that development continues for future generations. Whilst DFID will focus on SSA and South Asia, it also wishes to draw upon lessons from other parts of Asia and from Latin America. DFID also intend that better use of research is made to shape DFIDs' own policy and programmes.

To get results, DFID will focus on six subject areas: growth; sustainable agriculture; climate change; health; governance in challenging environments and future challenges and opportunities including ICT, biotechnology and nanotechnology. They seek to produce new knowledge and technologies to tackle the most important development challenges and to help to ensure that developing countries and the wider development community use the knowledge and technology. Equal effort will be placed on these two objectives.

DFID will measure itself against delivery within four results areas. Each of these has explicit and or implicit implications to a future research communications strategy. The DFID research strategy results areas are:

- New policy knowledge created for developing countries, the international community and DFID
- Evidence and new research are used for better decision-making
- New technologies developed and used in developing countries
- Capability to do and use research strengthened
- Crosscutting themes

DFID Research funds research with a wide range of partners in order to generate new knowledge and to get this into use. Important partners include multi-lateral agencies, international research centres, the private sector, UK and developing country universities, regional research institutions and the UK Research Councils. DFID employs a range of instruments to fund research:

- providing core financing to international and regional research organisations (e.g. the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research - CGIAR and sub-regional research organisations in Africa)
- funding research programme consortia (RPCs) and Development Research Centres (DRCs), conducting research into specific themes and linking northern and southern institutions

⁴ CRD changed its name in December 2008 to DFID Research. The name reflects an increased profile for Research, including an enlarged and restructured team within DFID. The main changes include the introduction of Research Fellows and a Head of Research, who is a practising researcher and academic.

- partnerships with the private sector to develop new products and technology
- contributing to joint programmes with international research funding agencies and UK Research Councils
- funding to international networks on growth and climate change.

1.2 Communication in DFID research: Current status

In addition to a series of consultations, DFID prepared a number of resource documents and ten working papers which informed the content of the research strategy 2008-2013. Three working papers relate directly to the topic of research communication. These are "research communication", "stimulating demand for research" and "capacity building".

Since the launch of the research strategy, DFID Research has begun a process of review and reflection to develop a clear research communications framework through which they will support the delivery of the research strategy. This includes a series of potentially interconnected studies, the findings of which will come together by mid-2009.

1.3 The research communication programme portfolio and lesson learning

DFID currently supports 17 research communication programmes and it is the work of these programmes set in the context of the new DFID research strategy that is the topic of this review. The research communication programmes are listed in Box 1.

Box 1 DFID supported Research Communication programmes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agfax/ New Agriculturalist: Communicating research: contributing to sustainable development (WRENmedia,) http://www.new-ag.info/ and http://www.agfax.net/ 2. AGRIS: Information Systems in Agricultural Science and Technology (Food and Agriculture Organisation, http://www.fao.org/agris/) 3. BBC WST Policy and Research Programme on the Role of Media and Communication in Development (BBC World Service Trust) http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/trust/researchlearning/story/2005/09/050913_globalpartnership.shtml 4. CommGap: Mainstreaming communication in development (multi-donor trust fund with World Bank, http://www.worldbank.org/commgap/) 5. Fostering Trust and Transparency in Governance (Systems in the ICT Environment/ International Records Management Trust, http://www.irmt.org/building_integrity.html) 6. GDNNet: Global Development Network (GDNNet – The electronic voice of GDN', www.gdnet.org) 7. ICT4D: Information and Communication Technologies for Development (DFID – IDRC, http://www.idrc.ca/ict4d) 8. infoDev (World Bank, http://www.infodev.org/en/index.html) 9. Makutano Junction TV Drama (Mediae Trust, http://www.makutanojunction.org.uk/) 10. MK4D: Mobilising Knowledge for Development (IDS) http://www.ids.ac.uk/go/knowledge-services/mk4d/about-mobilising-knowledge-for-development-mk4d with its five components: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) ID21 communicating development research (http://www.id21.org/) b) Electronic Development and Environmental Information System– ELDIS (http://www.eldis.org/) c) British Library for Development Studies (BLDS) (http://www.blids.ac.uk/) d) BRIDGE – Mainstreaming Gender Equality (http://www.bridge.ac.uk/) e) SLI (Strategic Learning Initiative) (http://www.ids.ac.uk/index.cfm?objectId=1344CDB4-AEFF-31D9-FE98167E226DFCA0)

11. PERii: Programme for the Enhancement of Research Information (International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications, <http://www.inasp.info/file/104/peri-programme-for-the-enhancement-of-research-information.html>)
12. RELAY: Research Communication Programme (PANOS, <http://www.panos.org.uk/relay>)
13. Research Africa: SARIMA (Research Research Ltd, Research (Africa) (Pty) Ltd, Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), <http://www.research-africa.net/>)
14. Practical Answers (Practical Action, <http://practicalaction.org/practicalanswers/>)
15. R4D: Research4Development (CABI and DFID, <http://www.research4development.info/>)
16. SciDev.Net: The Science and Development Network, <http://scidev.net/>)
17. SjCOOP: Peer-to-Peer Monitoring in Science Journalism (WFSJ / World Federation of Science Journalists, <http://www.wfsj.org/projects/page.php?id=55>)

1.3.1 A review of communication in DFID-funded Research Programme Consortia

The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) led a Review of Communications in DFID funded Research Consortia (RPCs) which was completed in November 2008. The study generated a series of recommendations key of which are summarised in Box 2.

Box 2	Key recommendations from the review of communication in 30 DFID funded Research Programme Consortia (RPCs)
	<p>Continue with the policy of a minimum spend of 10% on communication in the RPCs. It has contributed to significant changes in working practices and a higher degree of embeddedness in policy and country contexts compared with other DFID-funded research programmes.</p> <p>Consider rolling out a similar minimum spend on communication across all research programmes funded by DFID, in association with similar communication guidelines and support.</p> <p>Consider increasing the 10% threshold to 15% for the next round of RPC</p> <p>Review the M&E guidelines and support given to the RPCs.</p> <p>Consider emphasising the importance of Southern research leadership to a greater extent</p> <p>Provide incentives for innovation. An award for best innovations in research communication and best presentation of best practices could be set up to promote innovations in research communication among the RPC.</p> <p>Establish links and partnerships (at DFID level) with media and new media agencies to promote RPC's research and engagement with journalists</p> <p>Establish a community of practice. Set up and facilitate a research communication Community of Practice for RPC's communication staff</p> <p>Fund research on research communication.</p> <p>Support and encourage more use of the host organisation's central communication team/staff or/ and more use of decentralised RPC communications staff.</p> <p>Continue to lobby other research donors and encourage them to also invest more in research communication.</p>

Source: ODI Review of Communications in DFID funded Research Consortia (RPCs)

This research communication programme study did not explore explicitly the linkages between the DFID's RPCs, DRCs and other DFID funded research and their communication strategies, and the DFID-funded research communication programmes. Although some of the respondents to the surveys were representatives of DFID funded research. On the ODI study, it is noted however

that there was a marked lack of reference to all but a few of the seventeen research communication programmes.

1.3.2 The Regional Research Units study

Parallel to this research communication programme study, DFID has commissioned work to explore how DFID's resources could be allocated to establish three-four regional research units in each of China, South Asia and one-two regions of Sub-Saharan Africa, to help achieve the objectives of the research strategy of increased uptake, use and impact of DFID research. It is anticipated that decentralisation will increase DFID's role in shaping national and regional policy, will help partners apply research results locally and make sure that research from developing countries forms part of the international debate. Decentralisation will also help stimulate demand for research more effectively, help regional partners predict future development trends, find new ways of using technology, and strengthen links with the private sector, NGOs and local communities.

The findings of the regional research units' study were not available at the time of preparation of the research communication programme study however key questionnaires were shared in draft with the team leader of the regional study and questions relevant to for example access to south based research have been included in this lesson learning.

1.3.3 Knowledge management strategy

DFID is currently developing an overarching Knowledge and Information Management Strategy. It is expected that the DFID Research Knowledge Management strategy will fit within the broader strategy. Lessons from this review of the research communication programme portfolio could usefully feed into that study – specifically the thematic assessment of knowledge management and M&E.

1.3.4 Research communication framework and action plan

During 2009, DFID plan to prepare a research communication framework and action plan, which will create the basis for investment choices and a means to monitor delivery over the period 2009-2013. This will be an essential part of the implementation process of the research strategy as a whole. It is intended that the above studies will inform the preparation of the framework.

1.3.5 Review of donor priorities

Although DFID is seen as a significant contributor to research uptake and use, there are other established and emerging donors interested in supporting research communication initiatives. Combining and coordinating efforts with these donors can potentially help DFID deliver the research strategy to achieve maximum impact. The review therefore aimed at answering the following questions:

- What are key donors funding in the field of research communication?
- Which donors have made explicit reference to research communication in their policies and funding frameworks? How does this compare with DFID's approach?

- For those donors who do not make reference to this field, what do we know about their views on research communication?
- What, if any, advocacy initiatives (targeted at donors) on research uptake and use exist (this might include production of flyers / workshops, events etc)?

As a first step, existing studies on donor priorities were consulted, including (in chronological order):

- An IDS convened workshop on research communication (Barnard et al, 2007);
- A study undertaken by ODI (Jones and Young 2007), which looked at DFIDs research funding from a comparative perspective; and
- A donor mapping undertaken by PANOS RELAY (2009), assessing the commitment of a range of donors to research communication.

The main findings from these studies will be included in an addendum to this report. In order to identify other donors who are willing and able to work alongside DFID in promoting a stronger emphasis on research uptake and use, the review team proposes to interview several donors that have shown commitment to research communication in the past.

2 Scope and objectives of the review

This study is set within the context of the DFID research strategy 2008-2013 and aims to:

- Understand what lessons are emerging from across the portfolio of DFID funded research communication programmes, and the implications of this for DFID to deliver commitments in the new research strategy, and to
- Examine how the current portfolio of activities reflects and supports DFID's commitments in the research strategy, so that DFID can enhance and modify it as appropriate.

It seeks to learn lessons from the portfolio of research communication initiatives, in order to contribute to the development of a communication strategy for DFID Research that adds value to the communication components of individual research programmes, while at the same time promoting the outcomes of the research programmes through strategic linkages between them, with the range of research communication initiatives supported by DFID and through potentially new and innovative complementary initiatives.

Most of the ongoing initiatives complete their current funding phase in 2009. The DFID Research needs a framework against which to decide which programmes should be continued to be supported, and if so, with what objectives, strategies, partnerships and activities, and further what new initiatives may be warranted to support DFID in delivering the new research strategy in the context of the communication of research.

The review seeks to arrive at strategic and higher levels recommendations that will assist DFID Research in defining its research communication framework and in the allocation of resources to those areas that are most likely to result in meeting the objectives of the research strategy. This is not an evaluation of the individual programmes. Rather, it seeks to learn lessons, identify what works well and what is working less well, identify key gaps (in particular reflecting on where the portfolio is today and where it needs to be by 2013 to secure the vision and goals set by DFID in the research strategy) and inform DFID on how it might work differently in the future.

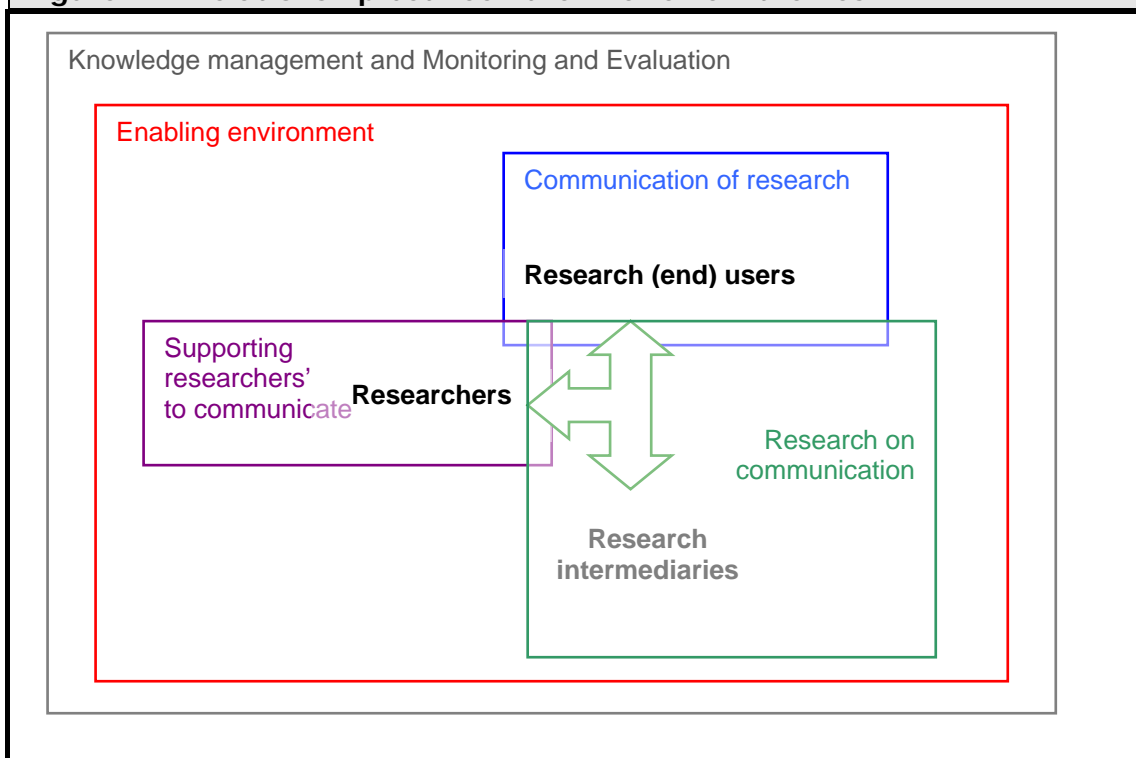
The TOR provided a conceptual framework for this review by clustering the key learning points in the form of review questions under five themes⁵. We see the relationship between these themes as shown in Figure 1:

- **Enabling environment** - with the policies and processes supporting or hindering research uptake
- **Communication of research** - with access to research by different **research users**
- **Supporting researchers to communicate** - with incentives and capacity development of **researchers**,
- **Knowledge management and Monitoring and Evaluation** - with focus on the science of evaluating research communication and delivering both programme objectives and wider development outcomes

⁵ These themes emerged from the Research Communications Working Paper commissioned by DFID as part of the preparation of the Research Strategy: http://www.research4development.info/PDF/Outputs/Consultation/ResearchStrategyWorkingPaperfinal_communications_P1.pdf

- **Research on communication** - being primarily concerned with communication approaches and **intermediaries**

Figure 1 Relationship between the five review themes



Source: TLC proposal

The five themes are closely interrelated, with both 'Enabling Environment' and 'Knowledge Management' cutting across the three other themes. When looking at key stakeholders from an innovation systems perspective, the boundaries between researchers, users and intermediaries become even more permeable, as users also contribute to research, and researchers also use research. Users can act as intermediaries for other users, and so can researchers. As a result, the thematic sections in section 5 overlap to some extent, and recommendations presented in section 7 cut across all themes.

Limitations of the study

The scope of the study was limited to the 17 research communication programmes supported by DFID and set within the context of DFID's new research strategy 2008-2013. Whilst the process involved direct contact with these 17 programmes and direct and indirect (through questionnaires) contact with researchers (both DFID and non DFID supported) and users (both working with DFID and not working with DFID), no analysis was undertaken of the global research communication network for which DFID is not directly associated. As a result, no substantial assessment can be made of the standing of these 17 research communication programmes within the wider research communication community, nor is the relative scale of the DFID investment in the context of the global investment in research communication known. The series of interviews with donors provides some level of qualitative perspective on both these questions.

No substantive literature review was undertaken as a prelude to this study. Whilst efforts have been made to draw on key relevant studies not least to set the framework for this work, a full literature review might have helped in better understanding and articulation the wider context of research into use. Amongst others, the various working papers prepared for DFID as part of the preparation process that underpins the research strategy were used by the study team to create a framework for our work (section 3).

Whilst the sample size of users and research generators contacted for completion of the questionnaires was small, the team feel confident that the outcomes and the emerging observations offer valid and useful insights. Nevertheless we are aware that the method of contact (by email) automatically creates a level of bias and excludes final end users – the rural and urban poor – and indeed many of the more decentralised service providers/development agents. No country level visits were undertaken nor were any participatory learning and face to face meetings held.

3 Methodology and tools used

3.1 Overall approach

Research communication involves a wide range of stakeholders and processes. As requested in the TOR, the analysis was conducted along five themes that generally cut across the various stakeholders and processes, as shown in Figure 2.

In line with the objectives of the review, it was agreed to use an approach that enabled capturing:

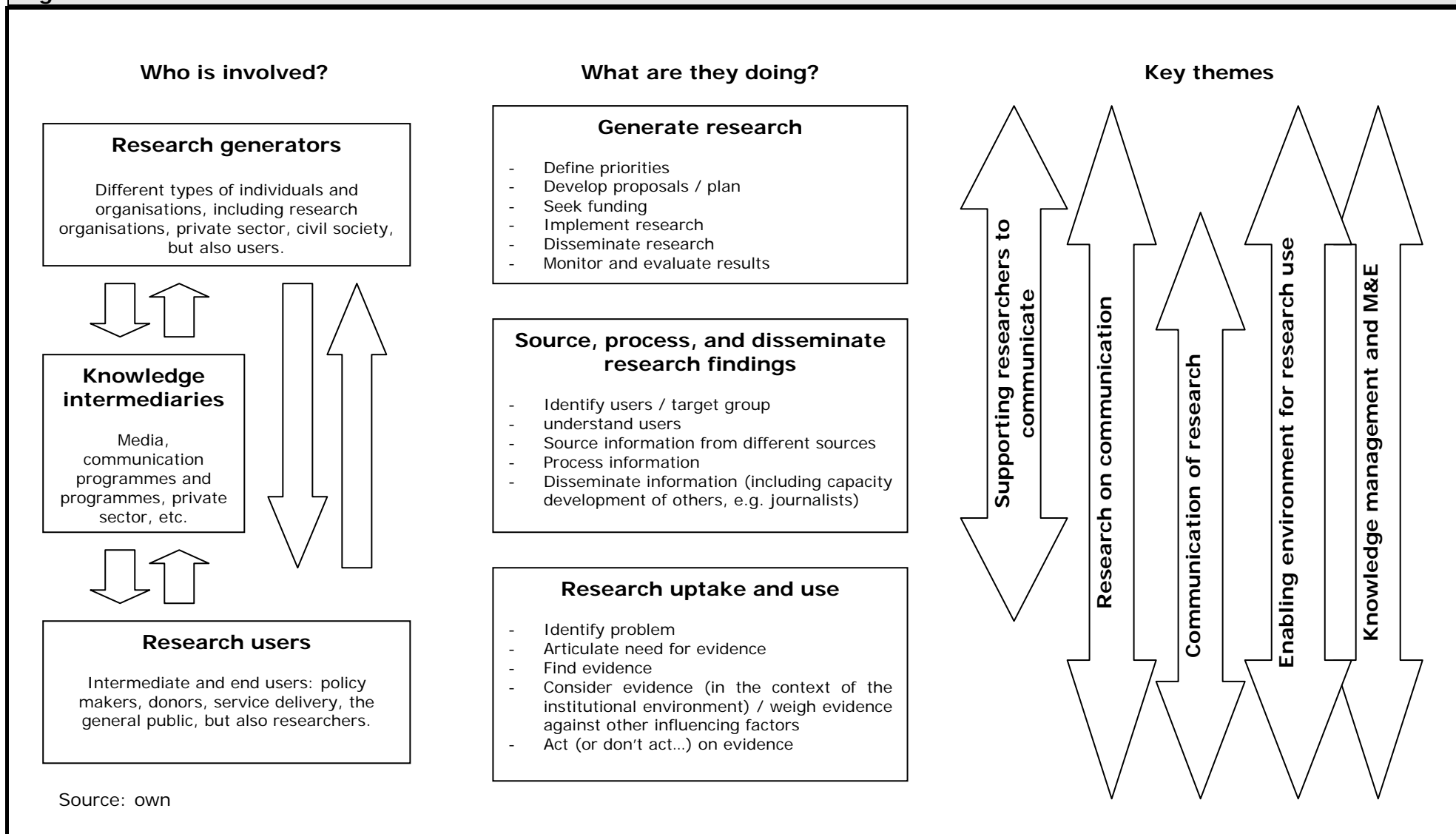
- a) The wider context of research communication
- b) The perspectives of the DFID supported research communication programmes
- c) The perspectives of other key stakeholders, including in particular
 - Research generators
 - Research users
 - Funders
 - DFID Research

a) The context. An understanding of the context was essential in order to put DFID supported programmes into perspective, and assess to what extent they have made use of and / or contributed to existing good practice and lessons learnt. The review considered the wider research communication literature (see Annex 3 for documents consulted), and built on the experience of team members.

b) Research programme perspective. The review used different methods to elicit the perspective of the 17 communication programmes, including document review, an online questionnaire survey and telephone interviews with key programme staff.

c) Other key stakeholders were consulted through online questionnaire surveys (for research generators and users), telephone interviews, meetings with DFID Research staff to reflect on methodology and progress, and by reviewing the research communication activities of other donors.

Figure 2 Overall research communication context of the review



3.2 Methods used

3.2.1 Document review

A review was undertaken of the 17 DFID supported research communication programmes, using documentation provided by the DFID Research. These generally included the original project proposal, the project logframe (where available), several annual or quarterly reports, several annual reviews, and a mid-term or final programme evaluation (where available). A standard Excel spreadsheet was developed and used to record key programme features; both the template and the resulting programme profiles are included in Part 2 of the report. Reviewers used their own judgement, based on the information available to them, about the relative importance of different sectors, delivery mechanisms and user groups, as there were not always stated explicitly in the documentation. The 17 profiles were subsequently used to undertake a portfolio analysis across the 17 programmes (Section 4).

Because the financial contributions made by DFID varies substantially between programmes (from an average of approximately annually £100,000 for SjCOOP to £2,000,000 for MK4D), weighting factors were assigned to the different programmes, in order to reflect their relative importance in terms of DFID investment. Thus CommGap would be ten times as much in the quantitative analysis as SjCOOP. However, lessons learnt were taken from all CPs, irrespective of their funding levels. Table 1 shows the figures for all 17 programmes.

Table 1 DFID contributions to programmes and resulting weighting factor for document review analysis		
Programme	DFID average annual programme contribution [£]*	Weighting factor
SjCOOP	100,000	1.00
Practical Answers	200,000	2.00
RELAY	218,000	2.18
Fostering Trust and Transparency in Governance	226,000	2.26
SciDev.Net	232,000	2.32
InfoDev	250,000	2.50
AGRIS	270,000	2.70
Agfax / New Agriculturalist	294,000	2.94
GNet	300,000	3.00
Research Africa	323,000	3.23
R4D	375,000	3.75
BBC WST	500,000	5.00
PERii	665,000	6.65
Makutano Junction	773,000	7.73
CommGap	1,000,000	10.00
ICT4D	1,000,000	10.00
MK4D	2,000,000	20.00
Total	8,726,000	

Source: R4D (for DFID contribution)

*Note: These average annual contributions have been calculated based on DFID commitments over the entire programme duration, as shown in http://www.research4development.info/PDF/Articles/Comms_Team_Activities.pdf. Actual spending on the programmes in the Financial Year 2008/2009 was £11m.

Figure 3 Programme activities by sector

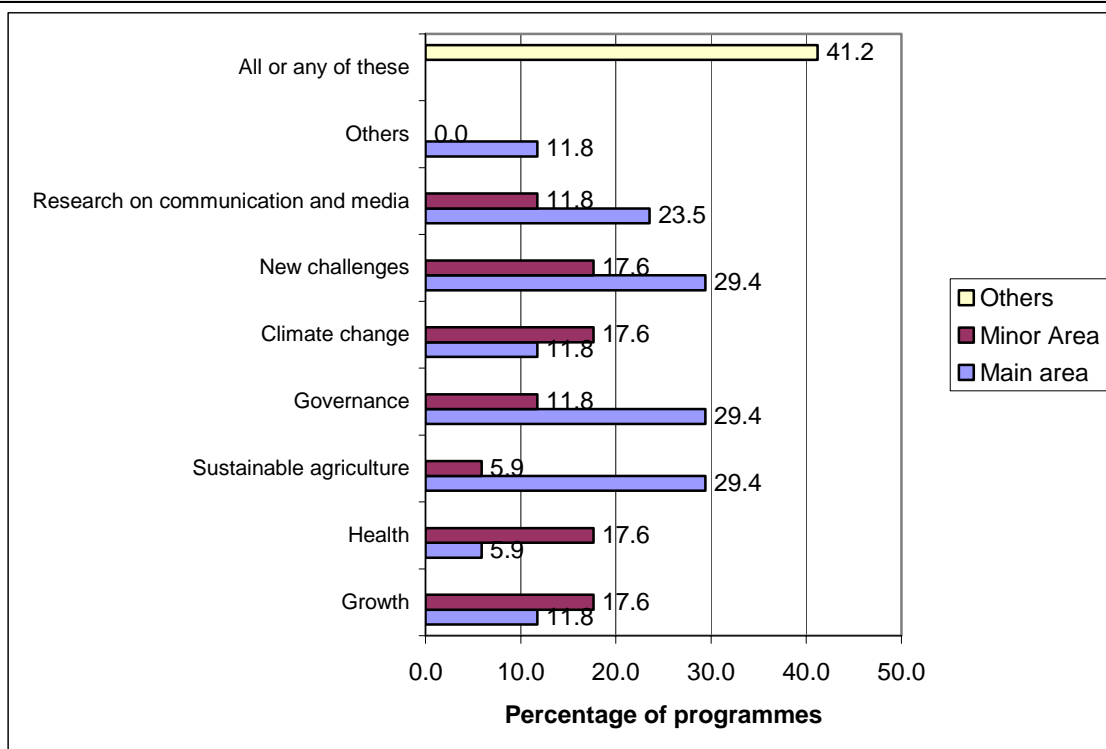
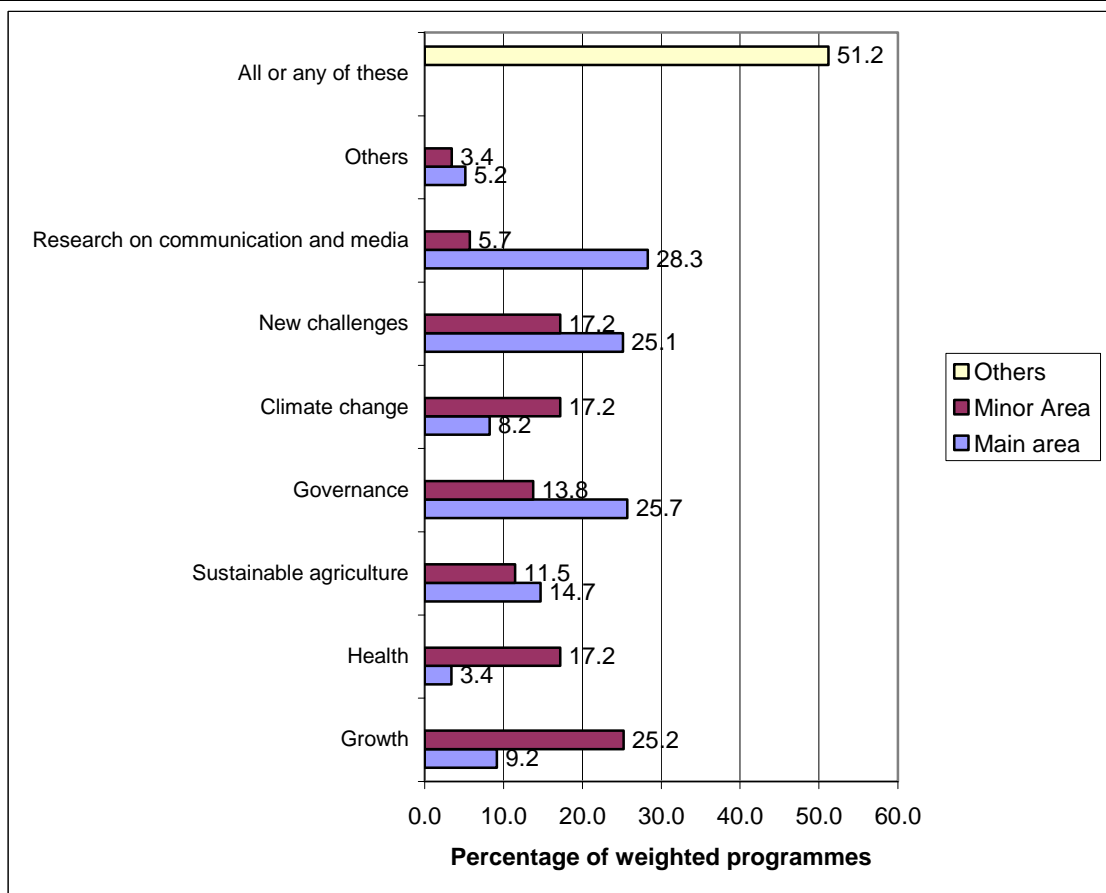


Figure 4 Weighted programme activities by sector



The use of weights influences the analysis, as shown in Figure 3 and Figure 4. For example, for 29.4% of the programmes, sustainable agriculture was a major area of work, but when weighting programmes in terms of DFID financial contributions, sustainable agriculture is only a major area in 14.7% of programmes. This analysis reflects the large amounts of funding to three programmes and their respective mandates.

The document review was also an important source of insights in terms of challenges faced by the programmes, good practices and lessons learnt, and innovative mechanisms and instruments. Each reviewer noted down issues for following up either in the questionnaire survey, or through telephone interviews with programme staff, research users or research generators.

3.2.2 Questionnaires

Based on the outcome of the document review and discussions with DFID Research staff, three questionnaires were developed to enable further quantitative analysis, and to provide pointers for the following interviews. In order to keep the work load for respondents to a minimum, and to enable a quantitative analysis of responses, the emphasis was on 'multiple choice' type questions, which could be answered by ticking a box. An example for a typical survey question is shown below.

Figure 5 Example question from research communication programme survey

Your programme uses information from different sources. We are interested to know what sources you use, how you obtain information from these sources, and what challenges you face in doing so.

3. How does your programme access research and information providers?

	Doesn't apply	Minor mechanism	Significant mechanism
We source information from open websites or open access publications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We seek out research outputs and information from multiple sources to meet specific needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research / information providers contact us on a regular basis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We contact research / information providers on a regular basis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We have formal agreements or linkages with key research / information providers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We attend DFID convened events or fora, where research / information providers participate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you have ranked 'Other' please provide more information here:

Source: Research communication programme survey form

The questionnaires for research users and generators were finalised only after interviews with research communication programme staff were completed, in order to ensure that newly emerging issues could be considered in the questionnaires. The three survey forms are included in Part 2 of this report.

Questionnaires were sent to 183 research users and 174 research generators. These were selected purposefully from the following groups:

- (a) In the case of generators: from DFID-funded DRCs, RPCs and their partner organisations; from research organisations in the North and South considered by team members; by DFID Research to be relevant in terms of DFID research sectors; through contact networks known to the team
- (b) In the case of users: from a range of organisations considered by team members; by DFID Research. Efforts were made to ensure representation by a wider range of different user groups.

No systematic stratified sampling was undertaken, but every attempt was made to include users and generators from different parts of the world, different sectors and different user groups. A total of 40 research users and 54 research generators fully completed the surveys.

Part 2 includes an analysis of the origin of those contacted with the questionnaire, and those who responded. This shows that most respondents among users (40 respondents) were located in Sub-Saharan Africa (45%), Europe (33%), South Asia (13%) the Far East and North and Central America (5% each), whereas research generators (54 respondents) were located in Europe (34%), sub-Saharan Africa (30%), South Asia (19%) and South America (7.5%).

A good coverage was also achieved in terms of sectors and user groups. However, local government / local level service delivery were not represented, and new technologies were somewhat underrepresented in the sample. There was a very low response from DFID staff at HQ and in the country offices.

3.2.3 Interviews

In order to explore in more depth interesting lessons learnt and ideas on how to address new challenges, telephone interviews were held with research communication programme staff, research users and research generators. These interviews used checklists (see Part 2), which were developed after the document review. All three questionnaires were sent to respondents before the interviews, and respondents were invited to identify and focus initially on those questions they deemed most relevant for their organisation or work. Towards the end of the interview, the interviewer would raise other questions.

Selection of interviewees was undertaken as follows:

- For programmes: The head of programme, and / or one or several senior programme staff, as agreed with the head of the programme. All 17 programmes were interviewed.
- For research users and generators: From the lists of users and generators contacted with the user / generator survey, a sample was purposefully selected to represent different user groups / research sectors and geographical regions. If selected respondents were not available, not willing to be interviewed, or did not respond, alternative respondents were contacted. Five users and eight generators were interviewed.

3.2.4 Meetings

Throughout the review, the review team met to agree on methodology, and to share and discuss emerging findings. In addition, the team leader and project manager met several times with DFID Research staff throughout the review period.

4 Key findings of the current research communication programme portfolio

This chapter analyses the current portfolio of programmes in terms of its distribution by key parameters. These include type of implementing organisation, funding mechanism, duration of funding, sector, user groups, delivery mechanism etc. Unless otherwise stated, percentages refer to the number of programmes (i.e. 10 out of 17 or 59% of programmes had previous phases) and not to the proportion of DFID's overall financial contribution to the programmes. See Chapter 3 for details on how the weighting by contribution was done.

4.1 DFID current investment in research intermediaries

DFID Research currently supports 17 research communication programmes. The total average annual DFID investment of the current portfolio is estimated at £8.7M, with individual programme annual investment size ranging from £100,000 to £2M.

This does not reflect the entire level of annual investment of the portfolio, as many of the programmes (49% of the 17 programmes by value) are co-funded with other donors with an estimated average annual total budget in excess of £22.8M (Table 13).

In the case of at least six programmes, DFID is the sole funder (Agfax and New Agriculturist, BBC WST, CommGap, Fostering Trust and Transparency, RELAY, Research Africa and R4D as DFIDs' window for its research portfolio). Some programmes are specific initiatives embedded within a wider research communication investment - for example SjCOOP, a programme of mentoring of science journalists, is set within the World Federation of Science Journalists, and Practical Answers is set within Practical Action.

The duration of DFIDs investment for a given programme ranges from 3-5 years. Many programmes are now reaching completion of their current phases of support from DFID.

Some programmes have been supported by DFID for many years, for example Agfax and New Agriculturalist, and Practical Answers. 59% of the 17 programmes have had previous phases, 12% have had some prior DFID investment and 29 % are new DFID grantees.

The follow presents the key findings of the document review (DR) and the three survey questionnaires – the research communication programme survey (RCS), the research users survey (RUS) and the research generators survey (RGS). The section on methodology draws attention to any limitations of the survey methods used, in particular those of the RUS and RGS – which by their very nature are small in size. It is however hoped that the findings offer some signposts that are helpful in informing the future for DFID investment in communication.

Table 2 DFID investment in research communication programmes

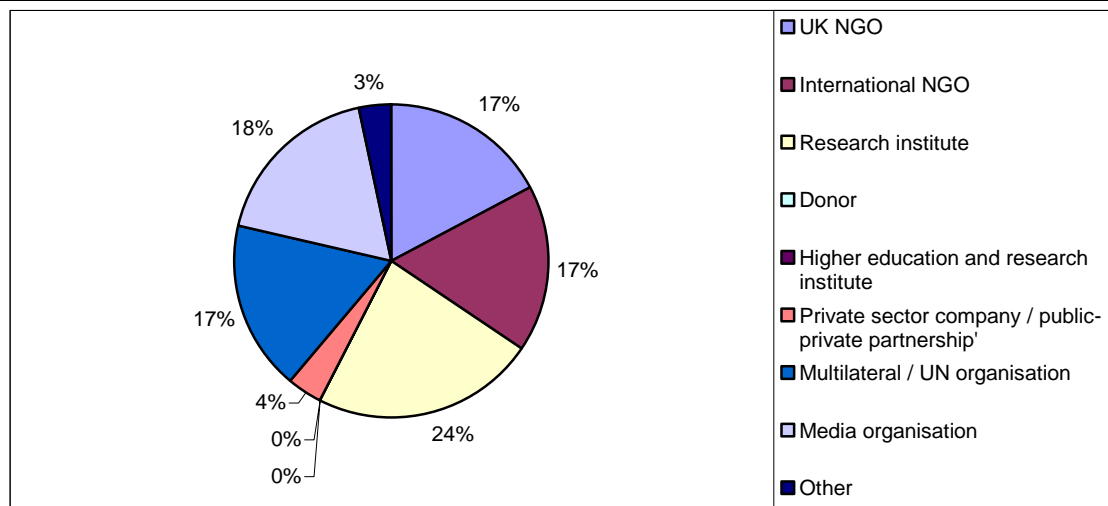
Programme	DFID contributions			Total budget (all donors)			Proportion of DFID to annual budget
	Start and end of DFID contribution *	DFID contribution - total [million £] *	DFID contribution: Average annual	Start and end of project *	Total budget	Average annual operational budget	
Agfax and New Agriculturalist	11/06 - 10/09	0.80	£294,350	11/06 - 10/09	0.80	£294,350	100%
AGRIS	2005-2010 (?)	1.30	£270,000	2006-2010	?	?	?
BBC WST Policy and Research	2006-2011	2.50	£500,000	2006-2011	2.50	£500,000	100%
CommGap	2006-2011	5.00	£1,000,000	2006-2011	5.00	£1,000,000	100%
Fostering Trust and Transparency in Governance	2006-2008	0.60	£226,173	2006-2009	0.60	£226,173	100%
GNet	04/04 - 03/07	1.20	£300,000	2005-2008	?	£2,000,000 (GDN total)	40-50%
ICT4D	2006-2011	5.00	£1,000,000	2007-2011	31.00	£6,200,000	16%
InfoDev	02/06 - 03/09	0.96	£250,000	2006-2009	?	£7,000,000	4%
Makutano Junction	10/07 - 10/09	2.32	£773,000	2004-2009	?	?	?
MK4D	05/05 - 09/08	6.93	£2,000,000	2005-2008	9.74	£3,247,000	62%
PERii	Not clear	5.65	£665,000	2002-2008 (new proposal to 2011)	17.79	£1,779,000	37%
RELAY	2005 - 2008	0.87	£218,000	2005-2008	0.87	£218,000	100%
Research Africa	07/05 - 02/09	0.94	£323,000	2005-2008	0.94	£322,936	100%
Practical Answers	2007 - 2008	0.40	£200,000	2007-2008	?	?	?
R4D	2007 - 2010	1.50	£375,000	2007-2010	?	?	?
SciDev.Net	05/01 - 03/08	1.62	£232,000	2001-2008	?	£750,000	31%
SjCOOP	01/06 - 02/09	0.30	£100,000	2006-2009	£1,170,000	£390,000	40%

* based on http://www.research4development.info/PDF/Articles/Comms_Team_Activities.pdf - this refers to the most recent funding round until 2008. Many programmes, including e.g. Practical Answers and GNet, have received funding from DFID previously.

4.2 Nature of lead organisation of research communication programmes

In supporting this programme portfolio, DFID has contracted a wide range of types of organisations as service providers/partners. These are presented below in terms of their value, i.e. weighted by the average annual DFID contribution to the programme.

Figure 6 Proportion of programmes value (DFID average annual contribution) by nature of lead organisation



Source: DR

The management of the programmes is largely through a single agency, i.e. 76% of the 17 programmes, with 18% being managed through a consortium or network of organisations and one programme (AGRIS) being managed as part of the FAO WAICENT (World Agricultural Information Network) framework.

4.3 Programme mapping according to information supply and demand

Through the document, the research communication programmes have been broadly clustered to provide an overall depiction of the key features and main types of activities. The framework used for this originates from the management literature on organisational memory systems, but has been adapted to the context of research communication.

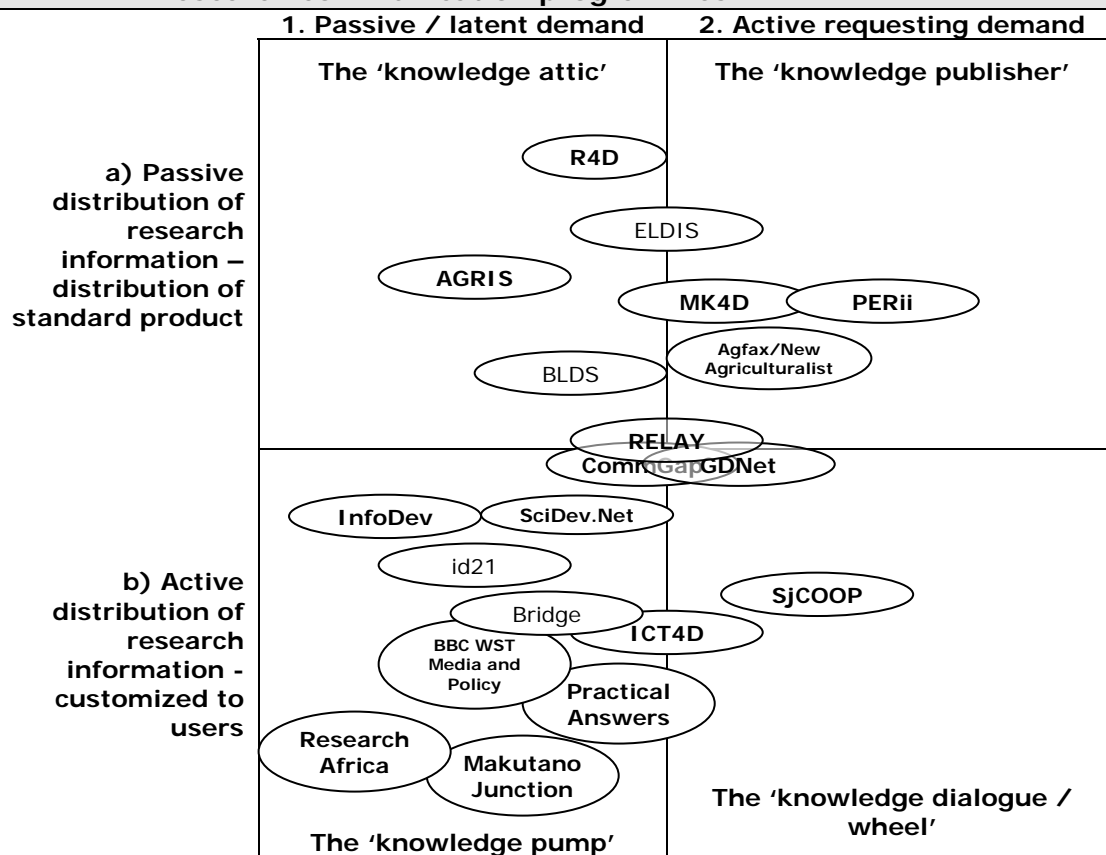
The framework (see Figure 7) has two dimensions: the demand for and supply of information, and whether these are done actively or passively, resulting in four spaces in which information exchange happens. These have been characterised as follows:

- 1.a) The 'knowledge attic': An archive – material is collected and stored
- 1.b) The 'knowledge pump': A system which tries to deliver information selectively to people who are believed to need it
- 2.a) The 'knowledge publisher': A system which allows users to actively request information, but which does not respond with a tailored supply of information

2.b) The 'knowledge dialogue / wheel': A system which enables users to request information and which responds with corresponding supply

Programmes have been mapped against these dimensions, looking at their main functions and operating mode. We realise that many programmes operate in different ways and therefore cannot be clearly located in the grid, as they cover a wide range of activities that fit into different sections of the model. Some programmes do not fit very well into the model at all, because they are not primarily concerned with the dissemination of information – this applies primarily to Fostering Trust and Transparency in Governance and those primarily undertaking research into research communication for example CommGap.

Figure 7 Key features and profile of the portfolio of DFID supported research communication programmes



Source of model: Adapted from van Heijst et al. 1998

Programmes in the 'knowledge attic' that are primarily about storing and disseminating a standard product include R4D, AGRIS, BLDS (a component of MK4D) and to some extent ELDIS, with their data bases of knowledge resources. These programmes undertake hardly any customisation of information, and are therefore able to serve a wide range of users - from students to policy makers, NGOs to journalists - without much targeting. These programmes require well managed web sites that are updated on a regular basis, and that have sophisticated search functions to enable users to narrow down results in line with their requirements. They also require good relationships with research generators to ensure that information is accurate, complete and up-to-date.

The vast majority of programmes are located in the 'knowledge pump' section, whereby information is customised to a varying extent to users, but users are not

able to actively request information that meet their specific need. The main reason for this might be the higher costs involved in not only customising information, but also sending it in response to specific requests to specific users. Different programmes use different systems to customise information – the main one being user surveys through web- or phone based feedback. The level of customisation to particular groups is fairly low throughout, with most programmes having a broad range of users. Possibly the main targeting in the case of web based systems is by default, as these can only be used by people with Internet access.

Some programmes enable users to actively demand information, but respond with a standardised product or service - for example, users can order ELDIS content on CD ROM. Several programmes offer similar services, but it is generally not their main function.

One of the programmes (Fostering Trust and Transparency) cannot be located in any of the four segments because of its different nature – it does not primarily deal with the dissemination of information, but focuses on capacity development and associated tools.

Only one programme shows characteristics of a knowledge wheel (SjCOOP) and to some degree ICT4D, by actively engaging with users in a dialogue. Interestingly, the SjCOOP programme has the lowest contribution from DFID, even though it has high 'transaction costs' because of its customisation and adaptation to the needs of its users.

Finally, a number of programmes are located at the boundary between the four sections, as they show characteristics of all four models.

Using this very approximate categorisation of programmes, DFID contribution by value is approximately distributed as follows:

1. 19% to knowledge attics
2. 18% to knowledge publishers
3. 52% to knowledge pumps
4. 11% to knowledge wheels

4.4 Thematic focus of the research communication portfolio

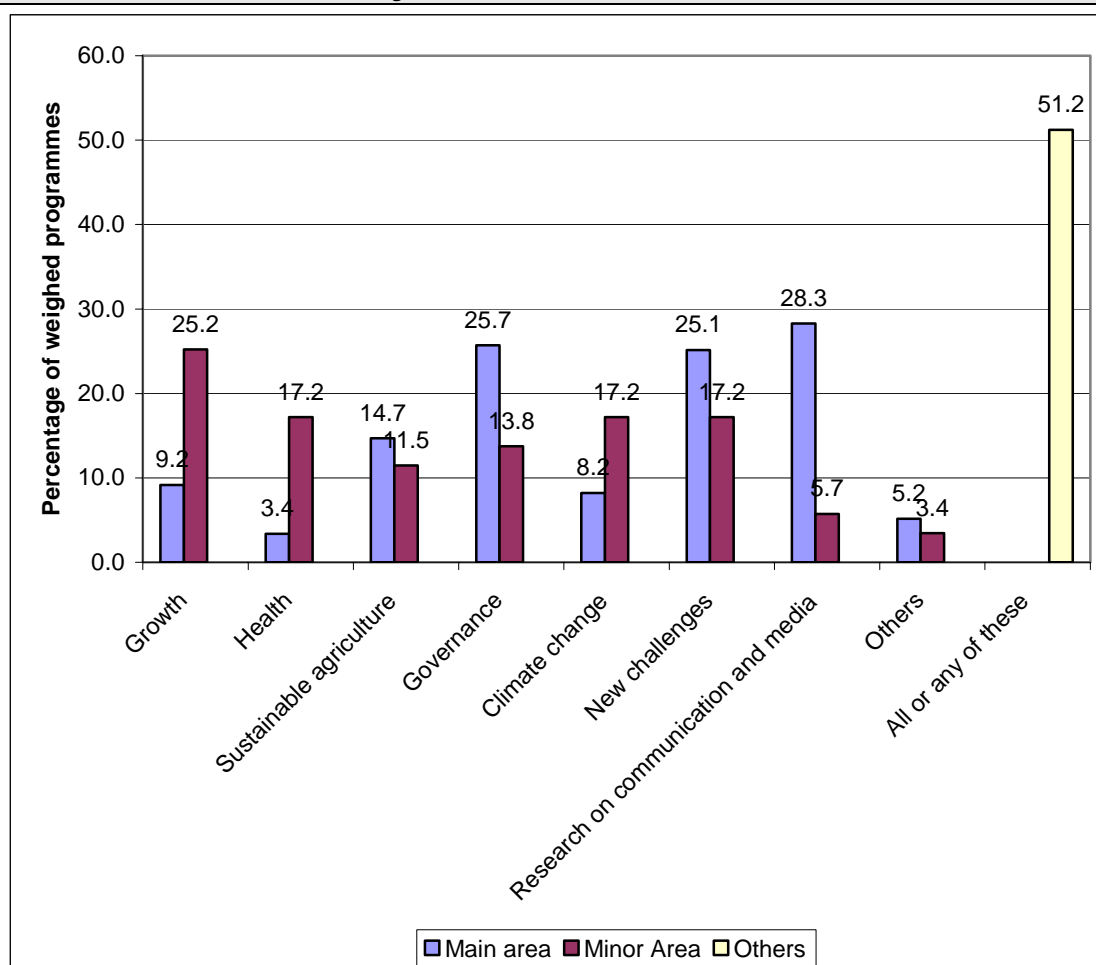
The document review identified the sectoral focus of the research communication programmes. The categories of sectoral focus used derive from the DFID research strategy and are as follows:

Table 3 DFID research strategy 2008-2013: focal areas for research	
Growth	Infrastructure; political processes; social processes and education
Health	Research to make health programmes more effective; health systems; developing drugs and vaccines and removal of barriers to use
Sustainable agriculture	New technology; high value agriculture; rural economies; risk, vulnerability and adaptation; markets; managing RNR
Governance	Conflict, state fragility and social cohesion; social exclusion, inequality and poverty reduction; strong and effective states; tackling MDGs; and migration
Climate Change	CC in SSA; CC in national or international policy; adaptation strategies; reducing impact of CC and promote low carbon growth
New Challenges	Beyond aid; use of new technology i.e. biotechnology, ICT, nanotechnology

Source: DFID research strategy 2008-13

In addition, this review added "Research on communication" as a focal area. Figure 8 shows the weighted sectoral coverage of the 17 programmes (the approach used to weight programmes is explained in Chapter 3).

Figure 8 Proportion of programmes value (DFID average annual contribution) by sector



Source: DR

From this it can be seen that the focus of effort and sectoral coverage of the research communication programme portfolio is highest in the area of research on communication, new development challenges, and on issues relating to governance.

This analysis is presented in Table 4 against the current DFID investment in research and the expected increase in investment for a given thematic area by 2013.

Table 4 DFID research strategy thematic areas, and their relative importance in the research communication programmes				
Thematic area	Research budget 07/08 (£M) (%)	Sector focus of CPs*		2008-2013 Anticipated budget change
		Weighted allocation as primary focus %	Weighted allocation as secondary focus %	
Growth	10 (8%)	9.2	25.2	Significant increase
Sustainable Agriculture	40 (31%)	14.7	11.5	Increase
Climate change	7 (5%)	8.2	17.2	Significant increase
Health	50 (39%)	3.4	17.2	Increase
Governance	12 (9%)	25.7	13.8	Increase
New challenges	1 (Less than 1%)	25.1	17.2	New- increase
Research communication, synthesis and impact	8 (6%)	28.3	5.7	Significant increase
All or any	n/a	51.2		
Other	n/a	5.2	3.4	
	£128M			e£200M

Source: DFID New Research Strategy, Document Review

* Note: The percentages do not add up to 100%, as most CPs focus on more than one sector.

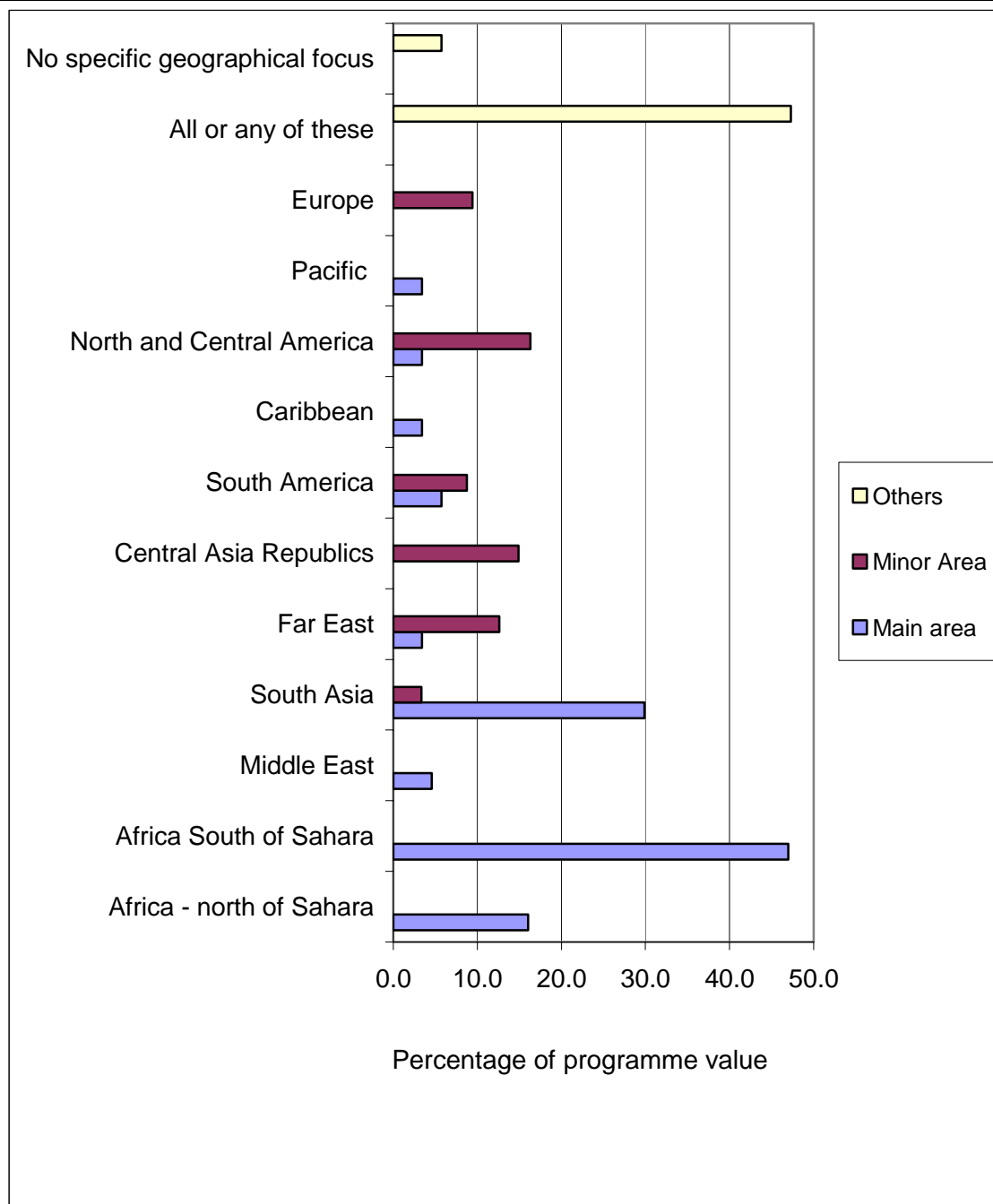
The health and sustainable agriculture sectors in particular appear to have relatively low levels of commitment to research communication activities related to current and anticipated DFID spend on research. However, caution should be used in assuming there is a direct relationship between level of research communication investment in a given sector, the costs and relevance of the communication mechanisms adopted and the impact. For example the high cost of research in the development of, for example, a drug for human health may if developed require a lower level of investment for uptake, than for example addressing social needs of, for example, HIV/AIDS carers where a higher investment on outreach and knowledge dissemination may be required.

4.5 Geographic focus

According to the document review, 10 of the 17 programmes focus primarily on Sub-Saharan Africa, and 6 of the programmes on South Asia. Figure 9 presents the weighted distribution of geographic focus. The weighted allocation of funding for research communication by region is in line with DFID's priority regions of SSA and South Asia. A significant proportion of the CPs have no specific geographic

focus and assume relevance to any region – these tend to be the ‘knowledge attic’ type of programmes which do not specifically tailor information to specific user groups.

Figure 9 Proportion of programmes value (DFID average annual contribution) by geographical focus



Source: DR

4.6 Main impact pathways

The assumed principle pathways to work towards impact for the programmes are indirectly via other communication intermediaries and or practitioners or through

contributing to better informed decision makers and thus towards better policy processes and or intervention (RCS Q21).

Two of the programmes deliver directly to households and to rural and urban poor communities (Makutano Junction and Practical Answers) and to some degree within specific activities also the ICT4D (DR). The document review and the RCS Q21 gave somewhat differing results as two additional research communication programmes felt that they delivered directly to households and to communities – this is not the case as the mechanisms are strongly indirect through policy makers and or other development practitioners.

Figure 10 Impact pathway of programme (RCS)

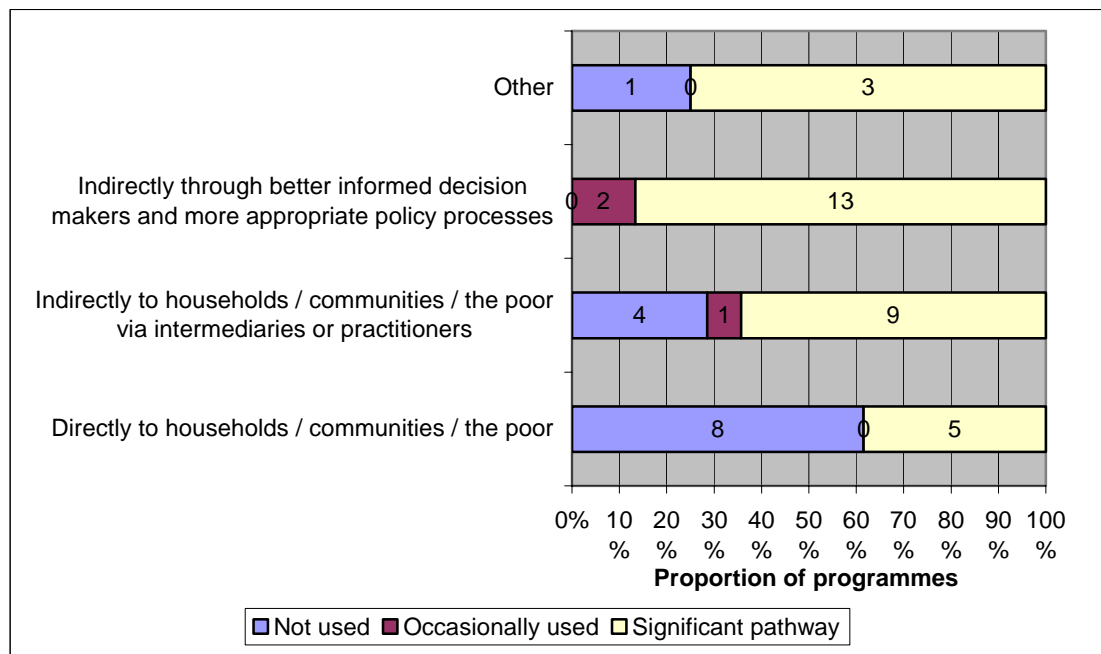
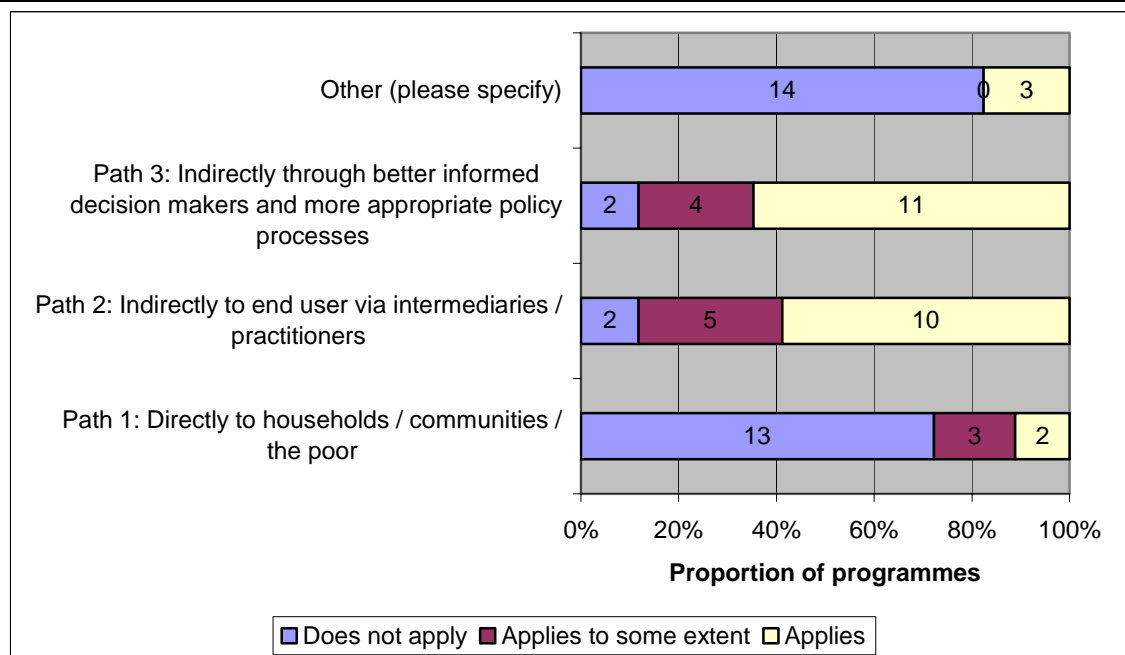


Figure 11 Impact pathway of programmes (DR)



4.7 Intended users

The document survey (DR) identified some 22 categories of users in each of the north and in the south. The question as to who are the intended users was asked of both the research communication programmes in their questionnaire (RCS) as well as through the DR, with broadly similar results. However differences do exist and this largely reflects the weak articulation within the programme documents including the logical frameworks as to who are the key intended target beneficiaries.

Figure 12 Intended users – North (DR)

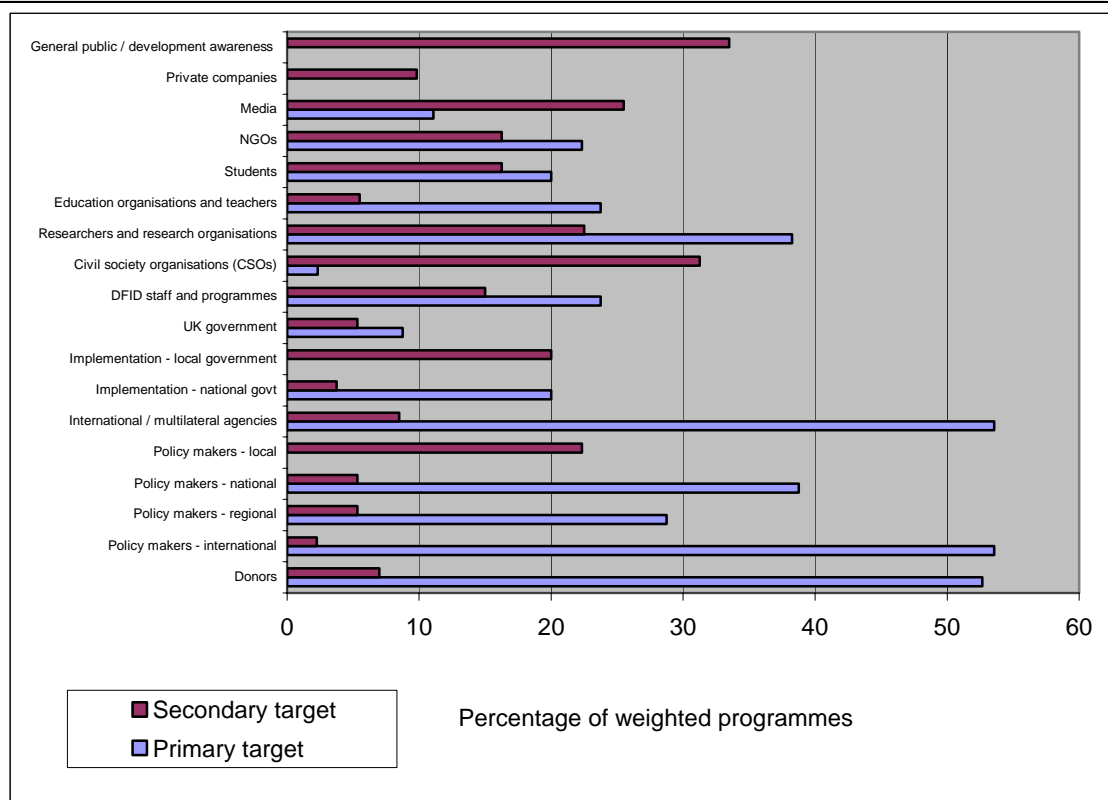
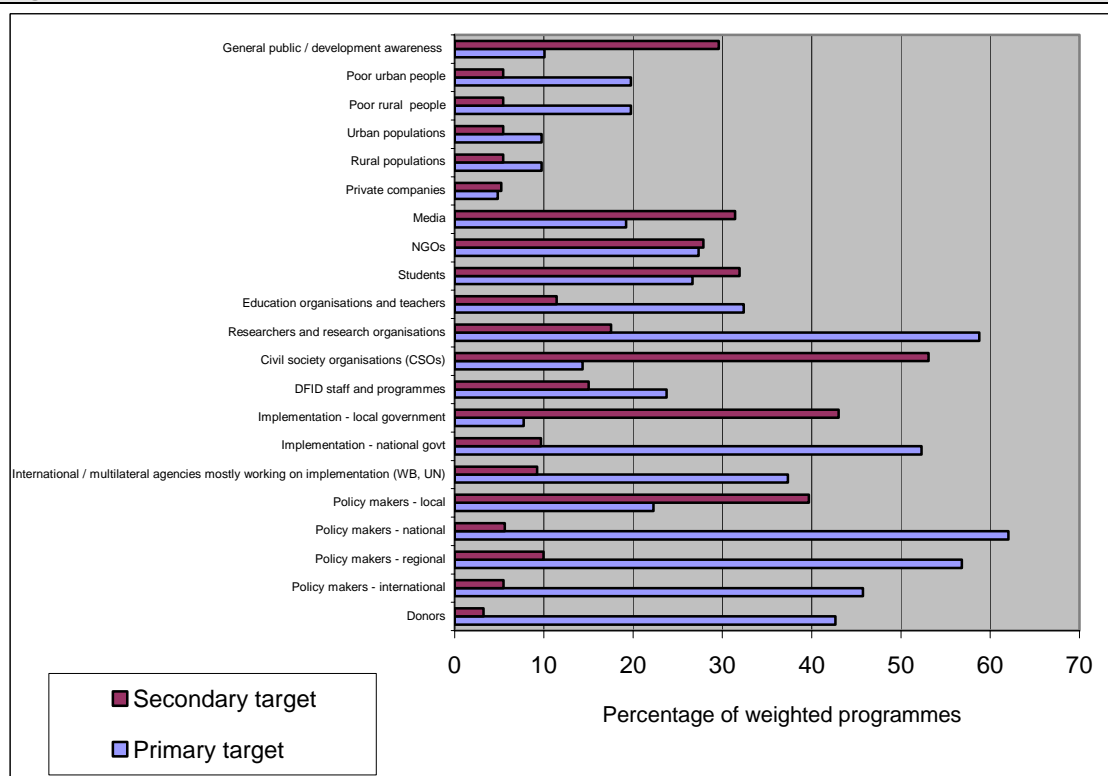


Figure 13 Intended users – South (DR)



Over the programme as a whole – all of the 22 target groups in both north and south have at least one communication programme which reports to target them (RCS Q19). Many programmes have multiple and in some cases very diverse intended target groups.

For the intended users in the north, international policy makers, donors and international and multilateral agencies were seen as the key focus followed by other research organisations. The media, civil society and general public /development awareness were not seen as a key focus in the north.

In terms of intended users in the south, national and regional policy makers, national public implementation agencies and researchers are seen as the key users. In the south, whilst implementation organisations at national level are intended users, there appears little focus on sub-national structures such as local government. Again research organisations were a focal group and in the south media and NGOs were also targeted (RCS Q19).

DFID staff in both the UK and in country offices were seen to be targets in 12 out of the 17 programmes (RCS Q19).

There was a low overall ranking of youth in either the north or south (RCS) although students (10 programmes out of 17) were seen as a target in the south. The private sector was not seen as key intended users in either the north or the south (RCS Q19).

4.8 Sources of information

DFID research communication programmes source their information from multiple sources (RCS Q3-Q11).

They seek directly from researchers who are both DFID and non DFID funded (DR) and from other knowledge intermediaries (RCS Q9-10). Some generate their own research products, for example BBC WST and the Fostering Trust and Transparency in Governance programme.

Of almost equal importance as a significant mechanism for accessing research and information, programmes use open access websites and publication, contact researchers and information providers regularly and have formal agreements or linkages with researchers and information providers (RCS Q3).

Other reported mechanisms include learning events, international conferences and networking partners (e.g. for GNet its regional network partners source local content).

Examining more closely their sourcing from DFID funded Research Programme Consortia (RPCs) and Development Research Centres (DRCs) the overall relationship between DFID funded research communication programmes and the DFID funded RPCs and DRCs is weak (RCS Q4). For each RPC and DRC listed in the survey questionnaire there are between 1-4 research communication programmes that report that they use the outputs from these research programmes as a significant or occasional source (with a ranking of 5 users are: the Chronic Poverty Research Centre; the Citizens DRC; and the Crisis State Research Centre). It should be noted that this level of use includes the DFID funded research communication programme - R4D - which is the portal for DFID funded research work and therefore ranked all RPC and DRCs as significant sources. If critical linkages are established, even if only one or two in number,

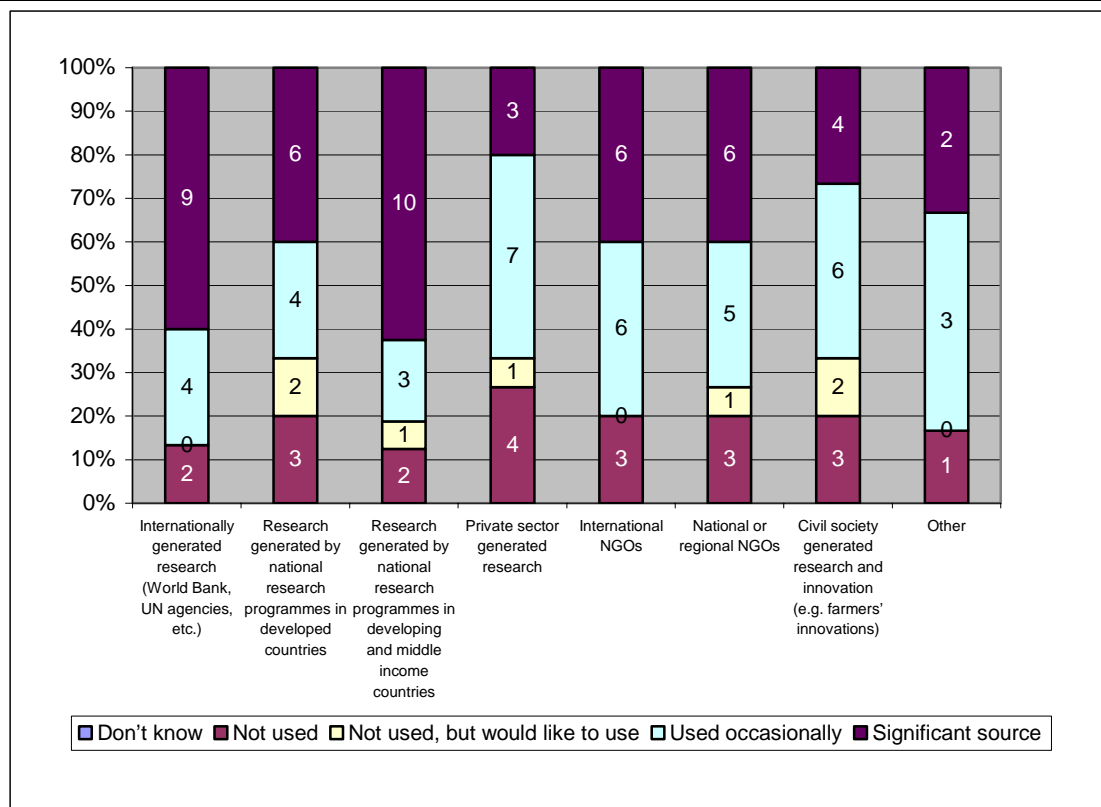
then addition linkages may not be important i.e. just number of linkages may not be the sole indicator of successful and better communication. However, it is also noted that a number of the research communication programmes say that have not used other CPs sources but would like to use them (RCS Q9) and similarly many researcher which include representatives of RPCs stated that they did not know of these CPs programmes (RGS Q15).

Of the seven UK based Research Councils, the Economic and Social Research Council was seen as a significant source of research information for three out of the 17 research communication programmes. Interestingly, the ESRC was instrumental in setting up RURU and has been rated at being committed highly to research communication in the PANOS RELAY donor mapping exercise. The other Councils were used only occasionally. It is noted that a number of research communication programmes state that they have not used these sources and would like to do so (RCS Q5).

Of other programmes which are DFID funded and co-funded (including the Research into Use programme (RIU), the CGIAR, International Organisations (UN agencies and World Bank etc) and the Climate Adaptation in Africa Programme at IDRC), some 50% of the programmes state that they use as a significant source the CGIAR and the International Organisations. Again a number have not used these sources and state that they would like to do so (RCS Q6).

There is higher interest in sources of research which DFID is not funding (or not funding directly and or is perceived not to be funding) i.e. national research (RCS Q7). Such research may be supported indirectly by DFID through RPC or other means but is not recognised as such.

Figure 14 Current sources of research information for CP – not funded by DFID



Source: RCS

The research communication programmes quoted many non DFID funded sources, which are used by them on a regular basis (see Box 3) (RCS Q10). In addition they link to and source from their own and other networks, scan multiple websites including donor and international agency websites, peer and non peer reviewed journals, newsletters and blogs.

Box 3 Non-DFID funded sources of research used by CPs
<p>The programmes quoted many non DFID funded sources which they use on a regular basis including:</p> <p>The Communications Initiative Network http://www.comminit.com/ Healthlink Worldwide http://www.healthlink.org.uk/ Euforic http://www.euforic.org/ EADI http://www.eadi.org/ Global Development Gateway http://www.developmentgateway.org/</p> <p>National and regional networks such as:</p> <p>Southern African Regional Poverty Network http://www.sarpn.org.za/ Council on Health Research for Development http://www.cohred.org/main/ DNet Bangladesh http://www.dnet-bangladesh.org/ Tanzania on line http://www.tzonline.org/ SerpP Philippines http://serp-p.pids.gov.ph/</p> <p>Media networks such as</p> <p>Internews http://www.internews.org/ Media Institute of Southern Africa http://www.misa.org/ Polis media http://www.polismedia.org/home.aspx</p>

Source: RCS

It is noted that research communication programmes use both research generated by the private sector and international and national NGOs, yet have a relative low ranking of such categories as anticipated users.

Whilst the outcome of the document review indicated that a significant proportion of CPs source information from non DFID funded communication programmes and knowledge intermediaries, the level of use of research findings from within the DFID CP cohort is relatively low (RSC Q9). Ten out of the 17 communication programmes "use occasionally" and as "a significant source" the ICT4D, the InfoDev and ELDIS. Others are used at much lower levels. Notably there is a low apparent usage of the R4D – the DFID research portal. Depending on the specific programme 1-5 research communication programmes say that they have not used a specific research communication programme but "would like to do so".

The research communication programmes were asked what percentage of the research used within their programmes did they feel was generated in the south. Six out of the 17 programmes felt 75% or over of the material was generated in the south however a smaller number did not know (two programmes) and three programmes indicated up to 25% generated in the south (RCS Q13).

4.9 Challenges faced by research communication programmes in sourcing and processing research output

Research communication programmes state that the most significant reason for having difficulties in accessing research from any source, North or South, is that it is not available in the public domain, i.e. not accessible or not written up, and that they lacked confidence in the work including lack of validation/peer review (7

out 17 respondents RCS Q12). A lack of knowledge of what an organisation has to offer, unsuitable format or lack of availability in the required language, and issues of IPR were also reported as minor challenges by more than 7 out of 17 respondents. There was somewhat greater concern on the lack of research output being written up when sourced in the south.

12 of the 17 research communication programmes process the findings; four do not (RCS Q17). This processing includes the preparation of a summary of a specific piece of work, summarising and bringing together research from multiple sources, and reformatting of material for specific audiences (at least 50% of the communication programmes process in these ways - RCS Q16). 5 out of the 17 programmes reported a weak linkage between communication programmes and research generators. The majority raised concern over the lack of awareness on the part of researchers of the value of communication. 11 out of 17 felt they had adequate skills to undertake processing. The majority of research communication programmes (11 out of 17, RCS Q 18) always or at least often acknowledge the research generators. Some 8 out of 17 say they train researchers either often or always, some bring groups together for workshops etc. but very few fund researchers to synthesise their work and/or organise any form of award for researcher's effort (RCS Q18).

Of the 54 research generators who completed the questionnaire some 38 spend above 5% and up to 10% in communication. 8 reported spending over 20% of their budget on communication (RGS Q8).

The majority, reasonably well balanced between north and south respondents, process research in-house for users (37 out of 54). 28 say they disseminate directly to users with in-house capability and some 24 state they have formal linkages with research intermediaries (RGS Q9)

Research users would like to obtain more research outputs and information from the south. Explicitly 22 of 54 respondents call for more research outputs from SSA and more than 10 of the research users call for more from Africa – north of the Sahara; South Asia; and South America (RUS Q11)

Looking through the lens of the research generators (RGS Q15), out of 54 researchers and their organisation contacted, only three DFID supported research communication programmes were contributed to occasionally and/or regularly – these were GDNNet, ID21 and ELDIS (16 or more respondents out of 54). For some they had heard of the programmes but made no contribution – score ranging from 5-23 respondents per programme out of 54. For many the programmes had never been heard of (scores 14-40 out of 54 depending on programme). 39 out of the 54 researchers, programmes and or institutions received some funding from DFID for their programmes of work (RGS Q7).

4.10 Delivery mechanisms and barriers to access

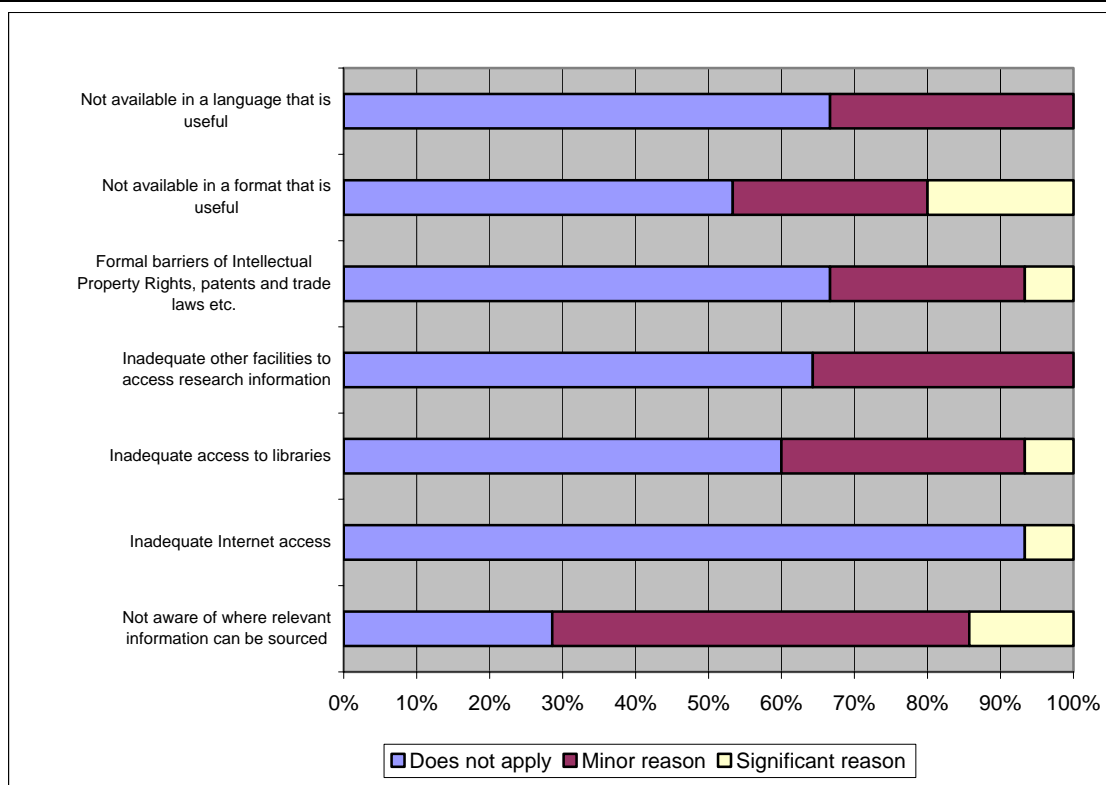
The research communication programmes were asked which delivery mechanism was used most commonly for which user group in the north and in the south. (RCS Q23 and Q24). For all categories of users in the north and south the internet was the most common delivery method – over 80% of the respondents for each user type. In addition face to face methods were used as a delivery method for development agencies including DFID; for research organisations in the north both print and workshops were noted and new technology including Web2 was used with NGOs, Media and DFID staff.

A slightly different profile was seen in the delivery methods applied to south based users, with a somewhat higher use of print materials and workshop and conference.

The 54 users in both the north and south use online access to source the range of information products. Used occasionally by over 22 respondents were print copies of journals, technical notes and workshops and study tours (RUS-Q3).

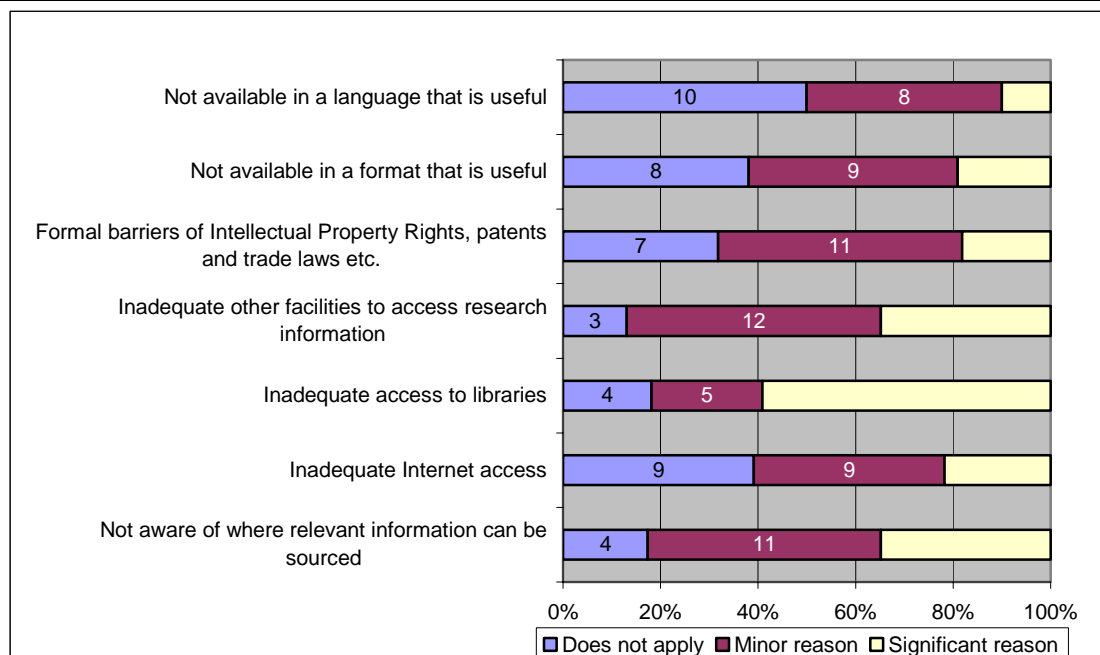
The users however noted a number of key barriers to access which differed somewhat by those based in the north (Figure 15) and those users in the south (Figure 16) (RUS Q4).

Figure 15 Barriers to access – North only



Source: RUS

Figure 16 Barriers to access – South only



Source: RUS

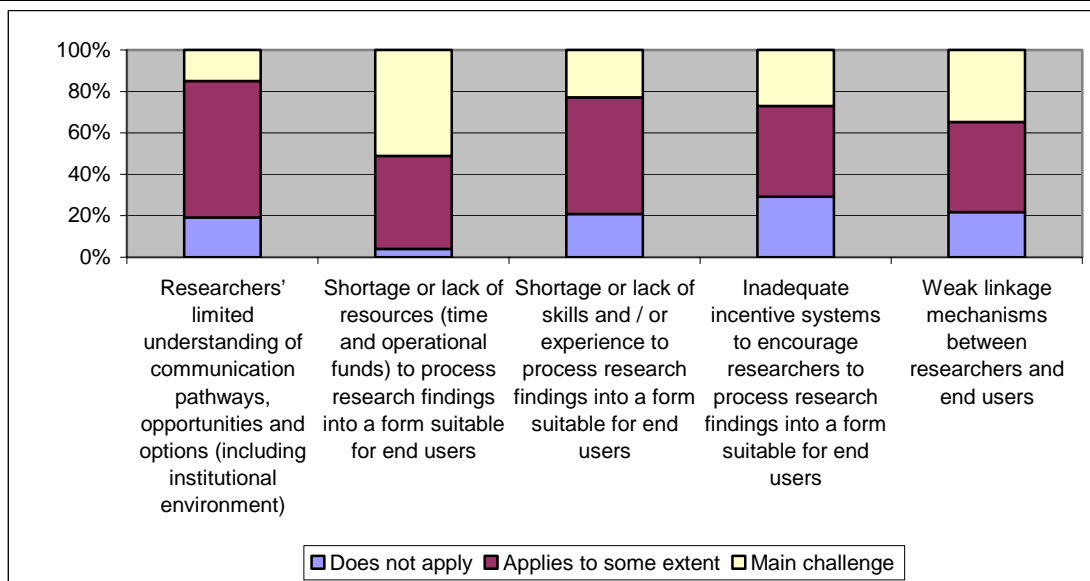
The southern respondents faced greater barriers to access, including in particular inadequate access to library services and other facilities, lack of awareness of where information can be sourced; and less access to the internet than the northern user.

When researchers were asked what were the main challenges in communicating research findings to research communication programmes (RGS Q11), a shortage of resources, and inadequate incentive systems to encourage researchers to process information were cited as main challenges.

When researchers were asked to rate what were the main challenges in communicating research findings to end users (RGS 12), there were no marked difference between the respondents in the north and the south. Key areas of concern were the lack of resources and weak linkages mechanisms between research and the user.

For both research communication programmes and end users, researchers felt that they lacked somewhat the skills to process material into suitable formats (25 out of 54 for research communication programmes and 27 out of 54 for end users - RGS – Q11 and Q12).

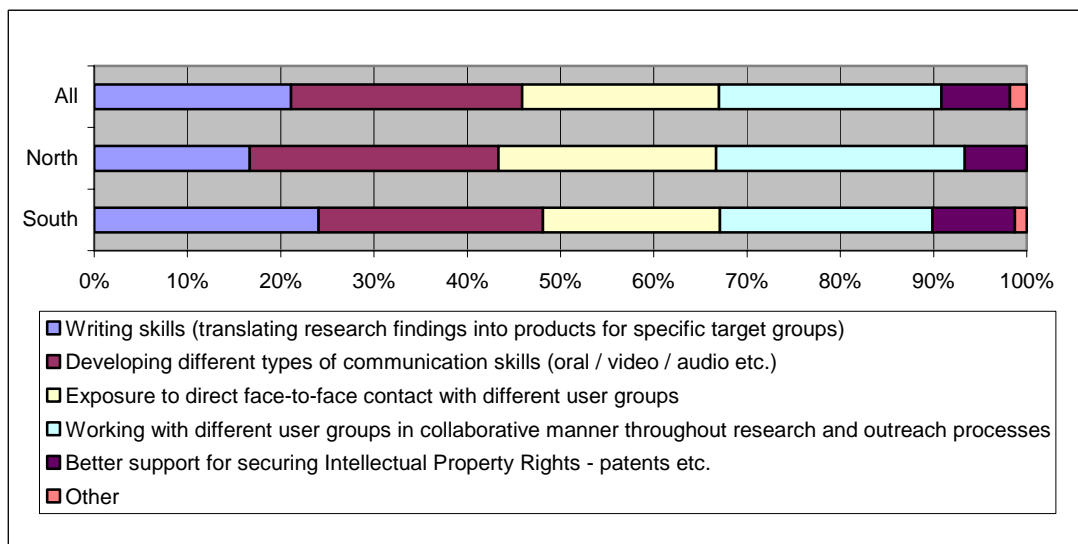
Figure 17 Main challenges in communicating research findings to end users - all



Source: RGS

When asked what would help the researchers to communicate more effectively there were some differences between the north respondents and those in the south. Nearly half of all respondents felt skills development would be useful as well as more face to face working and more collaboration between research and outreach throughout the programme. South researchers called for support in writing skills somewhat more than those from the north (RGS Q14)

Figure 18 Support considered very useful to communicate research findings more effectively



Source: RGS

4.11 The link between research communication programmes and the user

Of 40 user respondents who use once, occasionally or regularly, the DFID funded research communication programmes, four programmes were used by 13 or more respondents. These are AGRIS, GDNet, InfoDev and ELDIS. The 40 users say that they have heard of but not used programmes ranging from 1-11 users out of 40 for each programme. Most had not heard of the research communication programmes ranging from 12-29 scores/programme out of 40 respondents (RUS Q7).

The main reasons given for not using the research communication programmes was lack of time and information overload. Lack of access including internet access was also listed by 7 out of the 40 respondents. Putting aside the question of lack of time, over 50% of all respondents inferred that they would like to use such sources (RUS Q8 12 out of 40).

Research users were also asked to provide feedback on individual programmes that they had used. As most users consulted did not have much experience with the CPs, the response counts for this is fairly low, but interestingly there is overall high confidence in the quality of the information available. However, a much lower proportion of users said that the information is sufficiently up-to-date (see Table 5).

Table 5 Experiences with individual CPs (RUS Q9)

Research Communication Programme	I am confident in the quality of the information / material available	The content is relevant for my needs	The information is sufficiently up-to-date	Response Count*
Agfax/ New Agriculturalist	6	5	5	7
AGRIS: Information Systems in Agricultural Science and Technology	10	10	7	13
BBC World Service Trust	6	5	2	9
CommGap: Mainstreaming communication in development	3	3	1	6
Fostering Trust and Transparency in Governance	2	3	1	4
GDNNet: Global Development Network (GDNNet – The electronic voice of GDN')	9	10	6	14
ICT4D: Information and Communication Technologies for Development	9	9	4	11
InfoDev (World Bank)	11	11	7	14
Makutano Junction TV Drama (Mediae Trust)	2	2	1	3
MK4D: Mobilising Knowledge for Development (IDS)	6	6	4	7
a) ID21 communicating development research (IDS)	13	11	9	16
b) Electronic Development & Environmental Information System (ELDIS)	14	12	9	16
c) British Library for Development Studies (BLDS)	10	5	6	13
d) BRIDGE – Mainstreaming Gender Equality	4	5	4	8
e) SLI (Strategic Learning Initiative)	1	2	0	2
PERii International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications,	2	4	2	4
RELAY: Research Communication Programme (PANOS)	6	4	2	9
Research Africa: SARIMA (Research Research Ltd, Research (Africa) (Pty) Ltd, Association of Commonwealth Universities (The ACU)	2	1	1	4
Practical Answers (Practical Action)	3	4	4	5
R4D: Research4Development (CABI and DFID)	10	8	11	13
SciDev.Net: The Science and Development Network	9	6	9	12
SjCOOP: Peer-to-Peer Monitoring in Science Journalism (WFSJ / World Federation of Science Journalists)	2	2	0	3

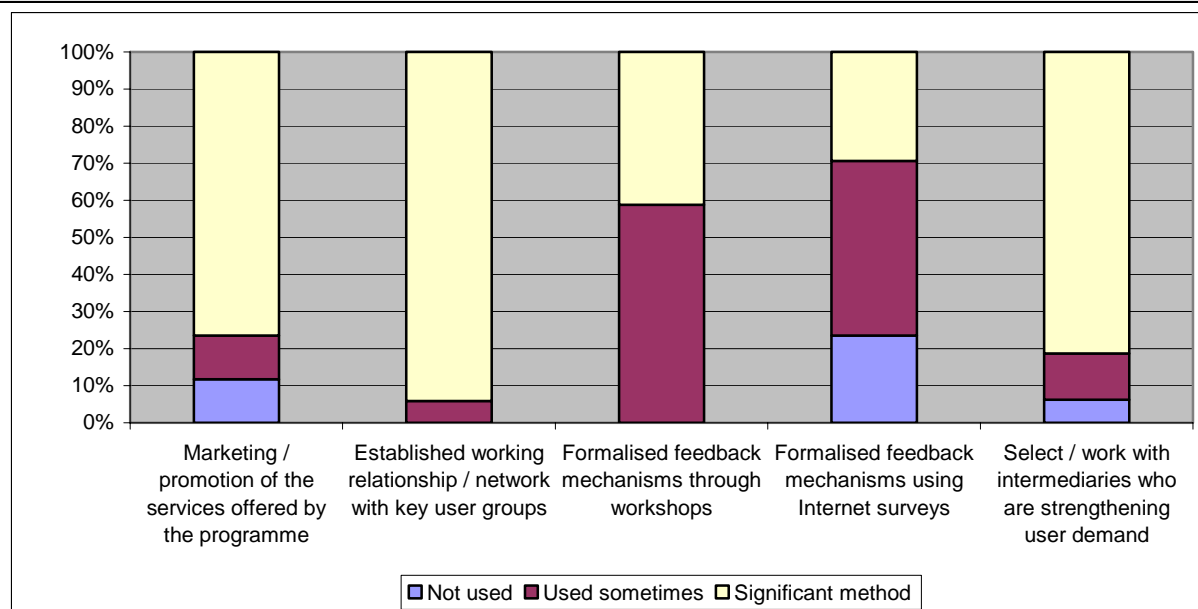
*Note: The total number of respondents in the survey was 40 research users. The question was "In relation to DFID-funded research communication programmes that you use regularly, which of the statements below applies to you? - You may indicate up to three for each row. Please leave blank those programmes that you do not use or have not used recently". Therefore, the total number of response varies between 3 and 16 per programme out of a total of 40, reflecting the fact that some programmes were better known and more used by the respondents.

The users called for more on-line journals and research reports, synthesis documents on research from multiple sources in print and electronic, and, more workshops and conferences as a means to share and learn (RUS Q10).

16 out of 40 users said that their views had been sought from research communication programmes (both DFID and non DFID funded (RUS Q 12) and the most common method was through completion of a feedback form (RUS Q13). Although there were feedback mechanisms between research communication programmes and users, the research communication programmes themselves do not seem to have used such a vehicle to feedback to researchers and thus attempt to influence the content of research programmes or initiatives. Only 6 out of the 17 programmes reported directly communicating user demands/needs to the generators of research and some (5 out of 17) by calling for particular type of research from the research generators (RCS Q27). Although therefore the research communication programmes support networks and coalitions, the opportunity to shape the research agenda through joint planning meetings with research providers in priority areas only appears taken up in 4 out of 17 cases (RCS Q27).

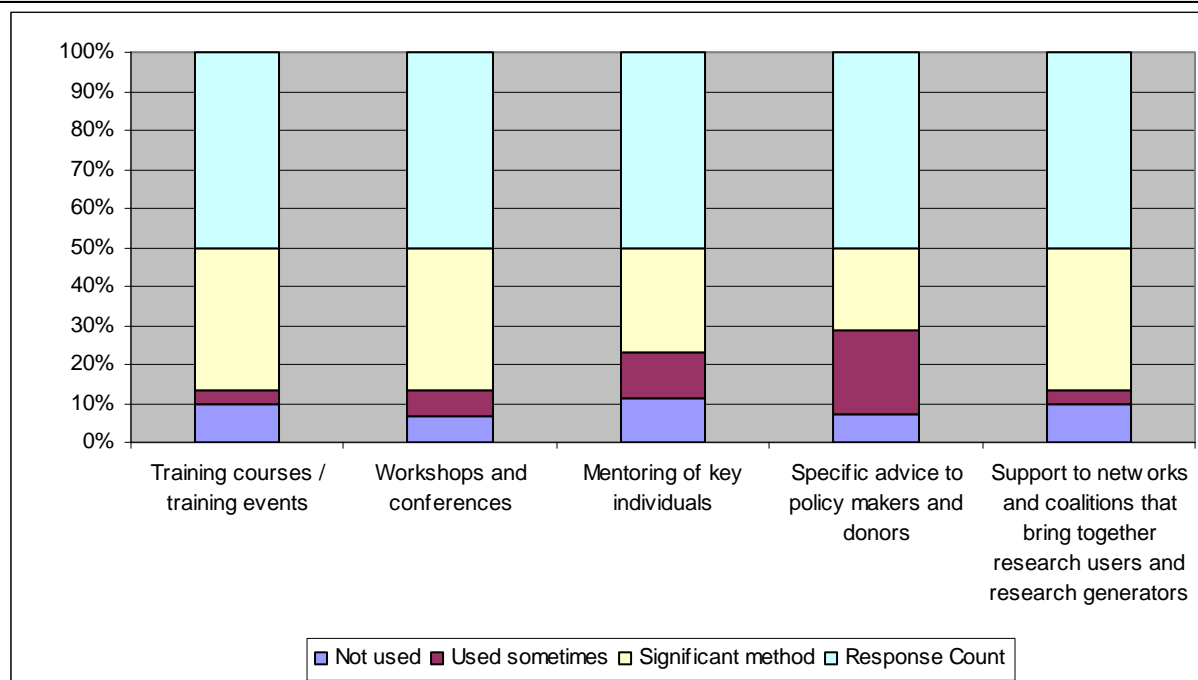
The research communication programmes have applied a range of means to strengthen the demand for their services from a wider audience (Figure 19). The range of means includes direct marketing of the services (13 out of 17); establishing working relationship /networks with user groups (16 out of 17), formal feedback mechanisms at workshops (7 out of 17); formal feedback from internet surveys (5 out of 17) and working with intermediaries who are themselves strengthening demand (13 out of 17) (RCS Q25).

Figure 19 How research communication programmes have attempted to strengthen the demand for services from a wider audience



A number of means are applied by research communication programmes to strengthen the capacity of users to demand research, with the most common being training events and conferences as well as support to networks and coalitions that bring together research users and research generators (11 out of 17 programmes) (RCS Q26) (Figure 20).

Figure 20 How research communication programmes have attempted to strengthen the capacity of user to demand and use research



Source: RCS

The 17 research communication programmes were invited to show how they identify their key anticipated users. Table 6 shows the different methods used and the level of differentiation of information collected (RCS Q20). Most programmes applied one or more methods, often aligned to their dissemination methods (i.e. radio would use radio counts, etc.) and most methods used had some level of differentiation by region and user type; there was a very low level of gender differentiation.

Table 6 How research communication programmes know their users

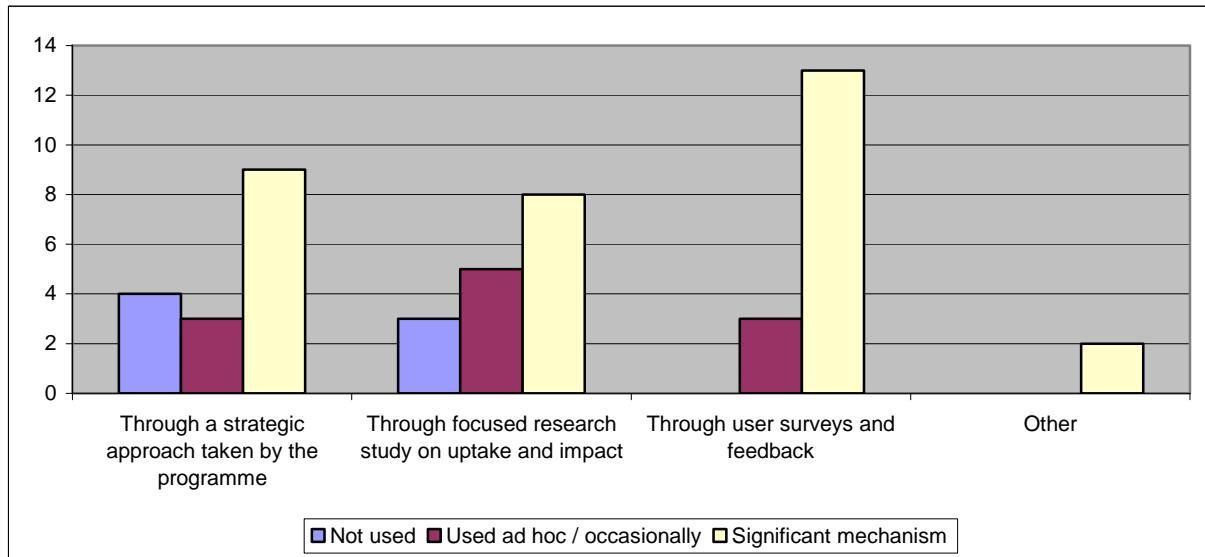
Answer Options	Not used	Used – undifferentiated by user group	Used - with geographical differentiation	Used - with gender differentiation	Used - with differentiation by user type / profession	Response Count
Analysis of mailing list of recipients of outputs	5	2	9	2	5	14
User survey	2	3	11	4	12	16
Tracking of web site use	1	4	11	0	5	16
Records of requests and queries received	5	7	5	1	5	15
Workshops and w/s feedback	4	4	4	1	6	15
Audience counts	6	4	3	1	2	12
Other	1	1	1	0	2	4

Source: RCS

Given that most programmes seek to deliver research information and knowledge to intermediaries through development practitioners, who in turn process for end use, or to policy makers, who, through access to relevant information, may be able to make

appropriately informed policy choices (DR and RCS Q21), the study sought to identify how the research communication programmes attempted to measure the impact of their activities (RCS Q22). Figure 21 shows that approximately half of the programmes develop and use an embedded set of hypothesis or assumptions when undertaking their strategic planning, and/or specific tools such as outcome mapping, or theory of change. For 8 out of 17 programmes, a significant mechanism was through focussed and ad hoc research study on uptake and impact, and 13 out of the 17 employ user survey methods and feedback.

Figure 21 Measuring impact on policy and process

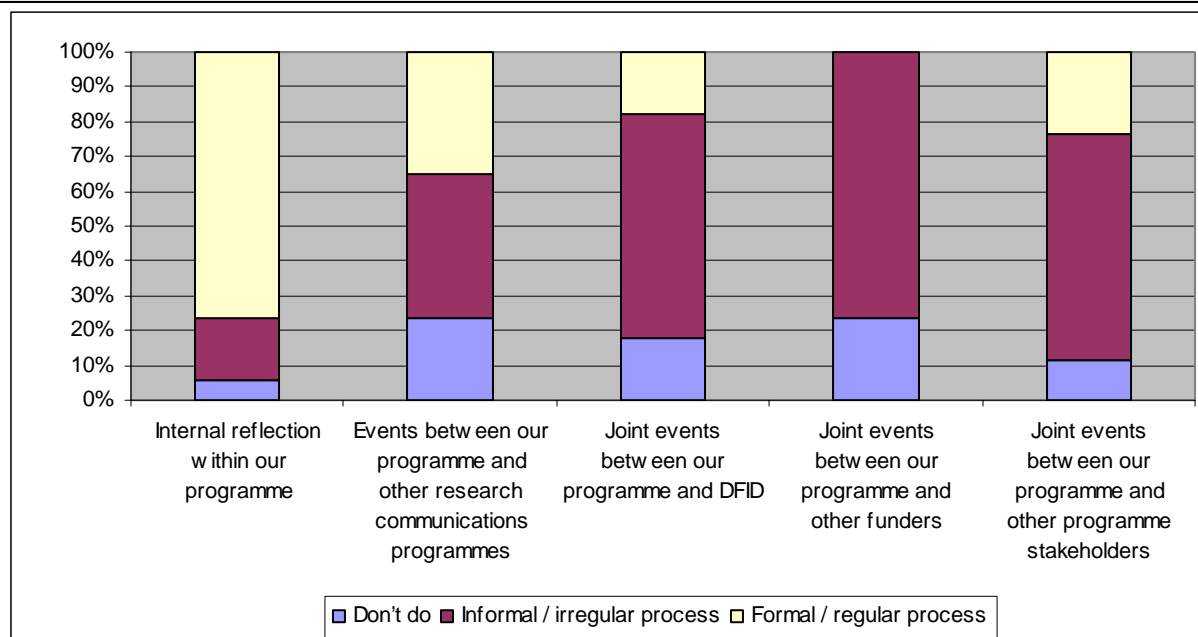


Source: RCS

11 out of 17 programmes have significantly changed their overall strategy in the last 5 years (RCS Q28). These changes have been driven by a number of factors, most commonly (11 out of 17) through in-house reflection. Funders play a role through permitting and encouraging learning and accepting change during the life of a programme (8 out of 17). The roles of advisory boards and of effective monitoring and feedback are also key in at least 7 out of 17 cases (RCS Q29). In 4 out of 17 cases there has been a change in thematic focus over time (RCS Q30). The main triggers for change in thematic focus (each mentioned by 4 out of 17 programmes) were through user feedback, advice from the advisory body and with the endorsement of the funding partner(s), and funders permitting or encouraging change or adaptation of the thematic focus (RCS Q31).

Most learning is undertaken internally with the research communication programmes (13 out of 17), with a range of other ad hoc events and formal and informal processes also feeding into the learning and change process. 4 out of the 17 do not have any joint learning events with other research communication programmes and 3 out of the 17 have no joint events with DFID as their sole or key funder (Figure 22).

Figure 22 Learning and reflection activities of the research communication programmes



Source: RCS

4.12 What research communication programme leaders told us

During the interviews, the research programme leaders/interviewees were invited to answer the open question "*what would you like to DFID to do more of or do differently?*". Drawing on the responses to this question, some nine activity categories were derived and the programmes' specific expressions of interest recorded against these categories (Table 7).

Eleven out of the 17 programme were concerned about funding issues, either the short duration of funding or unpredictability. In recognition of the new research strategy, it was hoped that the DFID plans would be realised and that DFID would maintain consistency of policy and commitment toward research communication. One respondent noted the importance of research communication as a public good and this was recorded under this category. Seven out of 17 felt that there was a need to strengthen the relationship between DFID and the research communication programme cluster; there was feeling of a lack of openness in dialogue and a weak capacity to share ideas with DFID as partners in development. Encouraging and supporting a network of the research communication programmes through for example the informal UK Research Communication Strategy Group was noted by some.

Seven out of 17 would welcome more investment and support to enable better sharing of innovation and good practice between research communication programmes.

Table 7 What DFID communication programme managers say they would like DFID to do differently or increase funding commitment									
Programme	Support CP platform Enhance dialogue between DFID and CPs	Sustainable funding Policy consistency RC as a public good	Strengthen debate /platform between donors	Share lessons of innovation and practice	Better user targeting	Increase focus on southern capacity building incl. centres of excellence	Need for more region specific work	Support science journalists	Increase funding for research on RC
Agfax/NA	X	X						X	
AGRIS		X		X		X			
BBC WST	X	X	X		X				X
CommGap		X				X	X		
FTTG		X				X			X
GDNNet/GDN		X		X		X			
ICT4D									X
InfoDev		X							
Makutano Junction		X							X
MK4D		X	X	X					
PERii - INASP	X	X	X	X					
RELAY - PANOS	X	X		X		X		X	
Research Africa – SARIMA						X	X		
Practical Answers				X			X		
R4D	X				X				X
SciDev.Net	X	X	X	X		X		X	
SjCOOP – WFSJ	X		X			X		X	X

Source: Interviews with CPs

4.13 The space within which research communication programmes' function

Although the portfolio of 17 research communication programmes is both significant in the breadth of operation and scale of investment, it is only one part of a set of global and local research communication networks. The research communication programmes themselves reach out to many other networks as sources of information and as partners in the knowledge delivery process. Box 3 listed some examples given in the RCS and others are given in Box 4. What should be noted is that some of this valued initiatives were three year programmes which when completed were not followed through and lesson learning may not have been fully embedded in other activities for example CATIA and BCO.

Box 4 The wider network of research communication programmes

Partnership for ICTs in Africa (PICTA) is an informal group of donors and executing agencies committed to improving information exchange and collaboration around ICT activities in Africa. It builds on the work of the [African Networking Initiative \(ANI\)](#) and the [African Internet Forum \(AIF\)](#). PICTA set up by ICT partners to assist in development, follow-up and coordination of the implementation of the African Information Society (AIS). Members of this regional coordinating committee are ECA's institutional partners from the United Nations system, bilateral and non-governmental organizations and representatives from the private sector involved in implementing AISI projects and programmes in Africa. <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/picta/>

iConnect <http://www.icconnect-online.org/home> iConnect is an initiative of the International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) and serves as a jumping off point for information on the application of knowledge and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in sustainable development. iConnect draws content from experiences from IICD and its partners, links resources and expertise and encourages collaboration. Africa link through UNECA

Building Communications Opportunities <http://www.bcoalliance.org/> **BCO** Partners are actively committed to the belief, that access to and the use of ICTs assists people and communities to have greater choice in determining and improving their lives and their standard of living. Whether it be by engaging governments around ICT policy or Poverty Reduction Support Programmes; advocating how ICTs support sector development in health, education, environment and food security delivery; raising awareness of how ICTs can promote debate and activism around culture, human rights, gender equality, HIV/AIDS, trade and aid, conflict prevention, and media; or networking with civil society and other development actors around the promotion of cheaper alternative technologies DFID was a partner with SIDA and DGIS and NGOs. Major evaluation report was done 2008

Catalysing Access to ICTs in Africa (CATIA) (2003-2007) DFID co-funding a three year programme which aimed to enable poor people in Africa to gain maximum benefit from the opportunities offered by Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and to act as a strong catalyst for reform. Nine small scale but strategic activities were undertaken that sought to improve access to ICTs in Africa – from the internet to community radio. It was a regional programme working across southern, eastern, central and western Africa

Source: Own / result of web search

4.14 Overall learning from the portfolio analysis

The analysis of key features of the CP portfolio as a whole has provided valuable insights about the use of DFID funds to address research communication in the different sectors of the research strategy, and in terms of coverage by

geographical region, user type and delivery mechanism. It also provides information about the range of challenges faced by the programmes overall, acknowledging that these differ from programme to programme.

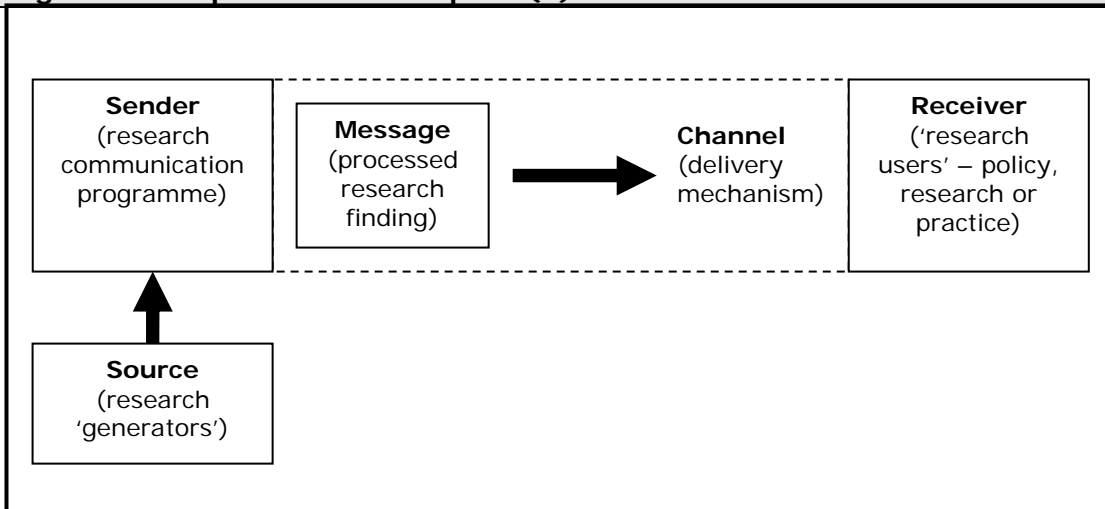
Having gained a detailed overview of the programme portfolio as a whole, the section 5 will now look in more detail at the key themes of the review, drawing out lessons learnt from individual programmes or groups of programmes. These lessons, together with the portfolio analysis, and a reflection of DFID research strategy (section 6) have informed the recommendations presented in section 7 of this report.

5 Key findings by review themes

5.1 Conceptualising 'research uptake and use'

While the terms 'research uptake' and 'research use' are routinely used in the research communication literature, there is substantial ambiguity about the meaning of these concepts, and it is difficult to find a definition of them. Many research communication initiatives focusing on processing and communicating research findings to users appear to assume that 'making evidence available' in suitable quality and format is in itself contributing to its 'use'. Outdated communication models such as the (Sender)Source-Message-Channel-Receiver (S)SMCR model (see Figure 23) assume such a linear, one-way path of communication, whereby the programme is the sender that develops (based on different sources of information) a message, which is then delivered to the receiver.

Figure 23 Expanded and adapted (S)SMCR model of communication



It is now commonly accepted that this one-way model is not working, as was pointed out in the communication theme paper contributing to DFID's first Research Funding Framework (2005-2007)⁶ (Dodsworth et al. 2003, p.6):

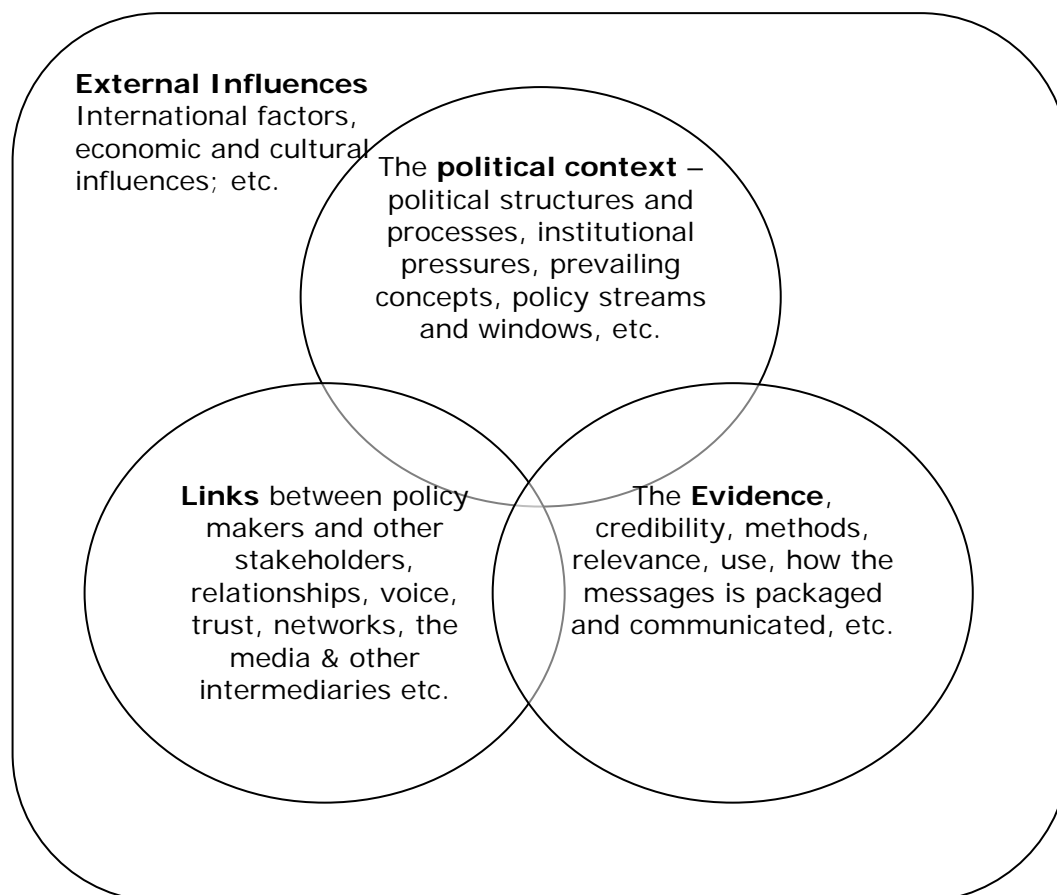
"The old linear view that a set of convincing research findings clearly communicated to policy makers will result in better decisions is being replaced by a new, more dynamic and complicated one that emphasises a two-way process between research and policy, shaped by multiple relationships and reservoirs of knowledge. Research knowledge is just one of many competing factors influencing policy decisions, or changes in practice, and is more often a contributory factor than a decisive one. The influence of research is more likely to be incremental, helping to establish, challenge and overturn dominant paradigms."

Dodsworth et al. refer to the Overseas Development Institute (ODI)'s 'Politics, Evidence and Links' framework for understanding and improving research-policy

⁶ <http://www.research4development.info/PDF/Outputs/consultation/research-framework-2005.pdf>

links, which explicitly recognises the importance of the political and institutional context and two-way interactions between research suppliers and users. They advocate that engaging users, using appropriate networks, helping people to learn and strengthening Southern research communication capacity are vital for research uptake into policy and practice. The ODI's RAPID framework looks at the role of evidence in policy making, identifying four interrelated factors: The evidence, the political context, linkages between stakeholders and external influences.

Figure 24 The RAPID framework (Research and Policy in Development)



Source: http://www.odi.org.uk/rapid/Tools/Toolkits/RAPID_Framework.html

However, there remains a substantial gap in the understanding of the processes leading to the application of research findings and other forms of evidence by both policy makers and practitioners. It is noted that whilst there is considerable innovation to be found within the research communication programmes – there remains a strong leaning towards the largely outdated linear model and mode of working.

A recent publication, based on work undertaken within the framework of the ESRC-funded Research Unit for Research Utilisation (www.ruru.ac.uk) on the use of evidence (Nutley et al. 2007) provides useful concepts and models for research uptake and use, both considering the 'practice contexts' and 'policy contexts'. It clarifies the differences between different types of knowledge (empirical, theoretical and experiential), research (the description of a production process that leads to one form of knowledge), and evidence (a value-based label attached

to particular types of knowledge). Research use has different dimensions, resulting in different conceptual models. Nutley et al. emphasise the continuity of different types of research use, as shown in Table 8 below:

Table 8 Research use as a two-dimensional continuum			
	Substantive	Elaborative	Strategic
Concrete	Research shapes the core of a decision or an issue	Peripheral use of research to further refine a position	Research is used to justify a position that has already been adopted
Conceptual	Research shapes a core orientation towards an issue or a basic understanding of an issue	Peripheral use of research to further refine an orientation or understanding	Research is used to confirm an orientation or an understanding that has already been adopted

Source: Nutley et al. (2007), p. 45 (adapted from Greenberg and Mandell 1991)

The continuum has implications for research communication, as different types of use require different types of evidence, presented in different formats, and with different levels of aggregation.

Research use can also be conceptualised as a series of stages (see Table 9), and this is particularly useful as a framework for analysing research communication initiatives. It can be used to assess to what extent and how different programmes acknowledge and support the different stages.

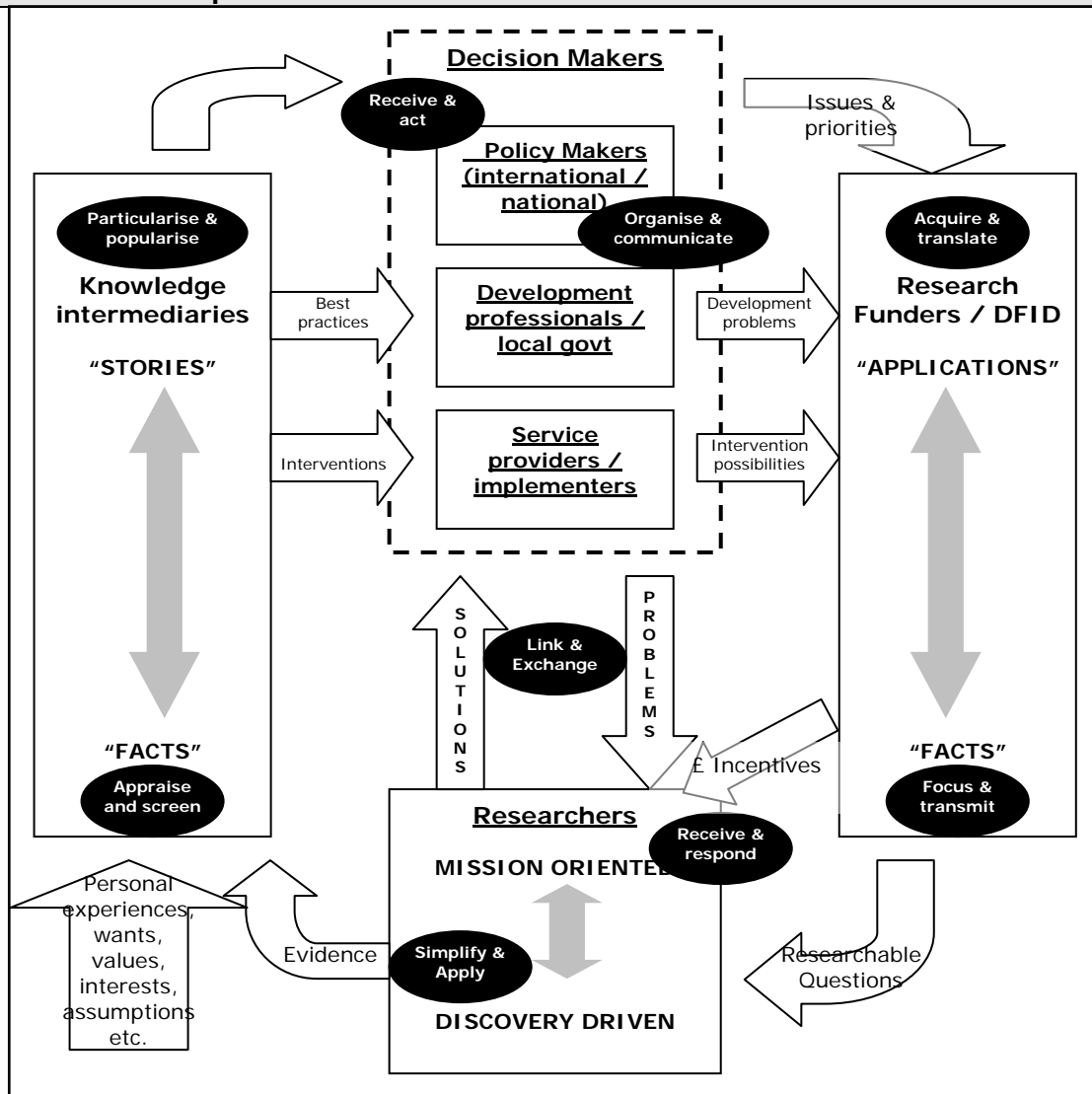
Table 9 Stage models for research use by policy makers and practitioners	
Knott and Wildavsky's standards of research user among policy makers	Glasziou and Haynes' 'Pipeline Model': The different stages of practitioners' use of research
(1) Reception: Research has been received by an individual (does not mean it is being read)	Practitioners are aware of findings from research
(2) Cognition: Research is read and understood	Practitioners accept the research findings
(3) Reference: Research provokes a change of thinking / a shift in a frame of reference, e.g. in terms of defining problems and priorities.	Practitioners view the findings as locally applicable and As doable within the local context
(4) Effort: Research has shaped action, effort made towards adoption	Practitioners act on the research findings
(5) Adoption: Research has had a direct influence on the decision making process and the resulting decision	Practitioners adopt the research findings
(6) Implementation: Research is translated into practice on the ground	Practitioners adhere to the research findings
(7) Impact: Tangible, identifiable benefits from the implementation of research-informed policies	

Source: after Nutley et al. 2007 (p. 47-49)

In relation to the 'enabling environment' for research uptake and use, and ways of supporting this, the Canadian Health Services Research Foundation (CHSRF) developed a model for evidence-based decision making (Figure 25), showing the two-way linkages between researchers and users. These linkages have also been characterised as research supply-side initiatives (where the stronger link is that of

research providing research findings or solutions), and research demand-side initiatives (with users articulating problems and associated information or evidence needs) (Nutley et al. 2007, p.233 ff).

Figure 25 Evidence-based decision making: Where to focus for improvement



Source: adapted from CHSRF (2000): p. 7

The CHSRF model identified key areas of intervention that can lead to improvement. It shows the different types of stakeholders, their primary drivers, and the linkages between them. The DFID research communication programmes want to inform a large range of research users, including the three categories of decision makers shown in the model (policy makers, managers and professionals working in service delivery), research funders, but also researchers, educational organisations, and to some extent the general public. Key areas of improvement identified are:

- Decision makers organise and communicate their priorities and problems
- Researchers and research funders develop mechanisms to access information on these priorities and problems and turn them into research activity

- Researchers learn how to simplify their findings and demonstrate their application in order to communicate better with decision makers and knowledge purveyors (intermediaries)
- The knowledge purveyors have to improve their ability to screen and appraise information to sort the facts from the stories.
- Decision makers and their organizations need to improve their capacity to receive such appraised and screened information and to act upon it — developing 'receptor capacity'.

RURU has undertaken an extensive analysis of the effectiveness of different research user strategies, according to the key mechanisms that seem to underpin them. Five mechanisms emerged as prevalent and important (after Nutley et al. 2007, p.132ff):

1. **Dissemination:** Circulating or presenting research findings to potential users, in formats that may be more or less tailored to their target audience. This includes both print materials and the use of other media, as well as social types of dissemination mechanisms such as seminars to disseminate research findings to policy makers;
2. **Interaction:** Developing stronger links and collaborations between the research and policy or practice communities. This involves the development of two-way flows of information between stakeholders, and approaches such as action research or participatory research. Policy involvement in research is an important component of this, and again three models for this have been identified:
 - a. Formal support (policy makers provide explicit support for the research, but are not involved in the process)
 - b. Responsive audience (policy makers respond more actively to researchers' efforts for interaction – e.g. ad hoc exchanges, meeting etc.)
 - c. Integral partners (policy makers act as close collaborators in the research process).
3. **Social influence:** Relying on influential others, such as experts and peers, to inform individuals about research and to persuade them of its value;
4. **Facilitation:** Enabling the use of research, through technical, financial, organisational and emotional support;
5. **Incentives and reinforcement:** Using rewards and other forms of control to reinforce appropriate behaviour.

We have used these categories to analyse good practice in particular in supporting an enabling environment for research use.

5.1.1 The nature of research

Throughout this report research is spoken of as homogenous, with an assumed capacity to be delivered and ready for uptake and use. This, no more than indeed the process of change itself, is not the case. Simplistic assumptions about the nature of research, the timeframe and its "fit for purpose" within a given context need to be avoided.

To drive develop change and to resolve intractable issues of development requires a complex of longer term and indeed "blue skies" research as well as more adapted action research. It requires better use of research evidence already available and generated by both research practitioners in the north and south.

This latter issue is specifically pertinent to the role of research communication programmes in meeting the needs of educational and research institutions and the researchers themselves, and in seeking to identify who and how critical reviews of evidence across multiple research sources can best be delivered.

5.2 The enabling environment for research uptake and use in the current research communication programme portfolio

5.2.1 Research communication programmes definitions of the enabling environment

DFID is committed to *“supporting greater access to intermediary services for getting research into use; and building national-level coalitions and international networks which bring together researchers, communication specialists and NGOs to bridge the gap between researchers and users”*. This review suggests that programmes focus primarily on the first part of this (access to intermediary services), with somewhat less engagement in bringing together different stakeholders to both support research use and influence future research priorities.

The majority of the current research communication programmes have not defined the enabling environment for research uptake and use beyond the first stage of the ‘research into use’ models shown in Table 9: Making evidence available to intermediate and end users in a format deemed appropriate for them. This might include raising awareness about research findings through marketing of the programmes, which is done by 13 out of 17 programmes (RCS).

In terms of making evidence available, programmes have defined the conditions that need to be in place for users to be able to receive their communication product. As the main delivery mechanism of the programmes is the Internet (see Section 5.3 on Communication of Research), several programmes focus on Internet access as a key enabling factor. Internet access has several dimensions, and each one can constitute a barrier for users:

- Technological access (extent to which Internet access at reasonable speed is technically feasible in given location)
- Economical access (extent to which the targeted users can afford to use such connections)
- Legal access (extent to which web sites are censored or blocked – particularly important in the context of governance and transparency improving initiatives)
- Social access (extent to which access is controlled by gate keepers)

Some of the programmes’ logframes define further what the underlying risks and assumptions are to ensure that they reach their target audience – several of these are related to the enabling environment in the wider sense, and sit broadly in the areas entitled “External Influences”, “Political Context”, and “Linkages” in the RAPID framework (see Figure 24). It appears useful to add as a forth dimension the “Institutional environment”, even though this is partly included in Linkages and Political Context. The Table 10 captures key assumptions made by the programmes (DR).

The main external factors relate to Internet access and access to other media, access to funding, the lack of excessive donor interference, and stability of partner countries. In the programme logframes, these are often higher level assumptions at goal or purpose level.

In terms of political context, programmes have been more specific in defining the enabling environment, including key aspects of good governance, transparency, and freedom of media. Other factors include the extent to which policies are influenced by evidence, and here some assumptions appear unrealistic, considering the current level of understanding of the processes that contribute to decision making by policy makers, practitioners and researchers. For example, the purpose-level assumption of GDNNet is "That policy is based on or influenced by research evidence", whereas we know that evidence is only one of the contributing factors to policy. This suggests that not all programmes were aware at their design stage of recent thinking on policy-research linkages.

The institutional context conducive to research uptake is closely related to capacities of institutions, as well as organisational cultures both in organisations generating and using research.

Linkages are clearly recognised as key by most of the programmes, and issues of partnership, collaboration, ownership and participation are considered prerequisites for successful research uptake.

The quality (and in particular relevance) of evidence is an important enabling factor – without quality evidence, there is nothing to take up and use. Obviously each programme would define in more detail, in relation to their specific area of operation (in terms of sector, user group, geographical location etc.) what the quality criteria for evidence need to be.

Table 10 The enabling environment for research uptake and use as expressed in programme assumptions

Dimension	Examples
External influences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good access to the Internet (Agfax / New Agriculturalist, GDNNet, Research Africa) • Access to other media (TV, radio, print) (Makutano Junction, Agfax, RELAY) • Sufficient and reliable funding (GDNNet in relation to M&E; Practical Answers in general, Research Africa in relation to African-led research proposals, SciDev.Net in relation to programme web site) • Programmes are not unduly influenced / sidetracked by a single donor's agenda (InfoDev) • No serious conflicts or upheavals in partner countries (Practical Answers)
Political context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free and plural media (BBC WST) • Development research contributes to more informed discussion and debate (RELAY) • Policy debate and self-recognition is a more effective strategy in reaching appropriate prioritisation of media and communication issues than lobbying or advocacy (BBC WST) • Policy is based on or influenced by research evidence (GDNNet) • Research-based information delivered via the Internet and in print form can enrich policy thinking (MK4D) • Policy-shapers and practitioners take research-based information seriously (MK4D) • Increased levels of demand by development actors for better engagement with the role of media and communication in enabling democratic development and meeting MDGs will be self-sustaining and trigger progress towards greater action beyond the life of this programme (BBC WST) • Developing country governments and donor agencies commit to integrating science and technology into their policies, and to capacity building in S&T (SciDev.Net) • Ownership of the findings and the political will to implement them is essential (Fostering Trust) • That an informed policy environment leads to the formation and implementation of policies which decrease poverty (GDNNet) • Political development agendas are influenced by various factors many of which are temporal and contextual. Many of the countries in Asia and Africa are politically unstable and regime change can present both opportunities and hurdles to policy change and adoption (ICT4D) • Draconian media laws, state control over free public expression, lack of open access to information, weak civil society (CommGap) • National and regional regulatory bodies and policies may support or impede alternative use of ICTs (ICT4D) • Appropriate institutions and line ministries are influential stakeholders for ICT4D projects to realise their intended development outcomes (ICT4D) • Policy makers have the political freedom and will to adopt research evidence (PERii)
Institutional context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity exists within development agencies to absorb the outputs of the Programme and trigger demand (BBC WST) • Target groups skilled in use of Internet (R4D) • Demand is a major factor in determining the level of engagement with media and communication within the development community (BBC WST) • Enough of a critical mass in support of policy / strategy change has been built at the various different levels of DFID/WB/partner development agencies (CommGap) • Research institutes are interested in communicating their findings and recommendations (RELAY) • National governments and academic institutions are willing and able to support research and retain qualified staff (PERii) • Managers are willing to integrate new policies and practices into their institution/department (PERii) • Technical managers in other organisations have skills and resources to use R4D content (R4D)

Dimension	Examples
Links between stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong ownership of the design and delivery of the project is essential if the outputs are to be relevant and well used; ownership of the findings and the political will to implement them is essential (Fostering Trust) • A partnership between the demand side (senior public sector stakeholders) and the supply side (records professionals) is essential for identifying meaningful solutions (Fostering Trust) • That linkages and collaboration between researchers around the world improve research quality, quantity and the policy environment (GDNet) • Critical mass and interest exists to sustain network collaborations (ICT4D) • Communication programmes are not unduly influenced by the interests of the private sector (e.g. ICT providers) (InfoDev) • DFID and DFID funded research projects continue to make available information on their research efforts (R4D) • Scientists and their institutions willing to share information (SciDev.Net) • Participation by key stakeholders in the steering group, and availability (R4D) • Journalists benefit from peer-to-peer learning (SjCOOP WFSJ)
Nature of the evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness among users of the existence of the evidence, or appreciation of its relevance (Agfax / New Agriculturalist) • Solutions must be developed in relation to real situations and needs, and must be applicable to a wide range of development environments (Fostering Trust) • A significant volume of UK-originated development research contains practical policy implications (MK4D) • Researchers undertake relevant pro-poor (rather than other kinds of) research (PERii) • The technological interventions promoted impact on poverty (Practical Answers)

Encouragingly, some programmes have clearly thought about the institutional, political and external factors that influence research uptake, including linkages between stakeholders. These include linkages between peers (for example in the SjCOOP programme) as well as between different groups of stakeholders. The political and institutional environment needs to be conducive to research uptake by providing a climate of openness, commitment to MDGs and poverty reduction, human and organisational capacities, and funding to enable the continuation of programmes and initiatives for research uptake.

It is important to keep in mind that the assumptions in Table 10 refer largely to the immediate programme environment, whereas research uptake and use goes beyond the immediate influence zone of individual research communication programmes. None of the programmes reviewed explicitly used the RAPID model or similar to define the generic conditions that need to be in place in order to encourage and support the actual use of evidence, and how these can be influenced.

Dodsworth et al. (2003) highlighted the importance of the institutional environment and processes (such as networking) that support research uptake:

"The conditions under which research is communicated and the institutional environment into which it is received can have a far more decisive effect on whether the research is taken up or not than the actual content, channel or strategy. Working in networks offers much promise."

The interviewees for this review stressed the importance of this institutional context when looking at research communication. Traditionally, researchers have been used to communicating within the academic world but not any further. A number of interviewees pointed out that the business of communication is not part of a researcher's career path and that they may even perceive it to have a number of risks. For example, they worry that their research findings may be simplified or misinterpreted or are not intrinsically suited to influencing policy. The importance of peer review and thus the verification of research that is being communicated was stressed by a number of respondents, for example: *"From an academic's point of view a portal like R4D and many other research communication outlets are 'secondary' to academic outlets because they do not emphasis peer review."* (R4D) *"There are many hidden steps in communication of research, and understanding these is vital in order to support the whole system. The idea is that many of the steps are invisible, as they are based on academic peer support, informal discussions and presentations, long before the research gets to the formal publication stage."* (PERii-INASP)

The importance of both formal and informal interactions between stakeholders has been confirmed by the research users in the questionnaire. 38.5% of users interviewed would like to have more workshops / conferences, 25.6% more personal contacts and advice, 23.1% more links with other relevant users / communities of practice, and 17.9% more study tours (RUS Q10).

Table 11 Which research information and communication sources would you like to have more of?

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Online (Internet and/or e-mail): news / event information / general development information / diverse range of issues	28.2%	11
Online: journals, original research reports	56.4%	22
Online: syntheses of research findings from multiple sources, produced at different times about a particular topic	51.3%	20
Online: short policy / technical notes	43.6%	17
Online: Consultations, blogs, social networking	15.4%	6
Online: Subscription to regular news / updates	20.5%	8
Print: journals, original research reports	28.2%	11
Print: syntheses of research findings from multiple sources, produced at different times about a particular topic	30.8%	12
Print: short policy / technical notes	20.5%	8
Print: Subscription to regular news / updates	2.6%	1
TV, radio and other mass media	12.8%	5
Research communication programmes/ research intermediaries	17.9%	7
Services that respond to your requests for research evidence	20.5%	8
Workshops/ conferences	38.5%	15
Study tours / other training events	17.9%	7
Direct link with research generators without passing through research communication programmes/research intermediaries	12.8%	5
Links with other relevant users / communities of practice	23.1%	9
Professional bodies and networks	17.9%	7
Personal contacts and advice	25.6%	10
Other	5.1%	2
Total number of respondents who answered the question	100%	39

Source: RUS

However, several programmes engage closely with users, in an attempt to both better understand their information needs, and to support them in reflecting on evidence and information received together with peers, demanding relevant, timely and reliable evidence, and to some extent link users with researchers. According to the RCS, 16 out of 17 programmes establish working relationships and / or network with key user groups. The nature of relationship varies however between programmes.

As noted in Chapter 4, stakeholder engagement has different forms within the different research communication programmes reflecting the different dimensions of user 'pull' and supplier 'push'.

5.2.2 Impediments identified by programmes in relation to the enabling environment

To some extent impediments are the opposites of the enabling factors. These include in particular restrictions to access to the various delivery mechanisms (Internet, print media / libraries), unwillingness of information 'sources' (primarily researchers and research organisations) to share information, and shortage of funding and other types of support to enable facilitation and dialogue. Some of

these were not anticipated by the programmes at the onset, and were therefore not included in the risks and assumptions of programme logframes.

Using the categories given in Table 11, specific impediments identified by the programmes are given in Table 12.

In terms of external influence, inadequate access to Internet and other facilities, either due to technical or cost implications. Importantly, access is not only a technical consideration (see Box 5).

Box 5 Access is not just about technology

Reasons for restricted access to information may relate to the *people* involved in the process. Examples include those in a position of relative power: monopolising Internet/computer access; lacking the confidence, skills or will to engage potential users, or; not putting in place policies and practice that optimise use of infrastructure, connectivity or information resources for teaching, learning or research.

It may require capacity and relationship building to engage such people in creating an 'enabling' environment through their own personal behaviour. Implications are that one needs to consider both organisational infrastructure/connectivity and organisational culture and practice.

Source: PERii programme interview

In relation to the political context, barriers relate to the demand for and responsiveness to research information by decision makers, as well as issues of monopolisation in the media landscape.

Table 12 Impediments for research uptake and use identified by the programmes and their users

Dimension	Examples
External influences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate Internet access: Significant barrier to accessing research information for 15.8% of users, minor reason for 23.7% (RUS) • Inadequate other facilities to access research information: Significant barrier to accessing research information for 21.6 % of users, minor reason for 45.9% (RUS) • Inadequate access to libraries: Significant barrier to accessing research information for 37.8 % of users, minor reason for 27% (RUS) • High cost of online journal subscription (RUS)
Political context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media landscape: Risk that reduced diversity (e.g. as a result of commercial / global / political factors) will reduce the range of voices that are heard. • Weak demand for evidence by (a) decision makers / (b) civil society: Major barrier for research use for (a) 28.9% / (b) 26.3% of users, applicable to some extent for (a) 52.6%/ (b) 50% (RUS) • Inflexibility in adapting public funding in response to research information: Major barrier for research use for 27% of users, applicable to some extent for 45.9% (RUS)
Institutional context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal barriers (IPRs, patents etc.) to sourcing research: Minor challenge for 7 out of 17 programmes (RCS) • Research generators are not aware of the value of communication: Significant obstacle for repackaging research findings for 10 out of 15 programmes (RCS) • Research generators have weak or no incentives to process and share research findings: Significant obstacle for repackaging research findings for 7 out of 15 programmes (RCS) • Negative attitudes of developing country researchers to communicating their research are a key barrier. They are often contracted to produce research by external agencies and so feel they have no remit to communicate their own research because they do not 'own' it • National level research organisations in developing countries are not funded to communicate research locally. (RCS) • Finding resource people (writers) who have skills in both understanding and interpreting research and communicating it to lay communities, specifically journalists (RCS) • Lack of time / information overload: Major barrier for using research communication programmes for 35.3% of users, applicable to some extent for 35.3% (RUS) • Specifically in relation to policy advice: There is an issue of policy advice overload, making it more difficult for decision makers to decide what advice to follow (InfoDev – RCI) • Researchers' limited understanding of communication pathways, opportunities and options (including institutional environment): Applies to some extent to 72.9% of researchers in communicating research findings to intermediaries, main challenge for 8.3%. (RGS) • Shortage or lack of resources (time and operational funds) to process research findings into a form suitable for intermediaries: Applies to some extent to 47.9% of researchers in communicating research findings to intermediaries, main challenge for 45.8%. (RGS) • Inadequate incentive systems to encourage researchers to process research findings into a form suitable for intermediaries: Applies to some extent to 52.1% of researchers in communicating research findings to intermediaries, main challenge for 33.3%. (RGS)

Dimension	Examples
Links between stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of mechanisms to enable dialogue and debate between researchers and research users: Major barrier for research use for 51.3% of users, applicable to some extent for 25.6% (RUS) • Lack of coalitions among research users at (a) national level and (b) at regional / international level: Major barrier for research use for (a) 37.8% / (b) 28.9% of users, applicable to some extent for (a) 37.8% / (b) 44.7% (RUS) • Don't know what other research communication organisations have to offer: Minor challenge for 8 out of 17 programmes; 9 out of 17 when referring to Southern research sources (RCS) • Research generators are wary of research communication's processing of research findings: Significant obstacle for repackaging research findings for 6 out of 15 programmes (RCS) • Insufficient feedback from beneficiaries (end users) of repackaged research findings is a challenge to the packaging of research findings (RCS) • Lack of critical mass of individuals/ groups with exposure to the relevant research information: Major barrier for research use for 26.3% of users, applicable to some extent for 50% (RUS)
Nature of the evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research findings are not available (not written up, not in the public domain): Significant challenge for 7 out of 17 of programmes; 9 out of 17 when referring to Southern research sources (RCS) • Information has not been validated / lack of confidence in the information: Significant challenge for 7 out of 17 programmes (RCS) • Not available in a format or language that is useful: Minor challenge for 8 and 7 out of 17 programmes, respectively; 8 and 6 out of 17 when referring to Southern research sources (RCS) • Research findings are not available in a suitable form: Occasional obstacle for 9 out of 15 programmes (RCS) • It is a challenge to distil findings from the final reports into key outcomes that are concise and packaged in a way to bring about intended influence (RCS) • Not aware where relevant information can be sourced: Significant barrier to accessing research information for 27 % of users, minor reason for 51.4% (RUS) • Lack of ownership of research results by users and lack of trust in findings because of no local validation: Major barrier for research use for 20.5% of users, applicable to some extent for 41% (RUS) • Interactivity / getting user-generated content requires substantial technical and facilitation inputs, making it costly (InfoDev – RCI)

Institutional barriers affect both research organisations and users, and relate to attitudes, capacities, and hindering organisational processes and systems. Not surprisingly, information overload and lack of time are a major factor limiting the use of evidence. Lack of resources and incentives also play a role. The legal and regulatory environment is also key, as Box 6 shows.

Box 6 Restrictions on the media as an obstacle to dissemination

The extent to which the media environment is free in any one country impacts strongly on which research filters through to the public domain. While media liberalisation has certainly been a reality across much of Africa and Asia in recent years, many countries' media still remain severely restricted: in Africa these include Zimbabwe, Eritrea, Sudan and Libya; in Asia/Middle East these include China, Syria, Vietnam and Myanmar. Restrictions can include banning foreign shortwave broadcasts and controlling internet content, imposing language restrictions and punitive taxes on community radios, strict government control of all media content and, in the worst cases, regular arrests, torture and killing of journalists.

Often libel laws are used to restrict coverage of corruption issues and prevent journalists from covering instances of bad governance. Such restrictions impact particularly on dissemination of research on governance issues, political science and social questions.

Where research may be highly sensitive, e.g. critical of government policy, **Panos RELAY** programme advises that 'one-to-one engagement with policy-makers [can be] more effective than high-profile media coverage, which could be counter-productive'. (Panos/Relay, 2006, *Getting into the Kitchen: Media strategies for research*. Panos: London p.8)

In terms of linkages between different types of stakeholders, insufficient mechanisms for engagement between stakeholders and the lack of critical mass of people exposed to relevant information are important. Box 7 describes some of the challenges that one group of intermediaries, journalists, face when interacting with other stakeholders.

Limitations in relation to evidence concern availability and format of findings, insufficient validation, lack of ownership, and high costs of interactivity.

Box 7	Challenges facing journalists covering research in Africa and the Middle East
	<p>First, the local research activities themselves are often too weak to achieve and finalize research activities in a way that can be communicated. Such local research activities achieve results only thanks to outside support or are the results of branches of international or developed countries institutions or programmes. It is also the internationally supported research institutions that communicate more easily with journalists.</p> <p>Second, information is often only released following the authorization of the minister, and journalists can wait two or three months before getting an answer. Many scientists also don't return calls, don't answer emails, or simply refuse to give interviews because of previous disastrous experiences with incompetent or dishonest journalists. Often, the information is just not provided, is too vague, or is sometimes manipulated for political purposes. Some sources will insist on receiving money. Journalists also complain that researchers are often on travel, or even give false appointments. Communication officers are too few and those that exist don't communicate well. Journalists often obtain information from informal sources and do not dare publish because they cannot attribute. When journalists publish, they produce articles that they feel look more like 'fiction' than journalism. Many journalists are also unable to handle the often different and competing points of view provided by researchers and scientists.</p> <p>Third, journalists also face difficulties in their own work environment with no or minimal internet access in the newsroom and resort to cybercafes; dozens of journalists might have to share one internet connection. There are no budgets to covers expenses for reports from the field. Journalists in Africa particularly seldom own a laptop.</p> <p>Fourth, at the same time, many journalists find that there is more and more research information generated in the areas of health, environment, forestry, and agriculture. In some countries, journalists now find it easier to access information about research and science. They are also becoming partners in concerted efforts with research institutions to disseminate information about research.</p> <p>Source: RCS</p>

5.2.3 Lessons learnt and good practice in the enabling environment

Programmes have used a range of practices to foster an enabling environment for research uptake and use, with a strong emphasis on the first stages of the uptake route (see Table 13).

Table 13 Examples of good practice for supporting the enabling environment for research uptake and use from the programmes

Mechanism	Examples
Dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All programmes are involved in dissemination of information or evidence in one way or the other; see the section on delivery mechanisms, products and targeting approaches used Collection of initiatives/activities linked to a particular topic and summarizing these initiatives for specific audiences (Knowledge Maps) (RCS) Awareness raising of the resources available to researchers and the role /status of libraries as guides and gatekeepers (RCS) Take into account the importance of local contents and local sources, as this is more likely to influence policy. Currently there is possibly too much emphasis on Western knowledge, which in itself can be an impediment to uptake, if it is perceived to be not relevant to local context (PERii – RCI) Mixing theory with practical application makes information more credible and suitable for users (CommGap – RCI)
Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directly communicating user needs to the funders of research to influence the content of research programmes: Significant method for 6 of 16 programmes (RCS) Establishing working relationship / network with key user groups: Significant method for 16 of 17 programmes (RCS) Use of (a) internet surveys and (b) workshops for feedback from users: used sometimes by 8 and 10 of 17 programmes, respectively (RCS) Select /work with intermediaries who are strengthening user demand: Significant method for 13 out of 16 programmes (RCS) Support to networks and coalitions that bring together research users and research generators to strengthen the capacity of users to demand and use research: Significant method for 11 of 16 programmes (RCS) Use of joint events between the programme and stakeholders to learn about and reflect on activities: informally done by 11, formally done by 4 out of 17 programmes (RCS); also interactions with funders and other research communication programmes Building links between researchers and journalists at developing country level (RCS) Face to face meetings that help demonstrate the value of communicating research (RCS) Pairing up of researchers and policy makers (PERii – RCI) Assessing programme impact through face-to-face meetings with partners, commissioning research by stakeholders in partner countries to monitor and evaluate the programme, though a steering committee of country coordinators who assess and provide feedback on needs and progress in their country (RCS) Exchange visits for journalists and researchers (i.e. journalists visit a research org and researchers visit a newsroom) (RCS) Partnership with Country Coordinating teams who manage and implement the programme in country as part if their existing remit to enable research communication in one form or another, peer exchanges between stakeholders (RCS) "Social networking" via communication corner on CP web site (R4D) – but involves mostly other programmes, not users (RCI) Peer review and peer support mechanisms are at the heart of the SjCOOP programme; also good experience with networks of journalists and scientists to help develop trust between the two groups (SjCOOP – RCI) Interaction is not necessarily face-to-face – e.g. InfoDev developed interactive ICT regulation toolkit, where users can post feedback (InfoDev – RCI) Joint priority setting with target countries (Infodev – RCI) ICT4D emphasise the social aspects of communication – organising workshops, capacity development, etc. (ICT4D – RCI)
Social influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific advice to policy makers and donors to strengthen the capacity of users to demand and use research: Significant or occasionally used method for 12 of 16 programmes (RCS) The edutainment model (Makutano Junction) is in a way an example of social influence, as characters on TV are often seen as role models by the audience. The model is used indirectly for advocacy, by raising awareness among decision makers about issues perceived

Mechanism	Examples
	<p>to be important by the audience (Makutano Junction – RCI)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A champion within an organisation is key to influencing and inducing change. AGRIS e.g. works with champions in the field of information management (RCI – AGRIS) • Role of journalists to challenge scientists (SjCOOP) • Use of 'infomediaries' (multipliers) to influence and induce change, but the challenge is sustainability of these positions (Practical Answers – RCI) • ICT4D partners contact policy makers directly by phone to share latest research findings with them (ICT4D – RCI) • The BBC WST engages directly with policy makers, using its high profile and credibility (RCI)
Facilitation and capacity development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (a) Training courses and training events, (b) workshops and conferences, (c) mentoring of key individuals to strengthen the capacity of users to demand and use research: Significant method for (a and b) 11, and (c) 7 of 16 programmes (RCS) • Providing training / capacity development for researchers to encourage them to contribute to programmes: Used always by 3, often by 5, and sometimes by 5 out of 16 programmes (RCS) • Working with research organisations to support the development of their communication strategies (RCS) • Through capacity development work, networking, and reflection and learning, seeking to improve the environment for information sharing and use, which is assisting the work of other intermediaries, and encouraging more evidence-based policy and practice, which will indirectly benefit end users (RCS) • Strengthening demand for journalistic coverage from the scientists by increasing the quality of reporting by the journalists and the media (RCS) • Working on information literacy - especially with RPC partners – to increase the demand for research, and the ability to make use it (RCS) • Development of open access training materials on access, use and management of research information, use of train-the-trainer methodology in all workshops (RCS) • Influencing organisational / institutional culture by promoting evidence as a good basis for decision making. This is done by emphasising the quality and reliability of the information provided (SciDev.Net – RCI) • Emphasis on decentralised, regional agenda with regionally identified priorities, linked to capacity development. Regionalisation enables better targeting. (GDNet – RCI). Similarly, PANOS works in a decentralised way, supporting multi-stakeholder platforms at country level. • Similarly, Practical Answers emphasises the importance of contextualised knowledge, at country or even local level, and then support users groups and communities of practice. Challenge is to mobilise resources for this (Practical Answers – RCI)
Incentives and reinforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledging research generators in communication products to encourage researchers to contribute to programmes: Used always or nearly always by 9 out of 16 programmes (RCS) • Featuring research generator web sites on research communication programmes web sites to encourage researchers to contribute to programmes: Used sometimes by 8, often by 1 and always by 2 out of 16 programmes (RCS) • Making it a reporting requirement for RPCs to generate at least 2 news stories and one case study each year to the programme - this is not currently policed or encouraged adequately although RPCs are repeatedly told of the requirements (RCS) • Organising international competitions and proposing names of journalists who could be invited to conferences, workshops and seminars disseminating research (RCS) • Small grants for new and innovative project work (RCS)

Because of the different objectives, target groups, sectors and impact pathways of the 17 programmes, it is difficult to identify generic good practices that are likely to be applicable across all programmes. The main lessons appear to be the following:

Dissemination: A number of different practices for the dissemination of research findings are used by the programmes – using different media, delivery mechanisms and formats. Further details are provided in the section on communication of research.

Interaction: Acknowledging the role of social interactions and personal relationships in processing and using evidence, some programmes have actively supported platforms that bring together different stakeholder groups, both as one-off events (workshops, conferences, training events) or through longer-term platforms and fora (pairing up researchers and policy makers, communities of practice, multi-stakeholder platforms etc.). However, such interactions can be relatively costly and some programmes are therefore reluctant to invest programme funding in such activities. There are also concerns over the sustainability of such externally driven initiatives. A useful route appears to be linking research communication to existing policy or user fora, other than creating new platforms. Some programmes are using web based interactive networking, but these are obviously limited to web users. The importance of interactions cannot be overemphasised – already the Dodsworth report noted:

"Opportunities emerge when chance encounters between individuals struggling with the same issue from different perspectives are together able to solve big puzzles. The challenge is to cultivate such encounters, making them happen routinely rather than by chance. Networks that bring together different stakeholders around common concerns and thematic issues show signs of sustained dialogue and increase chances of research uptake. At the same time, informal networks and peer groups are very important in establishing and reinforcing certain assumptions or ways of thinking and in feeding in (or locking out) new ideas."

Box 8 Linking researchers and practitioners – some suggestions

First, the local research activities themselves are often too weak to achieve significant impacts and there still remains a huge gap in linking researchers and practitioners in ways that makes it easy to adapt research into practical ways of using the knowledge / information. I don't think this occurs through workshops very often, it happens even less through publications (web or print), and it doesn't happen when researchers use 'applied' research methods in isolation for 'real life' development initiatives.

What is needed to get 'research into practice' is more effective linkages between researchers and practitioners, but this can't be led by researchers, or the process is just too supply driven. The real challenge is making the process demand driven - and a major obstacle to this is that practitioners often feel just too busy with their 'day job' and this sort of collaboration looks like just an extra burden.

Sources: RUS

Social influence: This mechanism does not appear to be used extensively by the CPs. Many of them might have too large a constituency to engage with influential experts and peers to the extent required for this approach to be effective. However, some programme strategically use influential intermediaries, such as

the info-mediaries of Practical Answers, the champions of Fostering Trust, and journalists by SjCOOP and others.

Facilitation and capacity development: Most programmes engage to some extent in providing technical, organisational, financial and other support to enable the use of research, often in the form of training of users and intermediaries. However, there are also less direct means of influencing the institutional environment, e.g. by using a decentralised or localised approach that is tailored to the requirements of a particular location or target groups.

Incentives and reinforcement: These are used primarily to induce research generators to communicate their findings, and can overlap with the previous category (capacity development, e.g. by funding the attendance of workshops and conferences). There are hardly any examples of reinforcement, as most programme partners operate on a voluntary basis and there is little or no direct influence that programmes can exert on them. Tying continuing funding to sharing of findings is a possible instrument, which does not appear to be exploited fully.

5.2.4 South-South collaboration in research communication

Three main dimensions of South-South collaboration can be distinguished in the programme portfolio:

1. Sourcing research information from Southern researchers and linking up these researchers through web portals or learning events
2. Linking research intermediaries and other stakeholders from different countries / regions through networks, workshops, learning events etc.
3. Linking researchers, users, intermediaries and other stakeholders in the same country / region through country-level multi-stakeholder platforms and events etc.

Below examples for each of these dimensions are provided. While there are clearly many good practices used by the CPs reviewed, there appears to be very little exchange between programmes on effective and efficient support mechanisms for South-South learning.

Sourcing research information in the South and linking Southern researchers

In the portfolio as a whole, a few research communication programmes are using Southern research fairly extensively, while others are using it very little. Six out of seven CPs state that over 75% of the research used by the programme is generated in the South, 3 have less than 25%, 3 less than 50 %, and a further two less than 75%. Three either did not know or skipped the question (RCS Q13).

There needs to further exploration of why such research is not being used more and encouragement from DFID for programmes to actively seek Southern research where possible and support for Southern researchers to promote their work more widely (see section 5.4 on 'Supporting researchers to communicate').

Linking research intermediaries across countries

The research communication programme portfolio includes a number of mechanisms for facilitating exchanges between Southern intermediaries located in

different countries or regions, often involving other stakeholders as well. These range from organising meetings and trainings, to developing and mentoring networks of stakeholders. Networks are very powerful tools, in particular if they are self-sustained through interests of users and support from other donors, rather than being initiated by or linked to a particular communication programmes. Some examples are provided below from ICT4D – see also section 5.3.12.

Box 9 South-South learning through research-policy networks

ICT4D which facilitates shared learning between countries by supporting networks of researchers working on telecommunications ('Learn Asia' and 'Research ICT Africa Network'), where members use each others' research.

'Learn Asia' tries to create conversations for researcher users, enabling them to express their needs. This is done through a yearly conference, whereby researchers working on telecommunications present their research to policy makers. The aim is to ensure that research is designed to be of use for policy makers, and relevant findings are communicated quickly to these uses (e.g. by researchers or intermediaries directly contacting policy makers by telephone when a relevant finding comes up).

The 'Research ICT Africa Network' carries out annual reviews of the policy environment. It involves working sessions with policy makers (including governments). In some countries these are open, in others they are closed because they want to achieve a level of trust. Records of all the se interactions are kept. The networks are across the region and results are published, to fulfil the role of a global watchdog.

Another example from ICT4D is the development of the Centre for Policy Review South (CPR), which brings together researchers and policy makers.

Source: ICT4D interview

Most networks have a technical focus around particular themes, topics or disciplines. An example is the IDS / SLI initiated IK Mediarly Network (see Box 10). It includes both Northern and Southern organisations, which has advantages and disadvantages. While one CP argued that Southern researchers might have more to gain by linking with Northern researchers than with other Southern researchers, there might be a risk of side-lining Southern ideas and initiatives in a mixed forum, if that forum is dominated by Northern members.

Box 10 The I-K-Mediary Group – linking intermediaries in ICT for development

The I-K-Mediary Working Group is an emerging global network of organisations that play a knowledge and information intermediary role in development. These organisations all aim to increase access to and use of research in development contexts by providing portals, gateways or reporting services. The I-K-Mediary Group aims to enhance and enable the positive impacts of information and knowledge intermediary work by:

- increasing the effectiveness of I-K-Mediary Group members
- creating a more enabling environment for their work.

Its vision is a world where stakeholders in policy and practice processes are willing and able to utilise research based information in their work for development and social justice. The group aims to enable the members to:

- Learn and innovate together
- Support professional development within the sector
- Collaborate with each other to maximise their efficiency
- Build greater understanding of the role of knowledge and information intermediaries

- Advocate for the value of information and knowledge in development processes
- Develop capacity of other key stakeholders in the information environment

The network is currently made up individuals from 18 organisations that host around 22 intermediary services. Members come from research institutes, networks, government and international organisations in Asia, Africa, Europe, and Oceania.

Source: Adapted from <http://www.ids.ac.uk/go/ikmediary-group>

Another example of South-South learning around a particular theme is the peer review mechanism of SjCOOP. Both mentors and mentees from different developing countries worked together, meeting at conferences and workshops, to supplement the one-to-one mentoring support from the programme.

Similarly, the programme 'Fostering Trust and Transparency in Government' brings together archiving professionals from different countries and continents, and enables exchanges on good practice.

In some cases a regional approach has been used, to build on common interests in a particular region, which can then be better served by targeted research. Programmes using a regional approach include GDNet, InfoDEV and to some extent Practical Answers.

GDNet has eleven network partners in eleven regions, and regional hubs are the fulcrum around which South-South collaboration is promoted. When activities that GDnet undertakes are deemed to be outside the remit of a specific GDN partner, a loose partnership is developed to carry out that specific activity. In that sense GDnet could collaborate with a south-based, DFID supported organisation, especially if such collaboration is aimed at enhancing greater learning and sharing among southern organisations.

Practical Answers operates through the seven Practical Action country offices and facilitates exchange between country offices to some extent, but budget limitations restrict the scope of exchange. Face-to-face events are costly and time consuming to organise, but are often considered the most effective way of learning and exchange. InfoDEV supports several regional networks, which share best practices. The InfoDEV-organised Global Forum (in 2004, 2006 and 2009) brings together incubation operations from over 70 countries. They also operate a global capacity building initiative that carries out training within and between developing countries, rather than bringing trainees to the USA or Europe.

Linking researchers, intermediaries and users at country level

Some programmes facilitate dialogue at country level, or are planning to do this. Panos RELAY is planning to create opportunities for in-country dialogue with DFID country offices around research agendas and build links to policy units. In some cases, global or thematic networks support country-level activities – for example the I-K-Mediary group is supporting DNet (Development Research Network) in Bangladesh, whereby users can send a question to a researcher by SMS and receive an answer.

5.2.4.1 Support required to enhance South-South learning

During interviews, CPs made a number of suggestions for ways of further supporting South-South learning. These include:

- DFID country offices facilitating exchange between intermediaries and research users (in particular donors and policy makers) at country level – this is supportive of the recommendation to “Strengthen DFID as a user of research and as an international champion of research into use” (see Section 7.3.2);
- Having clarity about the benefits and contributions of South-South collaboration – what role it plays in the overall picture, where it can make most contributions;
- Reflecting on constraints to sharing research, by bringing together donors and heads of research organisations to reflect on the experience from pilot studies (done by AGRIS in Ghana and Kenya), with an aim of overcoming these constraints.

5.2.5 Key researchable themes related to the enabling environment

Using Northern evidence on the use of research in development There is a large body of literature exploring the use of evidence by practitioners and policy makers in the North (see the Research Unit for Research Use (RURU) – www.ruru.ac.uk), but very little of this appears to filter through to development research. It would be useful to explore to what extent the findings from research use in the North can provide new and relevant insights for research communication in the South.

Understanding the processes leading to research uptake and use Related to this, the understanding of the programmes about the processes leading to research uptake and use appear to be patchy. Some programmes are keen to explore this further (e.g. PERii thinks that this is a key area that DFID should invest in; SjCOOP WFSJ is starting to look at the way media influences policy makers; CommGap is starting to look at a cohort of users to track how they use information), and it would be useful to support these programmes in doing this.

Exploring how research information is used In terms of impact, some interesting findings emerged from the RUS, when asking users the purpose for which they use research information. In our limited sample of 40 users, the dominant use seems to be to address a specific problem, followed by general awareness / background knowledge (RUS Q5). It would be useful to explore what other evidence there is for the way research information is used, and how this can inform the focus of future programmes.

5.2.6 Key emerging issues related to the enabling environment

A key decision for DFID is to decide the extent to which DFID Research (and in particular the Research Uptake Team) should play a role in understanding and influencing the enabling environment. This is a potentially a significant and long term investment – in particular if the focus is on longer term attitudinal changes, building of platforms and fora, influencing the political environment. The balance of the current emphasis on dissemination as compared to interaction and facilitation needs to be reviewed.

If the big challenge in research communication is the networking / interaction aspect bringing together researchers, communicators and users, a clearer separation between dissemination of research (often done globally), and support to uptake and use (nationally and locally) may be useful. Those programmes that

are mainly 'push' (R4D, AGRIS, some others) may need to be better harmonised (codes of practice, principles of operation), networked or indeed amalgamated including with other initiatives whether DFID and non DFID funded. This might be into a limited number of mega-sites which offer the full subject range in a high quality fashion, provide excellent search facilities, regular updates, etc. and then invest in targeted programmes including the regional and country initiatives working in much closer contact with existing networks and organisations.

Multi-stakeholder networking DFID needs to explore how research communication programmes can link more effectively with other organisations to build platforms, coalitions and fora for multi-stakeholder interactions, and how existing platforms and fora can be used more systematically and effectively. There is some good practice to build on. Example are e.g. the regional economic communities in Africa and their respective thematic working groups, country level sector platforms (agricultural working group etc.), other DFID convened working groups at country, regional and international level, etc. Practical Answers is thinking of initiating e.g. aid worker networks.

Understand and demonstrate impact There is a critical need to understand and demonstrate impact however it may not be practical or cost effective to look at each (sometimes small) programme separately. Such work may better be undertaken working with users and asking them how they make informed decisions, what information they use, etc thus generating guidelines and benchmarking for individual programmes. This would be a much larger scale than this study.

Understanding the most effective way of supporting South-South learning While there is some evidence that South-South learning has positive effects on organisational performance and impact on stakeholders, it is not well understood what type of support are required for what type of exchange. While one could argue that such exchange and learning is good by definition and worthwhile supporting, a better understanding of the most suitable mechanisms and instruments to address particular needs and solve specific types of problems would help using resources more efficiently. Working with and building on existing networks appears a promising and more sustainable solution.

5.3 Communication of research

5.3.1 Communication: the key to the relationship between research, policy and practice

This review has research uptake and use as its main focus, and the whole area of the communication of research therefore lies at the heart of this study. The main questions that arise are about who the research is being communicated to: what are the best ways of communicating to these audiences; how they are using the research; and how this then actually changes the lives of poor people.

There are a number of studies showing that an effective relationship between research, policy and practice is not linear. Research may be communicated through a range of audiences in such a way that it can influence policy, or at least shape the policy discourse, and development practice. In this review, we have found that communication in both directions is key to each stage in the relationship between research, policy and practice. Research influences policy which then influences practice – which may itself change policy – and the learning from practice can then ideally influence further research, which communicates itself to policy once again.

5.3.2 The role of intermediaries in relation to research

75% of the DFID funded research communication programmes see themselves as intermediaries in that they process research findings. The main perceived challenge in synthesising / repackaging research findings relates to researchers' attitudes and skills. These include the lack of awareness of the value of communication; weak incentives for researchers to process and share research findings; and a lack of professional trust between research generators and research communication programmes for the processing of research findings (RCS Q17).

These results would support the argument about the importance of incentivisation and the institutional context in which the communication of research takes place. A number of respondents noted that they thought researchers need to be shown the value of communication. One respondent noted that *"there is a lack of clarity in the role of intermediaries and a lack of understanding about what they can offer the researchers and research organisations to help interpret and disseminate their research effectively. If researchers worked more effectively with intermediaries they would not have to do it all – they could continue to publish in journals and could use others to communicate in different ways... There is still the fundamental barrier that researchers put together their findings in particular ways and formats and these are only really useful for the academic community. To interest policy makers this material has to be re-packaged. This really cannot be changed but what it means is that the "re-packagers" need to be involved and chosen on the basis of the target audience you wish to reach and there has to be awareness and support for this to happen."* (MK4D)

From the interviews with research generators however, it is clear that they feel the responsibility does not lie just on their shoulders. They believe there is a need for both sides to do business differently. It is also part of the function of the intermediaries to work with researchers, to build a dialogue and a relationship of trust and mutual understanding. This is not easy. As one researcher noted, *from the point of view of public sector researchers, communicators are not seen as 'a professional group; [they are] not respected in the public sector and trained*

enough. Communicators are recognized in the private sector as having important skills, but this does not seem to be the case in the public sector and in the wider development community. They are largely seen as one-way postmen, delivering information from one person to another, but they should be two-way postmen, delivering back. The role of the intermediary is under-funded and undervalued.'

On the other hand, researchers may mistrust intermediaries and worry that their work may be misunderstood or distorted. One research generator noted *"I am generally suspicious of summarising research by those that do not understand the field"*.

Intermediaries also need to have a dialogue with the audiences that they are targeting, whether face to face or through the materials they are sending. At present with the current programmes, this dialogue is somewhat weak. It is strongest where the intermediaries are dealing with other sectoral intermediaries such as the media or NGOs. As one research generator noted *"Local NGOs as intermediaries are important – they are useful in getting knowledge out to the grassroots. They're often good and motivated people here who can often access both the press and the President"*. Another said *"Media has a strong role in bridging the gap between researchers and end-users."* The dialogue is weakest where materials are just being sent to a list of people who may or may not read the information, let alone act on it.

5.3.3 Reaching different audiences

There does seem to be a general understanding among the programmes in this review that audiences need to be segmented for the purpose of effective communication; that you cannot approach a journalist in the same way and with the same materials as a policy maker. The MK4D programme, which encompasses a wide range of communication services, noted that in terms of audiences: *"Our individual services have their own specific target audiences for the services as a whole, as well as for individual products or components in some cases (such as a BRIDGE cutting edge pack or an Eldis subject guide). We are working to refine our targeting approach, so we can increase our influence."*

This review attempted to analyse the relative priorities for the different programmes in terms of target audiences for their research programmes. This was done both through the questionnaire to programmes and the document reviews. However, the results only gave a broad indication of priorities as most respondents indicated high priority for a large number of target audiences, especially in the South. This would seem to indicate that research communication programmes find it difficult to prioritise target audiences (see Figure 12 and Figure 13). All target audiences in the South, apart from children and youth, were selected by more than five programmes, again indicating that programmes were not able to prioritise who they wanted to reach. Possibly some programmes also feel under pressure to demonstrate the widest possible impact, which might result in a reluctance to focus on a particular user segment. This has implications for communication in the sense that this is the first step in the communication process – if you are not producing materials aimed at a specific audience, then they are less likely to have an impact; a government minister in Uganda, for example, is not going to read a long document more suited to an academic in a university.

This section continues with a brief look at the communication of research to three different audiences: journalists and the media, policy makers, and end users.

5.3.4 Journalists and the media

The media, in its various forms both North and South, is seen by some programmes as a major channel for reaching a wider audience, from policy makers to end users such as farmers and rural people. Makutano Junction uses ideas from research to feed into television programmes and believes that: *"The TV programme effectively reaches non-literates, rural as well as urban, women and men"* and that *"TV is one of the best routes to reaching diverse audiences."*

Box 11 The relationship between researchers and Makutano Junction – how working together makes a difference
<p>The programme content comes mainly from dialogue with the research partners and other information providers. At an initial meeting, the researchers suggest an issue which they are keen for the series to feature. At a second meeting, the researchers brainstorm with the writing team. Issues are allocated to specific episodes and writers. When the writer has a script ready the storyline is shared with the researchers who then give their feedback. Researchers' comments are then incorporated into the final script.</p> <p>The collaboration between the production team and the research partners works extremely well. At the start of the process, researchers have little idea about how to make their subject area televisual but by the end of the process an episode of Makutano Junction successfully encapsulates their work. Through this collaborative way of working, Makutano Junction allows researchers with their expert knowledge to influence the agenda for the series.</p> <p>All the researchers interviewed acknowledge that their involvement with Makutano Junction had enabled their research findings to be disseminated to a much larger audience than would otherwise be the case. It appears that there is no shortage of storylines – and there is a real appetite amongst researchers to collaborate with Makutano Junction. At last year's conference for researchers, a number of new issues and storylines came up which will now feature in series 7 and 8. There are still many more issues which could be featured in future series.</p> <p>Source: Makutano Junction Mid-term Review, October 2008</p>

Ensuring take up means looking at the demand side as well as the supply side: *"Both journalists and researchers need to understand the policy environment. This would ensure that demand for debate is strengthened"* (RELAY). It is important to *'Create a supply and demand, also to work with researchers to be able to communicate their research and to bring about an understanding of the constraints within which journalists work'*. RELAY does this through ice-breaker workshops, study tours and exchange visits – building trust and brokering relationships between researchers and journalists. The programme has also begun to look at using the media to scrutinize demand from end users, and supporting debates on the ground about what kind of research is really needed.

5.3.5 Policy makers

The RAPID framework, developed by ODI, has tracked the way that research translates into policy (see Figure 24 for a diagramme showing the main elements of the framework). For example: *"although research may not have direct influence on specific policies, the production of research may still exert a powerful indirect influence through introducing new terms and shaping the policy discourse"* (Lindquist, 2003).

RAPID bases its work on the communication of research on the principles that:

- One-way transferral of information ('broadcasting') is only effective in certain situations; at other times, strategies of response, dialogue, and willingness to accept mutual change will improve communication and influencing;
- The more technical aspect of communication is important. Simple tools such as using visual aids and presenting information in the form of stories can have a large impact.
- However, communication is not only a practical exercise, to be added on at the end of a project. It is equally important to focus on the conditions under which communication occurs, and the systemic aspects of the communication process. Unless these are taken into account, communication efforts might have no impact on policy at all.

While 13 out of the 17 programmes analysed see their main impact pathway as informing decision makers to achieve more appropriate policy processes (RCS Q21), none of the programmes have clearly identified the processes necessary to support decision makers in analysing, reflecting on and using the evidence provided by the programme. Some programmes appear to be concerned about the risk to be perceived to attempt to influence policy, and prefer to play a more passive role as information providers: *"A need to shape policy debate and inform policy – rather than influence policy – has emerged. It is in this context that the thematic packaging of content is increasingly relevant... (our) aim however is to inform policy debate rather than impact on policy in any predetermined way."* (Source: Research communication programme interviews).

A number of respondents in this review commented on how research can translate into policy debate, if not into actual policy. There is recognition that there are a number of ways to change policy and few of these are direct. One respondent noted that: *'This lack of understanding of the research to policy trajectory is, I believe, is the main challenge to communicating research findings.'*

Another noted within the RUS questionnaire: *"As former parliamentary with a considerable interest in agriculture in developing countries. ...With so much research around it is critical for a user like me to zero into the right piece of research at the right time and find its content presented in a user friendly way. Given the numbers involved and the usefulness of word of mouth validation/recommendation, ranking research products through user response and making it available to the communities of practice and users would be a very useful tool."*

However, most research is not generated with a policy objective in mind. One research generator noted in an interview: *"most of the research done is not designed to have a development impact in the first place...90% of science doesn't have an impact and it's not because farmers don't read the internet, it's because the research is not designed with the end user in mind in the first place."*

This being the case, it is the role of the research communications' practitioners to identify research that is timely and appropriate, and package it for the appropriate audiences. If these are policy makers, the material needs to be short and to the point. Often the communicators will also need to have built a prior relationship with particular policymakers. Another research generator noted that: *"Real policy communication has to be long term, nuanced and differentiated."*

He also stressed that the same message has to be communicated over and over again and often the target audience don't want to hear the advice given. *"Aid organisations and developing country governments sometimes view our findings as inconvenient"*.

Box 12 Research and the role of the media at times of political crisis – the case of Kenya

On January 22, 2008, as the violence following Kenya's disputed elections reached its height, international reports carried on the BBC and elsewhere revealed that Kenyan local language radio stations were being accused of inflammatory coverage and fuelling violence. A decision was made to investigate this issue and to research and publish a briefing for policy makers on it in order to determine the truth about the role of the media in the crisis, and identify clear policy relevant conclusions.

The situation was extremely fast moving and a research window to gain candid and accurate reflections from media and other actors in the country was small. A rapid research response was considered critical.

A Kenya-Somali national BBC World Service Trust research officer worked with the team to:

- conduct 20 – 25 detailed semi structured interviews with key media, civil society and policy relevant figures.
- review as much media content and media monitoring materials from both print and, especially, vernacular radio coverage, as possible.
- produce the policy briefing which was published in early April 2008.

Examples of how the research was communicated and what happened as a result include:

- The BBC World Service Trust organized a meeting in Nairobi for the governance advisers of around 18 donors and multilateral organizations. Donors concluded that this issue was of increasing significance and donor strategies published since have place priority on media
- The report was well received in Kenya (especially by media, academics and civil society organizations) and has been highlighted in formal government reviews of the media (the government response has since proved contentious).
- A speech of the Minister of Information delivered at a follow up workshop on community media committed the Ministry to supporting the sector more in the future.

Increase in demand within DFID for further analysis of the role of media in elections. The Trust has since established a new Advisory and Response Facility on the role of media in elections. Requests for initial analysis have been received from governance or conflict advisers in Malawi, Zimbabwe, Guinea, Ghana, Yemen and Cote d'Ivoire.

Source: BBC World Service Trust Policy and Research Programme

5.3.6 Reaching end users – research into practice

This aspect of the communication of research is key to completing the circle of research - policy - practice.

Most of the programmes in this study (13 out of 17) said that the main route through which their programme impacts on end users was 'Indirectly through better informed decision makers and more appropriate policy processes (e.g. policy briefs and workshops targeting national centres of excellence and civil society groups). The next most popular route (9) was: Indirectly to households / communities / the poor via intermediaries or practitioners, who process the information for end users'. Only five programmes said their main route was 'Directly to households /communities / the poor (e.g. TV soap opera on HIV/AIDS). (RCS Q21)

Given the importance of what might be called secondary level intermediaries, it would seem important to know how the media, NGOs and policymakers use the research and what impact this then has on development practice. This study

revealed however that often this was not known and indeed that few programmes had the ability to access this information and then to show its impact on poverty. Makutano Junction is one programme which does clearly map these links; perhaps because it has a direct link both with researchers and with end users; it is both a primary and a secondary intermediary and its purpose is to *"enhance poor people's livelihoods through access to, and use of, research information through an educational television drama"*. It knows from audience research that *"the issues covered by the show have a strong impact on its target audience"*. Makutano Junction is unusual here in that it has a distinctive focus on the Millennium Development Goals as can be seen in Table 14.

Table 14 Makutano Junction's focus on the Millennium Development Goals		
MDG Goal	MDG Goal	Focus of message
1	Eradicate Extreme Poverty and hunger	Agriculture, seed soaking, maize crop, pest management, Economic activities: pyramid/ revolving savings & credit, livestock: donkey, milk trade, silage preparation Social issues: mental illness,
2	Achieve Universal Primary Education	School committees/parents' rights, infrastructure, quality education, teaching storylines (maths, reading skills)
3	Promote Gender equality and Empower of women	Girl child education, promotion of child education, girl child hygiene, leadership, FGM, sexual & reproductive rights
4	Reduce Child Mortality	Malaria prevention & treatment, clean water, support to orphans, paraffin poisoning
5	Improve Maternal Health	Vulnerability to malaria & prevention, fistula, health committees, delivery services – antenatal,
6	Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases	HIV/AIDS, prevention & care & counselling, health workers' HIV status, symptoms, treatment, mosquito nets,
7	Ensure Environmental Sustainability	Access to justice, environmental education, awareness, advocacy and land rights

In general, it would seem that across the portfolio there is a need both to continue to strengthen the capacity of users to demand and use research through workshops, training courses, mentoring and supporting networks (RCS Q26), but also a need to work with secondary intermediaries to ensure development impact. Too much research is produced with no specific target audience in mind and is put on a website in the hope that it will be picked up.

If changing practice and having an impact on poverty reduction is one of the main objectives of a research into policy and practice exercise, then the evidence of success remains anecdotal. As one research user noted *"In the end, DFID is funding research so that it can have an impact on poverty."* This is partly an issue of monitoring and evaluation as well – programmes need to have the right tools and processes in place so that they can track the use of evidence for policy making and into practice.

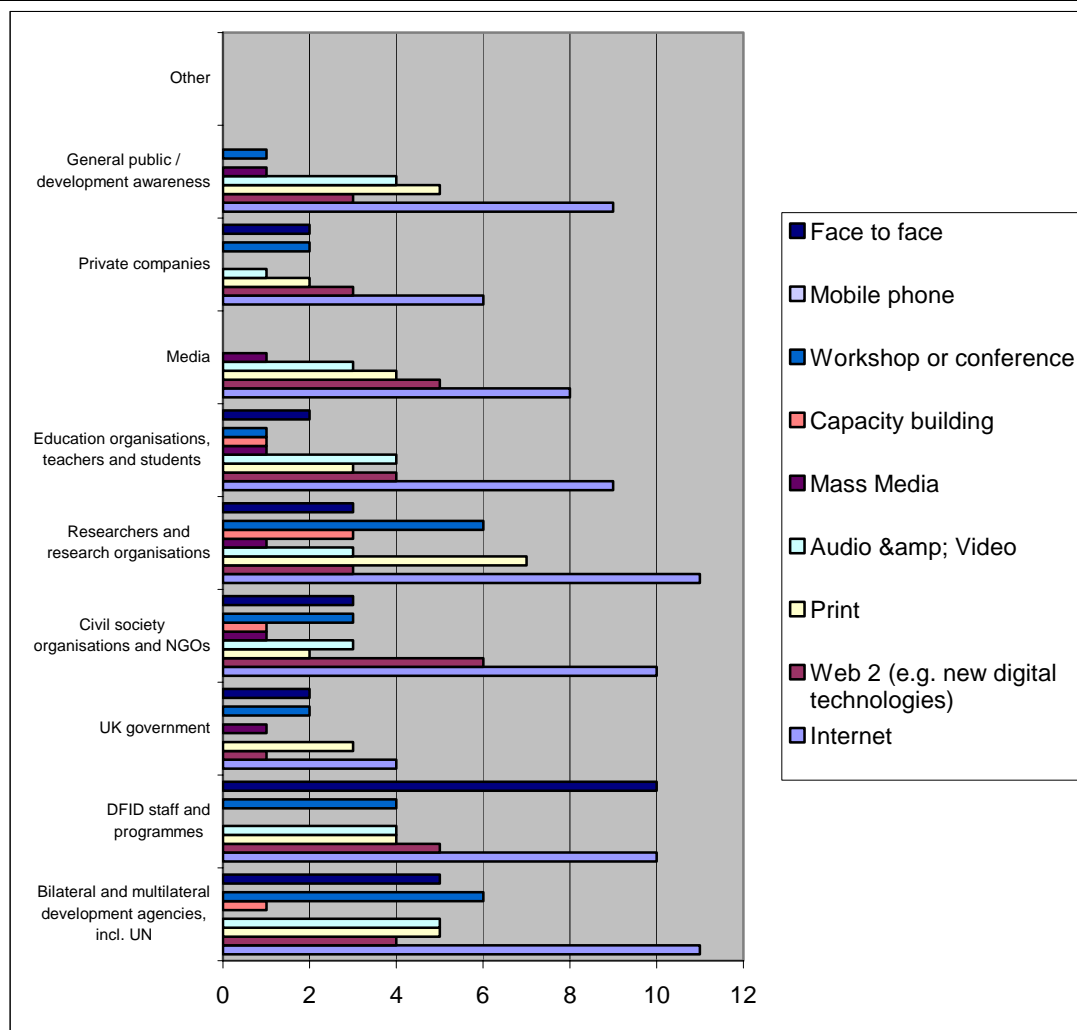
5.3.7 Delivery methods

This review examined the delivery methods used by programmes and research users according to target audience. Overall, for all target audiences, the internet

was seen as the most important delivery method by both programmes and research users. This obviously has implications for those who are not online. The second most important delivery method was print. Few used new technologies such as web 2. Face to face, although acknowledged as important in many of the interviews, was still given quite a low score in the questionnaires. Building platforms for dialogue is seen as key: *"We do an awful lot just by putting people in the same room..."* (PANOS Relay), and *"there has to be a genuine two-way exchange between knowledge users and knowledge providers. PA is looking at the possibility of community knowledge centres collaborating with each other."* (Practical Answers). In this context, mentoring in different forms was also raised by a number of respondents.

Most programmes were able to show that they felt different delivery methods were appropriate to different audiences. A questionnaire to programmes asked: "Which delivery method does your programme use for which audience?" For all target audiences in the developed world, the main delivery method for the majority of audiences was the internet, followed by print and web 2 technologies, then audio and video, workshops and conferences and face to face (RCS Q23).

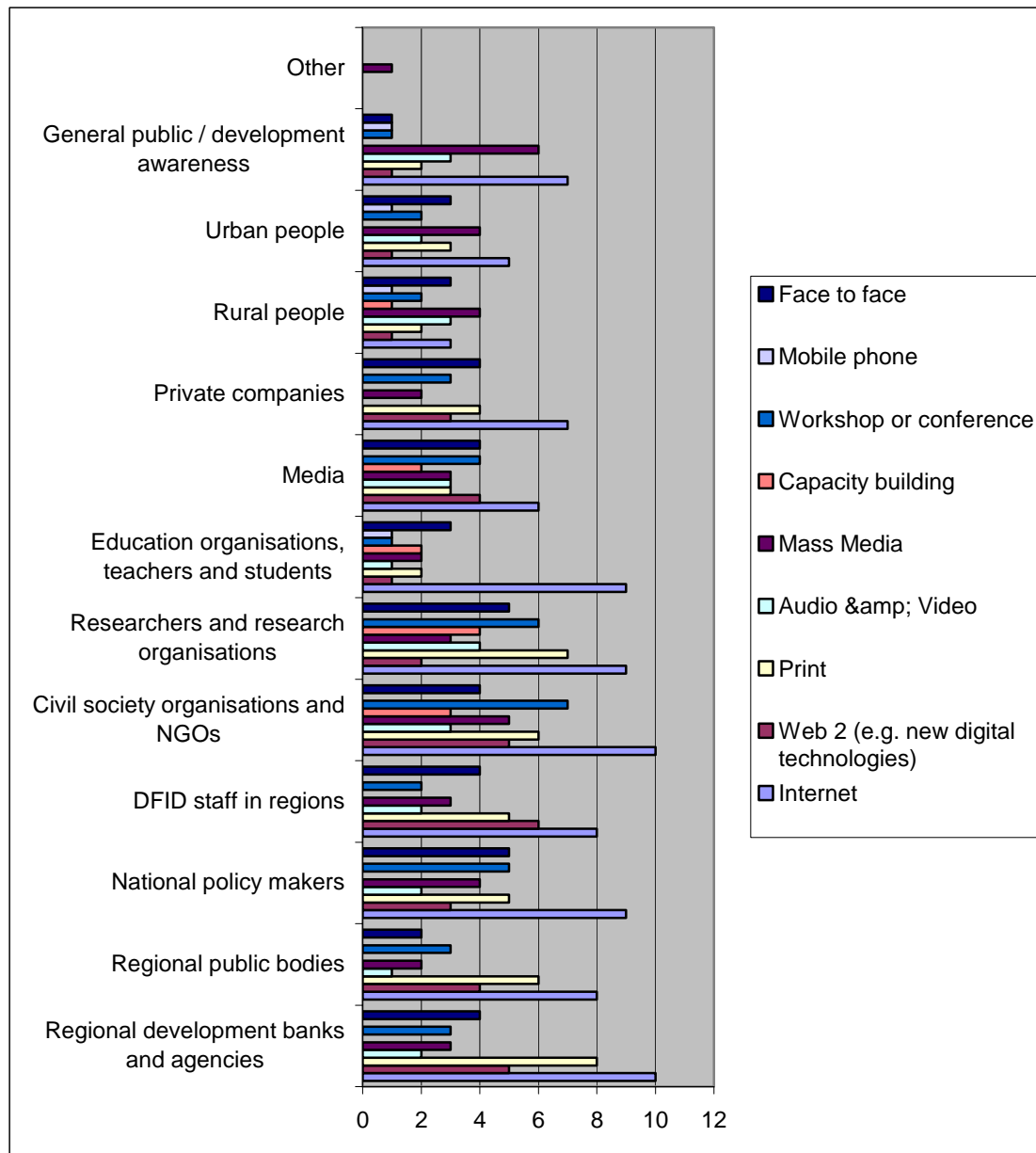
Figure 26 Delivery methods to target audiences in the developed world



Source: RCS

The internet was the main method of delivery methods used by programmes targeting users in developing countries as well, followed by print and mass media and face to face, then workshops and conferences (RCS Q24).

Figure 27 Delivery methods to target audiences in the developing world



Source: RCS

Research users were asked in the questionnaire to identify their main sources of research information sources and products (RUS Q3). The most important source was the internet, followed by print, workshops and conferences, and television and mass media. This alignment broadly indicates that the tools and methods used by the programmes are appropriate for the user.

Interestingly for the purpose of this study, research communication programmes/ research intermediaries came low down the list of 'used most often' and a little higher under 'used occasionally'. However given the high call for on-line

materials, it must be assumed that a significant portion of these are made available through research communication intermediaries (RUS Q3).

Box 13 ICT delivery of research communication: a summary of findings from the surveys

People wanting to find and use research say that they most often use ICT methods. According to the findings of the user survey undertaken as part of this study people are definitely using ICTs for finding research; it is a communication route that is rapidly growing in use (31/38 RUS Q3).

Users want more online journals and (downloadable) original research reports, and they also want more online syntheses of research: In response to the question 'Which research information and communication sources would you like to have more of the most popular sources chosen were 'online journals and original research reports' (chosen by 22 out of 39 respondents RUS Q10), followed by 'online syntheses of research findings from multiple sources' (chosen by 20 out of 39 respondents RUS Q10).

Researchers view print and face to face communication is most important delivery methods, but online communication is also important for some user groups – such as other researchers: The survey completed by research generators for this study showed that communication routes that are most significant are print, workshops, face to face communications and then internet routes for online distribution of research communication (RGS Q10).

The Internet is the main route for researchers to reach the general public: The survey showed that amongst researchers the internet was the main route to reach general public audiences; 23 out of 54 survey respondents said that they used the internet to reach general public however print and mass media also remains a priority (RGS Q10)

5.3.8 Barriers to the effective communication of research

Barriers to access by users include inadequate access to libraries and a lack aware of where relevant information can be sourced (RUS Q4). The former is particularly problematic in the South, where subscriptions to hard copies of journals are often prohibitively expensive and online access is limited.

For the programmes in the portfolio, the two most significant barriers were: 'Not available (e.g. not written up, not in the public domain) and 'Information has not been validated / lack of confidence in information' (RCS Q12).

Other issues that emerged from the interviews as barriers to the communication of research were governance, quality/trust, language and technology. The issue of governance is taken up in the section of enabling environment.

5.3.9 Technology

Technology was a constraint for some respondents based in the South. This applied particularly to the internet – in some cases, said one, because of bandwidth, it can take up to 2.5 hours to download a video from the web and comment were also made on the large size of documents in particular those with photographs. So although internet remains the main method of delivery and reception of research materials, this can often be problematic.

Few programmes or users said that they made substantial use of new digital technologies such as web 2. This is partly a question of resources: *"Making the*

right choices about where to put resources into new technologies is a big issue. We are convinced that we need to embrace new Web 2.0 technologies while not forgetting our core product and definitely not forgetting print which still remains very important. There are some fantastic opportunities offered by new technologies but this always means doing this and rather than doing this and not something else. It all means that we just keep on needing more and more resources rather than making difficult choices about what not to do" (MK4D)

But there is a sense that 'There is a challenge of getting information to where people want it – online routes are changing and a static website or portal is not necessarily the best route to reach people; rather Web 2.0 tools such as RSS feeds and search optimisation, social networking, use of video and audio are all important for the future. It is about 'social media' and few communication programmes are sufficiently engaging in this area.' (R4D)

A number of user respondents commented that the layout of some websites which aimed to provide research outputs was both badly organised and inaccessible notably R4D. Indeed some researchers whose material is on the R4D site said they had difficulty finding their own work on the site. The manner in which the search engines on service research communication programmes work calls for urgent attention.

5.3.10 Quality and language

Another challenge is that of quality. Users have shown that they want to be able to trust the organisations putting out the research; that they want to know that behind the policy briefs or short material they are getting there is a process of quality control and peer review. This gives organisations such as IDS or the Work Bank a real advantage: *"The IDS brand is a comparative advantage. By being part of IDS we get credibility on day one which really helps."* (MK4D)

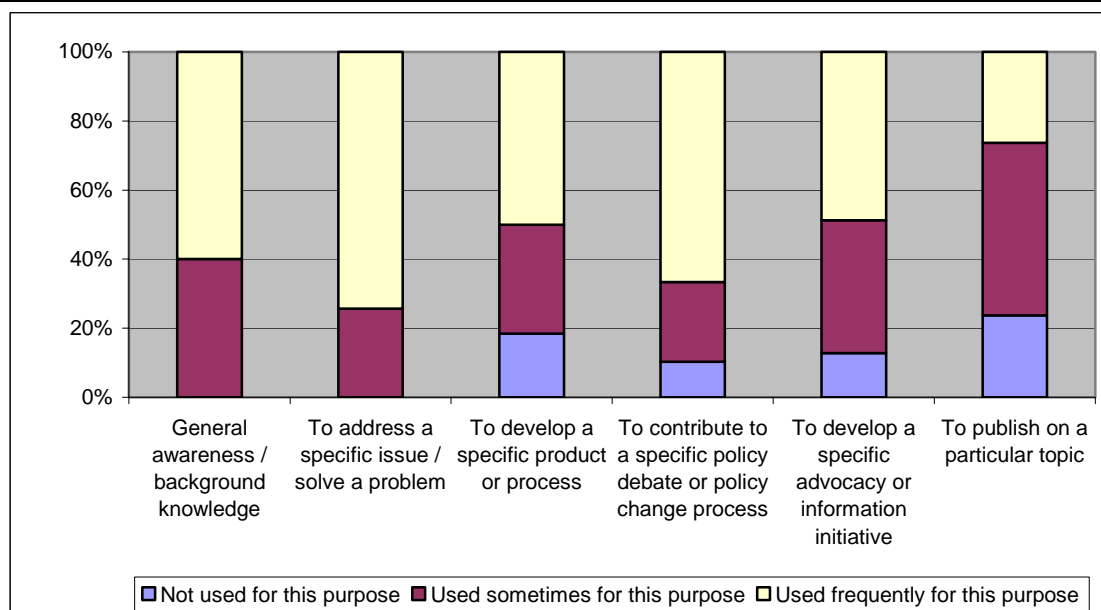
Language was raised as an issue in a number of the interviews with research communication programmes. Most of the research communication programmes are presenting in English. One respondent noted that: *'Language is the main barrier to scaling up and there is a case for adopting a multi-lingual approach to the production of materials. Another barrier is the terminology used in communicating to farmers. The key is communication but researchers are rarely competent in local languages and local conditions.'* (Practical Answers). The respondent noted that one way they had found around this was to work with local researchers, although they often had to work from English materials. He gave an example from Sudan, where there is a collaborative relationship with the universities offering a combination of scientific knowledge with local skills and knowledge. Materials are then produced locally and disseminated at the community level. For example, global bee-keeping skills are adapted to local conditions. To that extent, research is only one input into the production of materials.

Other respondents noted that they would like to produce materials in other languages but do not have the funding to do so. In the additional notes on the questionnaire one respondent noted: *"We are trying to do better on this but in most countries English is a second language and for most countries the language of policy is English so the question for us is do we spread ourselves too thinly by introducing languages or do we maintain quality by doing our English materials better."* Another suggested that: *"Research communication programmes should have their own translation facilities to help researchers to perform a good translation."*

5.3.11 Uptake: the use of research information

Research users were asked: For what purpose do you use research information? The following chart shows the numbers who said that the information was 'used frequently for this purpose'. 23% said that it was: 'to address a specific issue/solve a problem; 20% said: 'to contribute to a specific policy debate or policy, 19% 'general awareness/ background knowledge' and 15% 'to develop a specific policy or process.' Very few used it for publishing purposes.

Figure 28 Use of research information by user



Source: RUS

5.3.12 Lessons learnt and good practice in the communication of research

This study has shown a number of examples of good practice in the communication of research. However, many are anecdotal, and there does not appear to be any systematic collection, review and sharing of innovation and good practice.

Multiple approaches for effective uptake.

Effective uptake of research evidence requires multiple approaches and will differ by product and contexts. There is no one single line of approach. It was noted by one commentator in the context of policy influence is that *"it is about the way that people change their minds... real policy communication is long term, nuanced and differentiated. A message may be communicated over a long time and nothing changes but then the policy environment changes (elections etc) and things can take off."* Many commentators felt a general frustration that DFIDs support to research and communication leading to outcomes was too short term and prone to policy change which left both researchers and research communication programmes frustrated.

An example of the complexity of taking research evidence to policy change, how different research communication modes are necessary, and why timing matters, is given in Box 14.

Box 14 Pathways of Women's Empowerment: Reforming Egyptian family and personal status law

This RPC network has five research institutes, who are "hubs" for research and communications in their regions. One is the Social Research Centre at the American University in Cairo (Egypt) with partners in the Middle East. IDS provides both support to the 'global' policy space and coordinates the RPC.

The research work aims to impact on policy culminating in women-friendly legal reforms in relation to family law to be presented to parliament in Egypt before June 2009.

Barriers to change

- Pre-conceived ideas and flawed understanding of the religious establishment and the local media in relation to her topic (i.e. women's rights in marriage and divorce).
- Reaching ordinary young men and women in Egypt.

Strategy

Adopt different ways to reach the key interest groups women's rights organisations, policy makers and legislators who work on the new laws, media, religious scholars, the religious establishment, institutions that are concerned with the draft laws, and, ordinary men and women.

Action

- Write and disseminate evidence based publications
- Teach courses on the subject matter to provoke interest among students
- Prepare a major newspaper media supplement in Arabic
- Invite journalists to workshops to educate them about research findings
- Access universities and schools, using stories and written work accessible and interesting to them, not just newspaper articles, or workshop reports.
- Work with National Council for Women who have started a discussion about these new laws on Facebook.
- Take part in workshops run by women's rights organisations
- Make presentations to policy makers.

Source: Dr. Mulki Al-Sharmani Social Research Center - American University in Cairo 'Pathways of Women's Empowerment' www.pathwaysofempowerment.org

Delivery methods and new technologies

The results from this study on delivery methods have shown that the internet is the main way that research programmes deliver their information and that it is accessed by users (though end users and final beneficiaries i.e. rural and urban poor were not part of this study). Perhaps one delivery method online that had not been considered by most was newspaper websites, which reach important influencers. The WFSJ noted that: *"Young African journalists are using the websites - this is more of a generational thing. Five or six of our mentees have started their own blogs."* This is an area that might be worth investigating further.

There are some examples of mobile phones being used to communicate research to end users. New technology can support South-South peer learning - for example DNET in Bangladesh has a programme where you can text a question to a researcher from anywhere and get an answer. This kind of model could perhaps be shared more widely – one respondent noted: *"It would be good if we could create more of a demand for research by having a service where people*

could receive alerts on research available and in this way push people towards cyber cafes where they could follow up – this could increase demand."

Box 15 Reaching Journalists

- Relay PANOS had a range of successful strategies for reaching Southern journalists
- Create a supply and demand, also work with researchers to be able to communicate their research and to bring about an understanding of the constraints within which journalists work
 - Ice-breaker workshops, study tours and exchange visits – building trust and brokering relationships between researchers and journalists
 - Working Groups – bringing together multi-stakeholder platforms around communicating specific research issues (journalists, researchers, media and policy-makers) to create more strategic media debates that reach the 'right' audiences for this topic. For example, in Zambia, journalists, researchers, policymakers and CSOs looked at fish disease in western Zambia. Journalists need to be funded to do this and then the research community will put money in.
 - Editors forums – discussions around which important issues coming out of research communities they are missing, for example in Bangladesh we did a media scan to show editors what research stories they were missing around sex and reproductive health so that they could share findings and lobby.
 - Mentoring – linked journalists and researchers and took them to camps for internally displaced people.
 - Building modules on research communication into academic courses.

Source: PANOS document review

Facilitating end users to feed into research

One of the gaps that is emerging seems to be the feedback loop from users whether policy makers or practitioners and indeed end users back to researchers. A project from RELAY was one example of practice in this area. A media feature on child soldiers in Mozambique highlighted how research voices, concerned with psycho-social support, are out of step with voices on the ground, and that the media/journalism have played a role in highlighting this. (<http://www.panos.org.uk/?lid=19777>)

Supporting networks

A number of respondents in the interviews talked about being part of or supporting networks for the communication of research. Examples of this from ICT4D are given in Box 16.

Box 16 Examples of support to networks for research communication

Learn Asia and Research ICT Africa Network

ICT4D have supported the development of a network of researchers into telecoms - Learn Asia and Research ICT Africa Network. They use each other's research. They have also developed the Centre for Policy Review South. Learn Asia is an example of trying to create conversations for research users. There is a yearly conference for researchers to present their research on telecoms to policymakers. A lot of activity is focused on trying to ensure that the research is done for policy. Researchers are constantly engaging with the press or policy makers. As soon as they get a research finding they get it out into the press and make phone calls to policymakers.

The Research ICT Africa Network

There are also regular annual reviews of the policy environment – the Research ICT Africa Network approach involves working sessions with policy makers – in some countries these are open, in others they are closed because they want to achieve a level of trust. They keep records of all these interactions and also involve governments, for example in household studies. These networks are across the region – the last household surveys were done in 17 countries. The results are published– filling an information gap that can then result in action.

Source: ICT4D

Practical materials and toolkits

A number of research communication programmes have produced practical materials and toolkits to help with the communication of research. Some are given in Box 17.

Box 17 Practical materials and toolkits to help the communication of research

WRENmedia have developed a toolkit focussing on *tips of how to communicate and how communicate with media*, it is principally for use by agriculturalists and is on CD and on the internet.

RELAY have produced a media briefing *Reporting Research* to show journalists how to better understand and communicate research findings to create debate about important development issues that affect ordinary people.

PAN (ICT4D) have a document *Communicating for influence* (<http://communicating4influence.wordpress.com/>) that support theoretical and practical learning about communicating research for influence. It includes pre-workshop activities to prepare presenters, IDRC staff and project partners in a way to foster individual and collective learning and relationship building, and also includes post-workshop technical assistance and follow-up. Work is underway on editing a video that will be posted on YouTube.

SciDev.Net has created a substantial amount of material on its website relating to practical skills in research communication (see <http://www.scidev.net/en/science-communication/practical-guides/>).

Source: DR

Mentoring

A number of programmes talked about mentoring work that they were doing. The work of WFSJ is given in Box 18.

Box 18	SjCOOP: a mentoring scheme between journalists for better use of research
	<p>This model first identified good individuals to invest in. The innovation came particularly in bringing different groups of journalists together for example the French with African journalists, and the Americans with Arab journalists. The other innovative factor is the <i>in situ</i> training and involvement of the programme. The person concerned evolves in their own environment with their editors, colleagues and readers, recognising and utilising the person's new skills as they develop. SjCOOP help the journalists find outlets for freelancing, they help connect them at a national level and to provide some equipment.</p> <p>At the end of the project a number of the journalists came together independently to write cross border or trans-border stories on particular issues of interest. Young Africans want to be "Africans" and so this collaboration was seen as a positive development.</p> <p>The peer to peer element of the programme was good for building trust. Of the south to south articles generated, out of a sample of 200 articles analysed, 70% of the sources quoted were from local interviews. The mentee from Madagascar won several prizes and ended up teaching science journalism at the university. He is now the science journalist for Madagascar is often in discussion with Ministers. WFSJ observed the same situation in Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Rwanda and Senegal.</p> <p>Source: RC interviews</p>

5.3.13 Researchable issues around the communication of research

Better understanding of the user

Research is required into understanding what research end users want and what incentivises them to use the outputs of research. Not enough is known about secondary or even tertiary users. There could be a number of ways of finding out how research is taken up - learning through doing and undertaking a pilot study where direct impacts can be achieved whilst developing new ways of working is preferable to theoretical study.

Working with multiple layers of research intermediaries

Many of the DFID research communication programmes deliver to other intermediaries – the media, NGOs, etc. There is a need to know more about how these second level intermediaries work, their needs, and how they prioritise and position their choices and sourcing practices. How they position themselves effects the choices of what information enters the stream.

Capture, validate and share good and innovative practice

Identify innovative and good practice in research communication, validate and share with interest groups with a view to scaling up and out where applicable.

5.3.14 Key emerging issues and implications

Adding value within DFID investment

This study shows that DFID is supporting a wide range of types of research communication programmes each with their own *modus operandi* and indeed their own network of users and partners. There are no mechanisms in place for the individual programmes to add value to each other, to share lessons in a

systematic manner or indeed to avoid duplication of effort. There are no common codes of practice in work methods for example peer review or shared learning on training and teaching methods of for example the media.

Programme respondents were positive about the shared learning events they had attended with other DFID-funded programmes. Because there seems to be little contact between most of the programmes in the review, or indeed between other DFID funded research and these programmes, there is a need for DFID (or other parties) to facilitate more opportunities for the communication programmes to meet each other, e.g. the Science Writing event in November 2008.

Promotion of the research communication programme cluster to DFID and other parties

In terms of relationship between the research communication programmes and the DFID supported RPCs, DRCs and other DFID funded research whilst there are some excellent examples of strong linkages, the majority of the research communication programmes are largely unaware of or unconnected to the current DFID research portfolio.

Improved space for dialogue between researchers and research communication intermediaries

Building trust, confidence, value and respect between researchers and research communication intermediaries is a key challenge. On the research side, this needs to be met by educating researchers about the benefits of communicating their research beyond strictly 'career path' academic routes and incentivising them. One incentive route is to publicize and demonstrate that many parts of DFID want and use research information and outputs at both country and HQ levels. Another incentive - or 'push' factor is the 10% requirement of the RPCs and DRCs for focus on communication. The intermediaries need to work more with RPCs and DRCs, and with other DFID funded or co-funded research initiatives (e.g. CGIAR), demonstrating respect and a willingness to dialogue, and seeking means to help – where necessary - with the research communication. This can be aided where there is a communications person as part of a research team, which is the case with a number of DFID-funded programmes.

Strengthen regional and national research institutions and centres of excellence on research communication

Ways need to be found to work with the research institutes in the South to ensure that communication is on their agenda and that they are linked with national and or research communication intermediaries. There is a need to encourage a culture of sharing and provide support necessary to package the research in different formats. A number of regional centres of excellence exist and or are proposed to build capacity of researchers, media and other knowledge managers – these require support to enable capacity being to be guided by and undertaken in developing countries themselves.

Role of new technology

Technology is changing rapidly and this is likely to affect most of the research communication programmes in one way or another. This includes the potential

implications and impact of increasing the digital divide. Some research on how these changes will affect research communication and a sharing of learning between the programmes would be very useful.

Packaging of materials

Users were clear that they needed their materials packaged and shared proactively but not obsessively – i.e. not too often and selectively. They were also clear that material needed to be written clearly, accessibly and in an interesting way. This would seem to argue for the kind of repackaging that many of the programmes in the study were doing, but with more ruthless pruning and more selective targeting. In addition, a number of programmes are trying to work on translation into different languages and sharing and streamlining this facility would avoid duplication and ensure wider access.

Better targeting of audiences

Programmes in this survey recognised that while they were increasingly targeting specific audiences, they needed to do more work here. The questionnaire to research communication programmes showed clearly that there was not much differentiation between audiences, although research communication programmes understood that different audiences needed different delivery methods.

Users noted that they have little time and that there is too much material already; they don't know how to sort out material to work out what they need. What is clear is that the right information needs to be in the right place at the right time for the right people – and that this is not the case at the moment. Not enough information is going out efficiently and effectively.

Reaching end users and strengthening demand

This review has stressed the importance of showing that research outputs has an impact on policy, practice and on the delivery of development objectives. New mechanisms need to be found to ensure that end users can feed into the kinds of research that is being commissioned and or outputs/knowledge that are being shared to ensure that it is timely and relevant. There is also a need for DFID to familiarize potential users of research results with available channels of communication at country levels; especially in countries where DFID carries out considerable research activities.

While there are some research communication programmes who do deliver to end users, most see intermediary users (policy makers, donors, development practitioners) as their primary audiences and do not appear to have developed a full understanding of the intervention logic from making research findings available, to actual use of these findings in policy making and practice⁷. A much better understanding of how research is put to use is needed, including support to make this happen and the development of means to measure impact (see also section 5.5 on Knowledge Management and M&E).

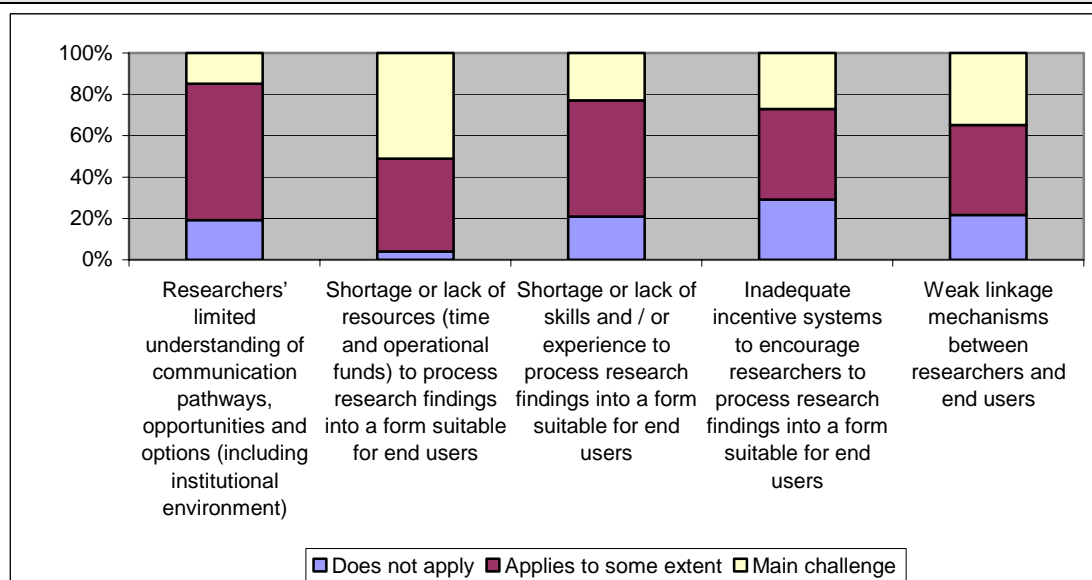
⁷ Research uptake and use in developed countries has for example been researched by RURU (the Research Unit for Research Utilisation at the Universities of Edinburgh and St Andrews), but the review did not find any evidence that this research is known to and used by the CPs.

5.4 Supporting researchers to communicate

5.4.1 The challenges faced by researchers to communicate

When researchers were asked “what were the main challenges in communicating research findings to research communication programmes?” (RGS Q11), a shortage of resources and an inadequate incentive system to encourage researchers to process information were ranked highly. When researchers were asked to rate what were the main challenges in communicating research findings to end users (RGS 12), key areas of concern were the lack of resources and weak linkages mechanisms between research and the user. For both communication programmes and end users, researchers felt that they lacked skills to process material into suitable formats (25 out of 54 for research communication programmes and 27 out of 54 for end users) (RGS Q11 and Q12).

Figure 29 Main challenges in communicating research findings to end users

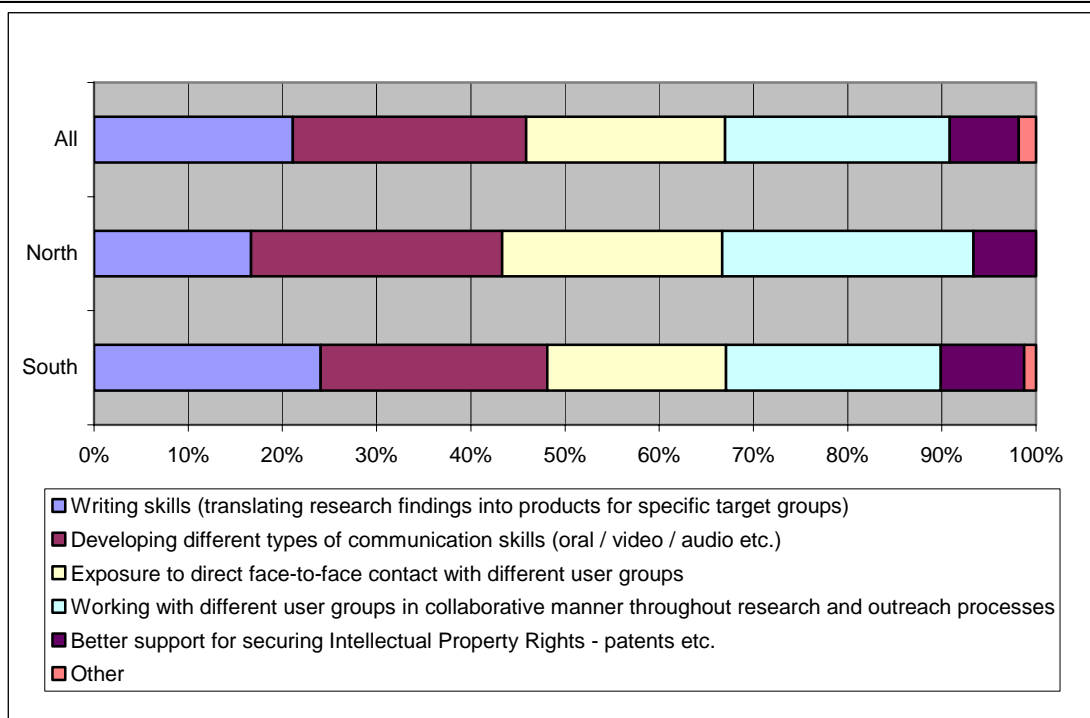


Source: RCS

Researchers identified a number of incentives or support that would encourage them to communicate their findings to intermediaries and or end users. Considered very useful by more than 40% of all respondents was funding to support workshops and conferences (63%); funds to summarize and repackage research findings (61%); opportunities to link directly with end users (54%); support for combined researcher and end user networks (52%); training capacity in research communication (53%) and linking with intermediaries in define uptake pathways (40%)(RGS Q13).

When asked what would help the researchers to communicate more effectively there were some difference between the northern based respondents and those in the south. Nearly half of all respondents felt skills development would be useful as well as more face to face working and more collaboration between research and outreach throughout the programme. Southern researchers called for support in writing skills somewhat more than the north.

Figure 30 Training or support considered to be very useful to help researchers communicate more effectively (RGS Q14)



Source: RGS

One respondent noted: *"There is the problem of Southern researchers 'sitting on their research' because they want to publish it internationally and if they cannot get this then they want to conserve their research until such time as they do get an opportunity to publish it or present it at an international conference. They do not sufficiently value Southern academic journals".* (FAO/AGRIS). This respondent noted that it is not about incentivising researchers to communicate or share, it is larger than that – it is about having a international commitment to sharing research for the public good. There needs to be high level political focus and commitment to this.

Space for additional comments was available in the RGS and researchers, through the key informant interview, were encouraged to raise their concerns and key worries in the context of communication of research evidence and findings. These are summarized in Table 15 and clustered into key themes. There is a deep concern about the "culture of research" in many developing countries; that research is not valued and thus outputs are not necessarily seen as key to the development agenda. Researchers themselves raised concern and/or acknowledged issues of quality for some research undertaken in the south: access to international research and mentoring where some of the solutions proposed. There was a clear need for research to be part of the development agenda and to be effectively linked and for new models of partnership to be fostered. Respondents spoke of the importance of journalists and the media. There was however some deep mistrust by some respondents of research communication intermediaries on their role and how well they handle the evidence. Many had not heard of the DFID supported CPs (RGS Q15) and few contributed to these programmes on a regular basis.

Table 15 What researchers say	
Strengthen the science culture	<p>Weak research culture (in developing countries) (RGS)</p> <p>The whole country (an SSA country) has a low level of scientific culture (IS)</p> <p>Culture of sharing information is weak (RGS)</p> <p>Need for research to be demand driven (RGS)</p> <p>Weak evidence of the value of research by decision makers (IS)</p> <p>Most researchers are interested in publication and academic jobs (IN)</p> <p>Lack of popularization of research output (in developing countries) (RGS)</p>
Improve the quality of research and research management	<p>Need to improve the quality of research - much is low value (RGS)</p> <p>Importance of generating good and useable research (RGS)</p> <p>Need to be able to do something about the problem you present.. research without proposing solutions is irresponsible (IS)</p> <p>Poor experimental design means outputs are not useable (IS)</p> <p>Need for research mentoring (IS)</p> <p>Need for on the ground training of researchers (RGS)</p> <p>Training is needed in how to search the internet (IS)</p> <p>Universities demand publication of research results through peer-reviewed journals (RGS)</p> <p>Lack of peer reviewed journals in SSA is also a disincentive to learn how to communicate (IS)</p> <p>Need for flexible and free of charge mechanisms for peer review (RGS)</p> <p>Grants are too short (IS)</p> <p>Most research we do is commissioned....then the next project is upon us (RGS)</p> <p>DFID push for impact but need a longer view (IN X2)</p>
Build the communication skills of scientist and allocate budget	<p>Avoid creating incentives to spend resources on premature or inappropriate communication(RGS)</p> <p>Better to employ skill communication staff than try to turn all researchers into communications staff (RGS)</p> <p>Need for a culture change within the research community to value sharing of research (RGS)</p> <p>African scientists need to be taught communication skills (IS)</p> <p>Local researchers are not that interested or skilled in communications.. we end up doing it (IN)</p> <p>Academies of science need help on communication (IS)</p> <p>In India there could be 10 RPC/DRCs – host a training workshop on writing policy briefs, improve your website, writing for different audiences (IN)</p> <p>DFID likes our communication work – but they always ask for more. You'd need almost as much time allocated to communication as research</p> <p>Research communication is often an afterthought of work in SSA in part due to the very small allocation of funds given for research (RGS)</p> <p>At least 10-20% of budget should be allocated to communication (RGS)</p>
Building intermediaries at local level	<p>Journalists have poor grounding in science – need strengthening in particular in controversial subjects (IS)</p> <p>Tools for dialogue are not available (RGS)</p> <p>Need to support local communication programmes, intermediaries (RGS)</p> <p>See knowledge intermediaries as mainly journalists and media (IS)</p>
Link researchers – and policy making	<p>Weak linkages between researcher and policy makers (RGS)</p> <p>Lack of understanding of the research to policy trajectory (RGS)</p> <p>Need a better understanding of the complexity of impacting on policy and the timeframe (RGS)</p> <p>Need to understand the target audiences and how to reach them (IS)</p> <p>There is a disconnect between research, policy and policy implementers (RGS)</p> <p>Importance and value of national reference groups to guide research and outreach (IN)</p> <p>Pair Parliamentary committees with scientists (IS)</p> <p>Need to cultivate a specific issue within the political agenda – i.e.</p>

	timeliness (IN) Research links with end users and research advisory bodies play important role (RGS)
Trust between CPs and researchers	We don't just give RPCs material and keep our fingers crossed... we do it together (IN) I don't trust CP –they don't know you work and may not get the message right (IN) I am suspicious of summarizing research by those who do not understand the field (IN) CP may not be an effective in communicating political science (IN)
The DFID CP portfolio	Whilst examples have been given of linkages between research and CPs: List of resource links was useful (RGS) I did not know any of the CP except 1 (IS) DFID CPs are not well known (ISx2) Looking at the RPCs list – I have not heard of a lot of them (IN, IS) Apart from ID21 – I have not heard of any of the CPs funded by DFID (IS) I do not recall having any linkages with the DFID CPs (IS)

Source: Notes from RGS and North (NI) and South interviews (SI)

In general there is both a weak individual and institutional incentive to communicate findings although there were mixed views in how much should be asked of researchers and what were the respective roles of research and intermediaries.

One respondent noted that *"the best way to incentivise researchers is to show them the effectiveness of communicating their research, demonstrate to them the benefits of this - no one will do it for goodwill alone"* (SciDev.Net). Another pointed out that researchers need support in order to be able to communicate – this might be training so that they can do it themselves, or it might be through intermediaries – research communicators – like many of the research communication programmes in this review. There were however differences of view on whether this was something researchers should be trained to do themselves, or whether there should be more investment in communicators. While one respondent said: *"Don't leave researchers to be the communicators"* and made the point that communication is *"a bigger world than the research world, there are skills and it is focused, so why keep insisting that researchers communicate, would it not be more sensible to focus on communicators using research?"* (Mediae). Another believed that: *"An issue for the next strategy is how to empower southern researchers without necessarily adopting advocacy messages. The challenge is to develop research communication capacity at the level of the researchers."* (GDNet)

34% of 43 research generators (RGS Q12) felt there were: "inadequate incentive systems to encourage researchers to process research findings into a form suitable for intermediaries" and 47% said that their main challenge was "the shortage or lack of resources (time and operational funds) to process research findings into a form suitable for intermediaries". However, it is not clear from these responses whether research generators would expect incentives to come from the CPs themselves or from other sources.

When researchers were asked "what was their primary mechanism for dissemination?" (RGS Q9), there was overall more in-house processing and a stronger level of linkage with research intermediaries in the north than in the south.

Table 16 Primary mechanism for dissemination of research findings		
Primary mechanism	North	South
	No= 18	No= 35
In house and direct to users	50%	50%
In house with processing	89%	60%
Formal links with research intermediaries	55%	40%
Ad hoc links with research intermediaries	38%	11%

Source: RGS

Within the research communication programmes currently supported by DFID, we see a range of generalized models which serve to illustrate how researchers link to research intermediaries (Table 17). The different models and structures have their own purpose and one approach is not necessarily better than another at meeting research intermediary or indeed the final end user needs. MK4D believes that it is precisely this diversity and range of specialist programmes that can offer added value to the end user and they have recently started the I-K-Medary Group to encourage working together and alliance building between different intermediaries.

Table 17 The link between research and research communication programmes – some models	
Model	DFID Research Communication Programmes
Researchers publish in journals – these are sourced by research intermediaries	AGRIS (Information Systems in Agricultural Science and Technology) – FAO SciDev.Net (The Science and Development Network)
Researchers make available papers and or synthesis which is sourced and used by research intermediaries	RELAY (Research Communication Programme) – PANOS R4D, MK4D
Researchers are commissioned by research intermediaries to prepare papers/ synthesis	GDNET
Researchers work with research intermediaries to refine key messages	MK4D Makutano Junction (TV Drama) – The Mediae Trust
Research intermediaries are lead researchers, sub-contracting where necessary	Fostering Trust and Transparency in Governance BBC WST Policy and Research Programme on Role of Media and Communication in Development
Researchers – research intermediaries and research users work together moderated by research intermediaries	Practical Answers - Practical Action ICT4D (Information and Communication Technologies for Development)

Source: RGS

Researchers, their programmes and institutions were asked how much of their respective budgets were allocated to research communication (RGS Q8) 38 out of 54 felt it was above 5% and at least up to 10% and some 20 felt it was above 10%. The ODI study on DFID supported RPCs felt that the ring fencing of 10% of budget had made a difference and contributed to significant changes in working practices and a higher degree of embeddedness in policy and country contexts compared with other DFID-funded research programme. They suggest consideration be given to increasing this from 10% to 20%.

5.4.2 DFID funded research communication programmes are not well known

Researchers reported contributing - occasionally or regularly - to only three of the 17 DFID-funded research communication programmes (RGS Q15). These programmes were: BBC WST; GDNNet; MK4D (specifically id21 and ELDIS). Most researchers to whom this questionnaire was sent had never heard of most of the other CPs.

Over 50% of researchers called for both more local and regionally based research communication programmes (RGS Q17) and more subject specific research communication programmes. Over 60% would welcome working with and through research communication programmes (RGS Q17).

In answer to the question does the "research communication programme portfolio cover all my needs" only 7% said it applied fully, 63% said it only applied to some extent. One may deduce from this most research generators did not feel that the current services offered fully met their needs.

According to the survey, GDNNet is one of the better known of the DFID funded research communication programmes for researchers but it also has many challenges in building its online community with only 7% of research generators contributing regularly. The constraints to contribution may need to be better understood and barriers removed.

5.4.3 Good practice and opportunities for building researchers capacity

Creating incentives for quality research

There is a clear call to support researchers in all aspects of their work from experimental design, research method, analysis, writing up to publishing and communication. GDNNet said that a recent review they carried out confirmed that training on research skills and on understanding strategic research processes were emerging as key areas that needed strengthening for researchers.

A greater diversity of sources of research evidence and knowledge is called for by users, particularly research outputs generated in the south (RUS Q11). However validating these sources can be a challenge, as users question the credibility of unknown or lesser known sources, preferring instead to use tried and trusted sources. Evidence from some of the research communication programmes interviewed suggests that the quality of research from some southern researchers and southern research institutions is held in less high regard by key stakeholders. Further, researchers in the south do not trust southern journals for peer review and hold onto their research until they can get published in an international journal.

Further research and new thinking is needed on internationally acceptable **peer review process** that gives easier and faster access for southern researchers. Concerns around validation also make it difficult for knowledge brokers and intermediaries as they cannot afford to shake their own reputations as good sources of information. For users of research and for the knowledge intermediaries trying to synthesise and share research more widely, validation is critical. Knowing where the information comes from and how it has been put together is vital. This concern was expressed both by MK4D and Practical Answers when interviewed.

CABI/R4D have indicated that it would be useful to find a way to "peer review" material along the lines of the Amazon user review approach in order to find ways to circumvent the lengthy traditional and competitive peer review process in the North. Such a methodology may also help to **validate "relevant knowledge"**. A science adviser in the World Bank said that they were increasingly interested in "relevant knowledge" rather than just research. Relevant knowledge was about harnessing the knowledge of operational staff.

Working with more experienced researchers to learn how to produce good research based on good data, how to interpret data and get published in peer reviewed journals is one entry point to support researchers in the south. Two initiatives from GDN are examples of innovation in supporting researchers.

Box 19 GDN and incentivizing researchers

The **Global Development Awards and Medals Competition**, launched in 2000, seeks to unearth new talent and support innovative ideas on development. Nearly 4,300 researchers representing more than 100 countries throughout the developing and transition world have participated in this competition to date. With support from the government of Japan, nearly US \$ two million has been distributed in prizes and travel to finalists and winners. In 2007 alone, the competition attracted more than 600 applications.

The Regional Research Competitions (RRCs) promote high quality research in developing and transition countries by funding well-conceived, policy relevant research projects. These efforts help discover new talent and increase research capacity. GDN has disbursed more than \$19 million and awarded more than 800 grants through this programme. A key feature of RRCs is that in addition to providing development and research grants, they involve mentoring, special training programs, "quality assurance" mechanisms to improve research results, and projects to bridge research and policy.

Source: GDN interview

GDN Global research projects encourage researchers to work on country studies on a particular theme and then share findings across countries with other researchers. This offers peer to peer support. GDN thus benefits from the overall framework of GDN activities, including Regional Research Competition, Global Research Projects and Awards in incentivising researchers. The GDN portfolio includes access to online Journals, datasets and funding opportunities to incentivise researchers.

What MK4D learned is that it is difficult for southern researchers and southern research organizations to build and create an (online) space from which to develop a dialogue around their own research and disseminate their findings thereby building a reputation.

Access to knowledge by the research community

A key factor in achieving quality research is the capacity to **access and review the work of others**. Recognising that 32% of respondents were either researchers or from research organizations, access to online journals and original research was cited by 22 out of 40 respondents as one of the things that they would like more of (RUS Q10). 14 out of 40 respondents said that inadequate access to libraries was the most significant barriers to accessing research information. High on the list as a minor barrier to accessing research information was lack of awareness of where material can be sourced and inadequate facilities.

The British Library for Development Studies (BLDS) has a Document Delivery service where it sends copies of journals and other documents to researchers in the South within 3-5 working days. Although there are now 286 organisations registered with the BLDS document delivery service, 80% of whom are in the South, 42% of research generators surveyed for this review had never heard of BLDS.

The PERii programme, working in 22 partner countries and over 80 network countries, also supports open access for researchers. This is principally through supporting the development of journals published in developing and emerging countries and the development of libraries (see section below). PERii cooperates with publishers and library consortia to enable access to research materials for eligible institutions in developing countries – now to include over 25,000 online journals, 11,000 e-books and citation and bibliographic databases and document delivery from BLDS. INASP itself provides information about open access online resources that are available to all researchers.

GDNet too, provides researchers with a comprehensive listing and access to free online journals and also provides website links to journals that may have restricted use for subscribers only but provide free access to list of articles with contents pages and abstracts.

There is a suggestion that “search engines are not adequate for development functions” (quote from RUS) and some key informants had specific concerns over the perceived weak search functions in R4D and id21.

Internet Access and ICTs

One free text comment (RUS), that the “cost of subscriptions to online journal databases is high when use is likely to be irregular and limited” supports a concern put forward by RELAY, MK4D, PERii and others that access to the web for many researchers remains challenging. Electricity shortages, low bandwidth, strictly allocated computer time, computer room locked and only accessible to a few people, poor access to libraries, etc., make it hard for southern researchers to get full access to web resources.

The example INASP offers is that of impact on bandwidth optimisation. Through PERii, university leaders have been made aware of the process whereby the bandwidth for the institutions can be clogged up by unauthorised and unmonitored use. By being made aware of this and supported to develop appropriate user policies and to implement technical fixes within the institution, the institutions are managing their ICT resources more effectively. This ensures more efficient use of available bandwidth and faster connections are available for research.

Developing country researchers, librarians and tertiary education professions need connectivity, but also they need good conditions to enable them to access online resources.

The Fostering Trust and Transparency in Governance programme, for example, discovered it was taking 2.5 hours for a training video to be downloaded which is clearly unworkable.

Although responses to the RUS indicated that for 23 of the 38 respondents' inadequate internet access was not a barrier to accessing research information,

this survey was sent electronically. Researchers in well resourced research institutions may have fewer problems but internet access remains a problem.

While there is an increasing interest in the development of ICTs as an answer to connectivity challenges ICT4D noted that while mobile connectivity can provide good individual access this is not the same thing as organizational connectivity.

IDRC's Acacia project, now in its second phase is supporting research that increases African content on ICTs through software development for the effective application of ICTs for development and learning from Acacia's community-based research and experimentation and to widely disseminate this knowledge. Acacia typically works with developing country partners in the field to better understand ICT and development issues. Their experience is that successful research networks are essential to improving quality and impact of Acacia-funded research.

But for many and in response to poor internet access 30% of research users are still looking for syntheses of research findings available in print. id21 who still produce many of these materials in print, scores the highest for the DFID funded programme "used most regularly" (RUS Q7): 38,000 people currently receive id21 print Insights (65% in the South).

The research users surveyed said that ***inadequate access to libraries and library services*** was their most significant barrier to accessing research information. There is not only inadequate access to libraries themselves but poor access to information within libraries themselves. PERii has been working with libraries and librarians to ensure that researchers – and others – can have access to global knowledge by enabling the development of libraries and enhancing the skills of librarians through curriculum development and access to distance learning and to help develop digital services that meet the growing expectations of scholars and researchers.

Building writing and communication skills

Nine out of 17 research communication programmes consider that potentially relevant materials are simply not being made available – either it is not written up and/or not accessible in the public domain (RCS Q14).

The reasons for this are multiple but include lack of skills in writing research papers and placing papers in suitable journals.

The research communication programmes are supporting researchers in multiple direct and indirect ways. Some examples are given in Table 18.

Table 18 Research communication programmes working with researchers on communication skills and capacity strengthening	
Programme	Activity
Agfax/ New Agriculturalist	Training workshops that link researchers and media "Making the most of Media" Communication skills training - Intense and practical, our one or two day courses get to grips with the essence of speaking or writing well for small or large audiences face to face, via radio or television, in print or over the internet. Toolkit on CD and internet "tips on how to communicate and how to communicate with the Media"
AGRIS	Study in Ghana and Kenya on barriers to communication by

Programme	Activity
	researchers
BBC WST	Identification and training of research professionals to for a Research and Learning Group, a global resource to understanding the role of media for development – works across 39 countries in 22 languages
CommGap	People, Politics and Change Course for government officials on using communication approaches for governance reform
Fostering Trust and Transparency in Governance -	Their dissemination products will mainly be DVDs and CDs sent to 500-1,000 targeted individuals and 'training modules and good practice guidance materials' available for download from their website.
GNet	Toolkits for Disseminating Research Regional Research Competitions Global Development Awards
ICT4D	Delivers training in Communications for Researchers and on Monitoring and Evaluation
InfoDev	Toolkits and capacity building on ICTs
Makutano Junction	Mediae runs workshops to get researchers to summarise their research in a few sentences – uses tools like sending a postcard to a mother with a summary of key research
MK4D	Pilot training course on information literacy with MA course in participation at IDS - on learning how to search and navigate sources, how to evaluate difference sources, looking at other preconditions and what different research can tell you. The Information Training and Outreach Centre for Africa (ITOCA) might adopt the training course. http://www.itoca.org/ I-K-Mediary Network, run by MK4D includes workshops and capacity building SLI has started a series of Toolkits or Guides – the first is on how to use email newsletters ELDIS has a virtual training suite with an interactive Tutorial on How to use the Internet for Development BLDS has a series of Toolkits for libraries and librarians
PERii	<i>AuthorAid</i> project Training for users of digital services and training for ICT skills Curriculum development for librarians
RELAY	Training Sessions by bringing together multi-stakeholder platforms around communicating specific research issues (journalists, researchers, media and policy-makers) to create more strategic media debates that reach the 'right' audiences for the topic e.g. Zambia: journalists, researchers, policymakers and CSOs explored fish disease in western Zambia. Editors forums – discussions around which important issues coming out of research communities they are missing so that they could share findings and lobby., e.g. Bangladesh: a media scan to show what research stories they were missing around sex and reproductive health.
Research Africa – SARIMA /	n/a
Practical Answers	Communications training on a variety of methods and approaches – principally for community groups
R4D	Source on toolkits and communications guidance
SciDev.Net	Science Communication Workshops held with regional partners for journalists, research communicators and others. Usually thematic focus. Provision of material on practical communication skills for researchers.
SjCOOP	Provide knowledge on how to support the establishment of an Association of Science Journalists in Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda and Ghana. Capacity building of science journalists – new and innovative models and partnerships – and how to communicate science research more effectively

Source: DR, research communication interviews

Mentoring researchers in writing and publication preparation is key. INASP's recent initiative is one example of such support now available to young researchers (Box 20).

Box 20 Mentoring young researchers in writing and publication

AuthorAID supported by SIDA, NORAD and DFID within the INSAP programme offers a mentoring programme where early career researchers or those working in disadvantageous conditions for research publication can receive individual writing and publication advice from highly regarded published researchers and professional editors. Thus, AuthorAID helps researchers in developing countries to publish and otherwise communicate their work. It serves as a wider global forum to discuss and disseminate research. Through the programme website, researchers also have access to a community space for discussion and questions, access to a range of documents and presentations on best practice in writing and publication and a chance to network with other researchers. AuthorAID has seen remarkable growth in participation and website usage from its launch in 2008. By the end of 2008 some 400 individuals have registered to participate.

Source: INASP www.authoraid.info

Packaging and working in partnership

Researchers need individual training in both how they can work with communicators or communicate directly with stakeholders. The communication skills of researchers have been cited by more than four of the research communication programmes as a barrier to using research.

When interviewed WFSJ reported that their journalists have attended many conferences with researchers where they have been unable to take away anything suitable for reporting because materials have been so poorly presented and lacking in relevant context. The researcher/journalist connection when working well can be a great motivator to sharing material.

When targeting their primary audiences researchers preferred method is through workshops and conferences and there is also a relatively high percentage of face to face engagement (RUS Q10). 70% (the highest percentage) of researchers said that further support for workshops and conferences would be very useful (RGS Q13).

Improved skills in this area would clearly support improved research communication. Many of the research communication programmes feel that researchers should not be put under pressure to be principal communicators however the research programme consortia model suggests that researchers are happy to engage with policy audiences but they just need the skills to do so.

id21 and ELDIS, in the MK4D programme work closely with researchers to interpret their findings and re-package them in formats for the web and in printed form suitable for policy makers. The incentive here is that researchers' material will be disseminated more widely and the likelihood of take up is improved by presenting the material in a policy context. Sharing tools and hands on support to encourage research teams can be very effective (see example below).

Box 21 Hands on support in research communication

"I have time constraints - I have to do the research, I have to write and teach and produce the outputs....But I'd like to do more, ideally, on dissemination"

"IDS has helped me a lot. There's a colleague in the 'Pathways of Women's Empowerment' RPC who is handling communications work. And here (Cairo) we have an intern working on the Pathways project and working with IDS; they've both had very close conversations with us researchers, particularly about exploring new ways of communicating our work".

Source: Dr. Mulki Al-Sharmani American University in Cairo
www.pathwaysofempowerment.org

Makutano Junction – the TV soap opera in Kenya disseminating issues around public health provides researchers with a very clear channel to targeting end users. Researchers work with the TV producer to develop story boards that carry key messages for each series of programmes and then work with script writers to refine the scripts for each programme. Viewers of the programme are asked to respond to issues by texting the programme, in this way researchers can get an immediate sense of their role in the development.

Box 22 Using feedback to inform programme content

Makutano Junction is a locally produced drama series set on the outskirts of a large town in Kenya. It features the loves and lives of certain characters who live in Makutano, as well as weaving into the storylines useful information that the audience has identified as being useful to them such as information relating to mental health, prevention of TB/HIV and issues relating to gender, such as abortion and domestic violence.

One Health Research Programme comments that her RPC has been able to provide MJ with a 'much more informed set of story-lines for producers' because their Kenya partner is both a script adviser and an 'ideas provider'. However, she does not regard MJ as benefiting the dissemination of their research as such, 'I wouldn't count it as an outlet for our research, it's more that it's a very important medium because it's popular drama and a way of getting better quality messages to people we wouldn't otherwise directly communicate with.'

Source: Realising Rights: Improving Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) in Poor and Vulnerable Populations.

Timeliness of outputs - finding the windows of opportunity

Evidence from this review suggests that researchers and research organizations need to continue to develop their strategic thinking around leveraging opportunities in the policy processes both nationally and internationally. 46% indicated that the main challenge for communicating results effectively for other audiences was having the time and resources to spend on doing this properly (RGS Q11).

84% of 44 respondents (RGS Q10) indicated that they disseminated their findings to international and national policy makers through workshops or conferences but it is unclear from these results how well timed as policy interventions such events are.

ICT4D suggested that regular reviews of the national policy environment would help encourage a greater awareness of the context of policy change and therefore how to develop a strategic approach to delivering findings. In answering the

question "what type of support or incentives would encourage you to communicate your research findings to research intermediaries and end users only 25% respondents said that "sharing evidence on how uptake pathways have increased research uptake" would be useful although 69% did suggest it would be moderately helpful. It is clear there is still a case to be made here (RGS Q13).

One key informant from the NGO sector said that "too often research is done on subject that the media think are old stories"

Yet it is necessary to be cognizant of the unpredictability of research uptake as the case examples in Box 23 illustrates.

Box 23 The unpredictability of uptake

Nigerian Environmental Study Action Team (NEST) has tried publishing briefs, face to face meetings, getting policy makers to appear at workshops and seminars. It is now putting in place its own communications programme and is in the process of appointing a communications officer. They have found face to face contacts work best. 'You have to cultivate the individuals and develop relationships with them'.

For example the Nigeria Academy of Science ran a workshop on infant mortality in 2007 which was attended by an official who later became the Minister of Health. Her first action as Minister was to implement measures in government hospitals to reduce infant mortality. NEST feel this was as a direct result of the workshop.

Source: Dr Okali, Chairman of the Nigerian Environmental Study Action Team (NEST), Nigeria. Also ex-President of the Nigeria Academy of Science.

Another view – a researcher key informant

'We can certainly up the communication but it doesn't necessarily mean we can up the impact as a consequence of that!... For instance, you can do a piece of work and it has no traction at all, then suddenly 10 years later you've got a window open, for instance the political environment changes, but we don't judge things over the life of a typically fairly short programme'

Others in this review have talked about the importance of grey literature and that most of the research findings that are useful to them are in the working papers before final results are published. An ICT4D funded projects, the Learn Asia and ICT Africa Network convene yearly conferences for researchers and policy makers and encourage researchers to get on the phone to policy makers with new findings as soon as possible.

Making choices: investment in communication programmes or support to researchers to communicate?

Whilst it is recognised that multiple paths for the communication of research are required, researchers themselves called for more opportunities to link with users (53%) to join workshops and conferences (63%) and for support to combined researchers and end user networks (60%) (RGS Q13).

The environment in which researchers' communicate is diverse. There are a set of a tensions about where to place investment: a) the call for researchers to be communicators themselves, linking directly with research intermediaries and/or end users, b) for research organisations to hold specialist communications staff, and c) for service provision of research findings through specialist research communication organizations and intermediaries. There is one single answer and

the challenge has to be to develop different models and structures that are best adapted to subject, circumstances and contexts.

See Box 24 for examples of the effective role of embedding communications specialists within research institutions – where the drive for communication is derived by the researcher and their institutions.

Box 24 Embedding communication within research structures

Health Economics and HIV/AIDS Research Division (HEARD)

In Prof Whiteside's opinion, having their own communication programme within HEARD is better than using outside research communication intermediaries. *"We're fortunate to be big enough to have a dedicated person. There is 1 person in our communication section working alongside 20 researchers - a 20:1 ratio."*

"We provide briefs, toolkits, newsletters; we target donors in the region, we provide the secretariat for the UNAIDS forum in the region, we use our own networks, we try to find champions". "Providing trusted information is also very important".

In Prof Whiteside's opinion, the *"best thing we did recently" was to publish major report on the Swaziland emergency – the HIV/AIDS epidemic in that country. We did some serious selling, including getting an op-ed about it in the Mail and Guardian newspaper. This had the effect of the World Bank sending in a mission - which is quite a result...there is still an epidemic in Swaziland".*

He felt that another good way of getting work 'out there' is publishing with popular publishers and working closely with good editors.

Realising Rights: Improving Sexual and Reproductive Health

This RPC is mainly doing communications itself. 'Having dedicated communications officers has worked extremely well. Partner institutes in the consortium have 'very mature communications capacities themselves'.

'We've brought in professional communicators who are now embedded in the programme.' For instance, partners APHRC in Nairobi and BRAC in Dhaka have strong links with the media and BRAC already hosts a programme of journalism fellowships around reportage of development issues including sexual and reproductive health.

APHRC does parliamentary briefings. Indepth in Ghana have also linked with parliamentarians and have used their work through the RPC to support a bill on reproductive rights that went through the Ghanaian Parliament.

Source:

Health Economics and HIV/AIDS Research Division (HEARD) University of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa
Realising Rights: Improving Sexual and Reproductive Health in Poor and Vulnerable Populations

Much innovation in this is being generated within the DFID supported Research Programme Consortia. The recent review of these programmes provides information on the range of products and actions taken by researchers when encouraged to focus on communication lessons (Table 19).

Table 19 Key outputs resulting from a ring-fenced allocation for communication within DFID funded RPCs		
Review Areas	Result	Summary of Results
Outputs		Wide range of written outputs and meetings Clearly policy oriented Few uses of popular media and stories Little investment in building networks
Processes and Structure		Stakeholder consultations often lead to national advisory groups Most have dedicated communications posts and communications working group Average spend on communications higher than 10% Organisational tension between researchers and communication staff
Monitoring and Evaluation		Followed DFID log frame requirements Little knowledge of appropriate M&E methods Little differentiation between quality outputs, uptake and impact Little knowledge of how to monitor and evaluate partnerships and networks
Working Practices		RPCs seeking opportunities for policy engagement Research more demand driven, more applied, more multi-disciplinary and more open access More links between RPCs More multiplier funding sought Serious reflection on North-South partnerships but still a big challenge Incentives for these partnerships not clear
Getting Research Taken Up		Several RPCs already made successful bids at getting research taken up Focussing on pathways that will yield opportunities in the future International, national, sub-national levels of policy, DFID policy, civil society, media, academics
Capacity Strengthening		Good opportunities for strengthening individual research and communications skills Some strengthening of southern capacity for research leadership but little discussion of challenges Same for South-South exchange and collaboration Reflecting as best they can on complexities of partnership and funding Little discussion of how to sustain capacity after the life of the RPC

Source: Hovlund et al. (2008)

The emerging experiences and implications need to link into with future investment strategy of DFID in support to research communication programmes.

Building platforms and processes for researcher coalitions and platforms for research – user linkages

48% of survey respondents of the user survey said that one of the most significant barriers to using research information is the lack of mechanisms to enable dialogue and debate between researchers and research users (RUS Q6). This is a repeated refrain throughout this review and is articulated in different ways. 39% of responses also indicated that another barrier was a lack of coalitions of research users at national level. *"Engagement between research centres, policy makers (international and national) and policy implementers must be improved: there is a current disconnect between the three"* (RGS Q13).

Work of the Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE) in Ghana in the education sector illustrates how getting difference stakeholders together can begin to pave the way to make a developmental difference *"In Ghana we had a big country launch in 2008 - policy-makers, academics, practitioners were invited - they launched a big Country Analytical Review. We're also getting funding from World Bank for communications for our first round of research findings. There are three education RPCs in Ghana - so our country teams had some joint seminars, and they're planning dissemination through universities. Also there are ad hoc meetings with policy-makers and one-on-one meetings that are not recorded well"*.

The linkage between research communication programmes offering different services may not be currently optimised

Although staff most of the DFID supported research communication programmes know of one another, a low percentage use the services of one another's programmes as a source of research output or knowledge. Of those used as a significant source or used occasionally only three have a ranking of ten out of the 17 programmes – these are ICT4D, InfoDev and MK4D (ELDIS and id21) (RCS Q9).

WFSJ was surprised to learn of this comprehensive set of DFID funded research communication programmes. They were also surprised that there was no active effort on the part of DFID to alert them to these services in particular or to DFID priorities within its research agenda. Further for SjCOOP journalists, on the mentoring programme, an introduction to any country relevant programmes would have been a valuable addition– whether research or other research communication programmes.

MK4Ds work with the I-K-Mediary network may have relevance here as an example of an attempt to bring together the work of the research communication infomediaries. "The I-K-Mediary Working Group is an emerging global network of organisations that play a knowledge and information intermediary role in development. These organisations all aim to increase access to and use of research in development contexts by providing portals, gateways or reporting services" (<http://www.ids.ac.uk/go/knowledge-services/our-services/strategic-learning-initiative/i-k-mediary-working-group>).

5.4.4 Key researchable themes related to supporting researchers to communicate

There is a need to strengthen lessons sharing of models of innovation – learning from the many examples in the DFID research communication programme portfolio on the provision of support to researchers on all aspects of enabling better communication of research.

There is scope for a deeper understanding of the extent to which access to researcher is the barrier for better quality research and or whether there are other factors which limit effective use of research evidence in the planning for and undertaking of new research in developing countries. What are the real constraints and what kind of roles can if any can knowledge intermediaries play? Given the ever growing role of major search engines what will be their role in the future for researchers?

5.4.5 Key emerging issues related to supporting researchers to communicate

Support to researchers and research organisations

Ensure that researchers and research organizations are aware of the DFID funded research communication programmes and the role they can play in both supporting researchers and research institutions.

Support to researchers and research organizations to ensure good access to online journals, development of appropriate software and search facilities, suitable mentoring programmes. There is perhaps scope to consider working with the big search engines to look at ways in which southern research organizations and media could be better served.

Support to researchers both in building capacity as credible researchers and as key communicators in the research to policy trajectory.

Support the development of ICTs in a way that brings technology closer to researchers and in particular investment and use of technology in southern research organizations and libraries.

Recognise and support the diversity of ways in which researchers both disseminate and receive information from print through to online. Access to libraries is identified as a key need.

The focus of this review has been mostly on the individual not on the institutional environment. If research institutions do not value research communication and this it is not necessarily built into the incentive systems – this impacts on the communication of research. In the UK this has begun to change within for example HEFCE/RAE criteria which now include training materials, manuals and media products as included in the RAE. There is a need in developing countries to work on the institutional environment and the incentive framework for both the institution and individual researcher to communicate research outputs.

Developing multi-stakeholder platforms and strengthening an interest in research

Provide more opportunities for researchers to participate in multi-stakeholder platforms with users, to enable users to feed into the research planning process

There is a need for DFID to play a more active resourcing and convening role in the south to bring together the key stakeholders in research communication whether through DFID in-country offices or through some other in-country/regional body.

There is a need to look critically at how southern researchers are supported through RPC/DRCs, in particular to strengthen their capacity to be policy change partners.

Linking support for communication in RPC/DRCs and research communication programmes

Much innovation has been generated within the DFID supported RPCs in supporting researchers to communicate yet the link with the research communication programmes is weak including as service providers - training mentoring etc. Lessons learnt through that work and through this review need to

be brought together. Specific efforts need to be made to enable the RPC/DRCs to work more effectively with the research communication programmes.

5.5 Knowledge Management and Monitoring and Evaluation

5.5.1 Introduction

As part of this review various questions were asked to find out how the 17 research communication programmes in the DFID's portfolio were managing the knowledge and lessons they have gained from their work to date. This included questions about how the programmes track and understand their users and how they may have changed their internal working practices or thematic focus as a result of learning events or evaluations. We were also interested to get a picture of their efforts and insights on the question of how to monitor their own achievements, evaluate their own impacts, and monitor their gender outreach. We found a range of knowledge management (KM) practices and a great willingness to learn from experience and adapt accordingly. Most significantly, we found a great deal of concern and uncertainty about Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) tools and how to track and prove the impact of communication on uptake of research

Definition of terms: We have used the term knowledge management (KM) to cover a range of practices used in an organisation to identify and adopt insights and experiences. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) stands for monitoring and evaluation.

5.5.2 Knowledge management and M&E in the current programme portfolio

Understanding users

When asked how programmes know who their users are, we found that they all had at least one mechanism to enable them to capture this knowledge. The most popular methods were analysing their own mailing lists, conducting user surveys and tracking the use made of their own web-sites. Face to face contact invariably comes to the fore when more detailed feedback from users is needed, such as workshops, focus groups and one-to-one interviews (RCS Q20). For programmes that are more decentralised, country-based steering groups or partners provide invaluable feedback - for example, PERii has a steering committee of country coordinators who assess and provide feedback on needs and progress in their respective countries. On the question of increasing Southern users, MK4D, despite having put a great deal of thought and effort into understanding their users, is one among many programmes that wish to have stronger links with Southern users - as they put it: *"increasing the input and involvement from southern researchers and southern research organisations is still exercising the MK4D knowledge services"* (MK4D).

Validating and organising information

Most programmes use a number of different processes to validate information, for example, doing surveys of their users and/or using their records or other methods to monitor progress against their log-frame indicators (although not all programmes use log-frames). The most popular methods of internal quality-control are user-surveys, external reviews, peer reviewing of materials and

internal reviews and/or internal learning events. Six out of the 17 programmes consistently submit their outputs to peer review - these tend to be those, such as CommGAP, InfoDEV, ICT4D and BBC WST who fit into what we have called the 'knowledge pump' category - i.e. those who actively research and distribute information to end-users, rather than those who synthesise information or aggregate that of others, or who concentrate more on capacity-building of 'info-mediaries'. The MK4D has many years experience in building and organising collections of information and making them available in a variety of different formats (e.g. Bridge, Eldis databases) - this experience is invaluable and could be used more widely to support other DFID-funded programmes to make more of their information.

Organisational learning and change

All the 17 programmes under review have at least one method of trying to foster internal learning. 13 of them make internal reflection a formal or regular process. Most of the programmes (13 out of 17) also hold joint learning events between themselves and their funders, and the same number hold or join-in with learning events or meetings organised with other research communication programmes (RCS Q32).

The majority of programmes (11 out of 17 RCS Q30) said they had significantly changed their overall strategy over the last five years; and the most significant trigger for this change had been 'in-house learning and reflection', followed by 'monitoring results' and 'user feedback.' (RCS Q31). For example, GDNNet has recently changed its approach to *"focusing more on regional requirements and packaging and on rolling out more capacity building activities" in response to what their surveys, workshops and web-stats told them about the changing needs of their users and about changing technologies*. In terms of change of thematic focus the MK4D programme has an international advisory group with a specific mandate to come up with *'cutting-edge themes'*. MK4D's main thematic change has been *'to stay on top of important emerging issues - such as climate change'*.

Independent Reviews

All except the most recent of the research communication programmes has undergone at least one strategic review or independent evaluation during its lifetime. Often these are wholly or partly responsible for changes in strategy or focus (Box 25).

Box 25 The value of an independent review during the life of a programme
<p>An external review of Practical Answers (Rowley et al. 2006) recommended various changes to the programme after having identified certain weakness in monitoring. Practical Answers responded by committing to: 'A new database ... introduced across the group to collect data in every country. In addition to previous categories around the user type we will also start to monitor gender. More importantly, through the mechanisms described above, and various follow-ups we will capture the impact or progress of projects assisted through the service'. (Practical Answers - Proposal Final 2007-8 (p.5))</p> <p>The same review also recommended 'accompaniment'. The idea was that 'accompanied' information-sharing makes knowledge more useable. The kind of actions recommended included more:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • face to face discussions, • carefully edited and translated materials, • locally rooted information, • visits to see the technology in practice, • demonstrations, • skills training by PA staff. <p>Practical Answers is currently working on these adaptations.</p>

M&E Strategies

Out of the 17 research communication programmes, the percentage of programmes with articulated M&E strategies was 53%, with another 18% judging themselves as 'somewhat' and the rest 'no's' (DR). However, this does not mean that the rest do not have an M&E strategy; rather, that some programmes do not articulate what they do as a *strategy*, though they may well track, monitor and evaluate the impact of what they do. For example, SciDev.Net does not show any formal M&E strategy in any of the documents provided, but, in fact, seems to have quite a comprehensive system of tracking its users by analysing its mailing lists and it assesses impact through focused research studies. Just as valid is the way Research Africa judges itself: they say that the best measure of impact is renewal of subscriptions to their services which they view as a commercial product.

Table 20 shows the M&E methods currently used across the research communication portfolio (excluding standard independent reviews and 'output to purpose reviews').

Table 20 Monitoring and evaluation methods used by programmes

Programmes	Methods used					
	Monitoring against log-frame indicators	Outcome mapping	Collecting stories and case-studies	Audience /Market surveys	Longitudinal surveys of attitudes and practice among target audience	M&E procedures under review/in flux
Agfax/New Agriculturist	✓		✓	✓		
AGRIS	✓					
BBC WST	✓		✓		✓	
CommGAP	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Fostering Trust	✓					
GDNet	✓					
ICT4D	✓	✓	✓			
InfoDev						✓
Makutano J.			✓	✓	✓	
MK4D	✓		✓			
PERii	✓		✓			
RELAY	✓		✓	✓		
Research Africa	✓			✓		
Practical Answers	✓		✓			
R4D	✓					
SciDev.Net	✓			✓		
SjCOOP		✓				

The challenge of proving impact

Many research communication programmes are experiencing difficulty in assessing the impact of their research communication programme on research uptake for policy change or practice. It was a striking finding that, in interviews, six out of 17 programmes expressly said they would value help with their M&E efforts and that several mentioned the need for support from DFID in this regard (see Box 26).

Box 26 Direct appeals to DFID on the challenge of M&E

WRENmedia: *'We are deeply concerned about the issue of proving attribution – how to prove whether our communication intervention has directly resulted in a policy change. WRENmedia would like to see more support from DFID on the topic of monitoring and evaluation.'*

INASP: *'DFID's M&E of communications guidelines (e.g. Myers 2005) are good and clear but there is a need for more support and advice in M&E, there is insufficient signposting to evaluation tools and methods that DFID would value...You don't know when it's ok to ask'*

RELAY: *'Tracking the influence of media debates on policy is difficult, first because there are so many other actors and second because it is difficult to assess how much the media contributes to policy debate. We need to conduct some more research into this but it is time consuming and expensive'. 'We need to communicate this to DFID – that such work is in effect a research programme on our research programme. It needs to be seen as a separate thing.'*

SciDev.Net: *'We would like to see more shared learning about skilled methodologies that can get robust results'*

Source: Research communication programme interviews

A further three programmes did not articulate a need, specifically, but expressed concern and worry about the adequacy of some of the methods they were using for measuring impact. Most programmes were very open, saying they felt their own M&E methods were *'ad-hoc'*, *'unsystematic'*, that they *'lacked the capacity and funds to measure the impact of [their] work'* or that they often had to *'rely on anecdotal evidence'*. Many felt that there just were not *'the necessary tools out there'*, and that existing knowledge of impact assessment tools and approaches were weak, and most methodologies were *'just too crude'*.

Practical Answers, for example, talked about receiving feedback from those who download their materials: these users are expected to indicate how they will use the materials and how many people might benefit. In practice, the difficulty is how to validate the information received. Simply not having enough dedicated time to reflect on M&E methods was emphasised time and again. For example, MK4D said: *'The main challenge is doing the thinking required... This is why having the time to do some analysis and build a framework (MK4D call this their 'Strategic Learning Initiative') has made such a difference.'*

5.5.3 Good practice in knowledge management and M&E

Whilst no one can really claim to have found the *'holy grail'* of measuring impact and determining attribution in development communication, the following six programmes have had - or are developing - some interesting experiences and that they could justifiably claim some successes with M&E.

IDRC (ICT4D) has a long track record in M & E and uses Outcome Mapping as a key tool. This involves looking at changes in the behaviours, relationships or actions of the people, organisations and groups with whom the project works directly (called *'boundary partners'*) and using these changes (or *'outcomes'*) as indicators of eventual impact such as policy change or poverty alleviation. The IDRC staff told us: *'As a programme we are very interested in monitoring how we influence policy'. ...* In terms of lessons learned, they say: *'There are two main components. First, how the whole issue of policy enlightenment doesn't*

necessarily have a causal chain. The situation is often quite complex and the best we can hope for is that more people are aware that research is done. Second, evaluators are developing the idea of windows of opportunity in terms of communicating with policymakers. There are only so many opportunities for influencing and timing is crucial. From both those angles we hope we will be able to learn a lot - ICT4D

It should be noted that IDRC has sponsored a number of useful publications on tools for communication impact assessment, including a *Compendium on Impact Assessment of ICT-for-Development Projects* (Heeks and Molla, 2008).

Mediae Trust has long been committed to spending time and money on quantitative and qualitative surveys of its audiences - for 'Makutano Junction' and for its other edu-tainment products. Commercial firms like Steadman Associates are often used for this purpose. Mediae says: *'the needs and interests of the research 'users' - in this case the TV viewers of the programme - are regularly researched and results fed into the scriptwriting process of the programme... People can learn from the process of regularly asking 'users' about what they are concerned about and what their information needs are. '*

MK4D benefits from an internal "Strategic Learning Initiative" that drives forward a comprehensive M&E strategy and works with all in the individual projects to integrate M&E across all their activities. MK4D says this has enabled them to understand 'opportunities for leveraging change' and to develop 'more relevant and targeted marketing strategies'. It has also allowed them to collect and collate actual examples of where change is happening (Box 27), so to show the connections between certain pieces of research and how it was used to effect a change.

Box 27	Three impact stories gathered through MK4D's Strategic Learning Initiative
	<p><i>"[The Eldis Agriculture Reporter] has improved preparation of policies and strategies in agricultural marketing and trade. More specifically, it has been very instrumental in the preparation of the "Agricultural Marketing Policy" which is expected to be approved by the Government very soon"</i> Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Marketing, Tanzania</p> <p><i>[Through information from id21 Insights] tribal women have been empowered and successful in pressurising the administration to run a mobile health van in inaccessible areas.</i> Programme Coordinator in an NGO, Orissa, India</p> <p><i>[Id21 Insights] helps us to counsel mothers to improve babies' health before and after pregnancy</i> Vice President of an NGO, Togo</p> <p>(Downie, 2008)</p>

MK4D says: *'The way we have assessed the impact of our work has been by collecting stories. This has changed a bit since our last output-to-purpose review last year when our reviewers pointed out that we needed a framework within which to place the stories. So since then we have been working on our Theory of Change. This now means that we can tag a story and place it within the Theory of Change – it is therefore providing the evidence to connect what we are doing with why we believe it will make a difference. Clearly impact is difficult to*

attribute, the closer you get to the policy decision or end user, but this has helped.'

SjCOOP feel they have had a positive experience with their Outcome Mapping system, which was set up at the beginning of the project. SjCOOP say: *'Since we were working with individuals and outcome mapping is about people modifying their behaviour this seemed like a good fit. It is a bit of a soft methodology but appropriate in [our] case. ...People hated filling out all the reports and the questionnaires...but in the end I would recommend it and it really helped us with the strategic direction of the project.'* SjCOOP found that using Outcome Mapping from the outset 'made it possible to correct our approach'. Mentoring has remained the main approach of the program, but they added more activities to strengthen mentoring in practice, for example: Skype teleconferences, competitions, appointing a full-time ICT person, and the production of articles by teams of journalists from several countries on specific themes.

BBC WST and CommGAP Both of these programmes look set to have some interesting impact data at the end of their M&E exercises, but at present it is too early to tell what the results will be. The BBC project is using a system of audits to analyse the current understanding of ICD (Information and Communication for Development), to provide a base case for further impact assessment; to review existing policy and investment in ICD among the multilateral and bilateral donor organisations; and an annual policy review – consisting of a literature review and further stakeholder audit, to assess progress towards the identified purpose of the project. BBC WST says: *'we have a range of detailed indicators and by the end we expect to have changed the seriousness with which policymakers are considering these issues.'* It has currently commissioned an independent baseline survey of 25 influential policymakers, people in bilateral aid organisations and NGOs which will be repeated at the end of the project.

CommGAP has taken a similar approach of using a 'before and after' methodology. Firstly, they are doing a quantitative and qualitative baseline survey about the role of communication in governance among 35 key policy- and decision-makers in developing countries (African and Asia). This cohort will be surveyed again after 18 months, and then at the end of the 5 year grant-period to see if there has been any perception changes and significant policy changes attributable to CommGAP's input in their country or within their own practice or their department or unit's practice.

Building shared learning

A group of the DFID research communication programmes and other interested parties have formed an informal network to share lessons on M and E (Box 28).

Box 28 Research Communication, Monitoring and Evaluation Group

About five years ago, a group of research communicators and others involved in getting research into use established an informal network in the UK that meets roughly every two months. The main focus of the group is to share lessons and experiences in good monitoring and evaluation of research-communication and communication programmes. With support from DFID the group held a two-day workshop in 2006, including southern partners, on M&E which produced a paper "Proving our worth: developing the capacity for the monitoring and evaluation of communicating research in development." This was a four pager that outlined key next steps for the group and other areas which the community of practitioners also resolved to explore. This project was steered by Panos, Healthlink, IIED and IDS. After this project they planned a programme to bring in a series of experts as well as continuing to share projects and lessons learned.

One regular member of the group says: *"It has been exciting that this group has stayed alive and well. We have had fluctuating interest but I believe everyone is becoming more confident in their understanding of M&E and through this have been more challenging about what their projects are doing."*

The group has also put together a small proposal for a Peer Review Group that would peer review proposals and projects for M&E strategies; they are currently in discussion with DFID over possible funding for this.

Source: Own

5.5.4 Gender equality issues across the portfolio

On the issue of gender, this review attempted to get a general sense of whether sound gender analysis informs the 17 programmes and to what extent they try to ensure their outputs reach both women and men.

Looking across all 17 research communication programmes at how they know who their users are, we found that there was a low level of systematic differentiation by gender. We found that only 5 out of 15 programmes explicitly differentiated their users by gender when conducting user surveys (these were GDNet, Bridge, SciDev.Net, BBC WST and Makutano Junction), only two programmes out of 15 analysed their mailing lists by gender (SciDev.Net and R4D). None of the 16 who track the use of their websites differentiated their website users by gender (RCS Q20).

Looking at the 14 programmes with logical frameworks (three programmes do not have one) the review found only two out of these 14 had an explicit mention of gender and/or women's equality issues in their log-frames; these were ICT4D and the Bridge section of MK4D's log-frame (DR).

Disappointing as this may seem at first glance, it should not be concluded that the rest of the programmes neglect gender issues. It could perhaps be concluded that gender has not been forgotten in these instances, but in fact may have been *mainstreamed*, and so not thought worthy of special mention. However, this question probably needs more investigation.

Certainly, many of the other programmes do work explicitly or implicitly on various types of gender issues. This includes making a special point of communicating research on gender: For example, Panos' RELAY programme works closely with DFID's RPC on sexual and reproductive health, Realising Rights; id21 covers gender issues regularly as does WRENmedia's New

Agriculturist; and Practical Answers includes gender considerations as a cross-cutting consideration in most its technical advice.

A recent search on R4D for some insight into the gender dimension of the DFID research output gave the following evidence. The R4D website brings together information about 5,000 DFID-funded projects (past and present) with over 18,000 documents. Using the advanced search function, a search on R4D returns 1,239 documents mentioning 'women', 629 case studies mentioning gender, including 178 documents with 'gender' in the title, of which 26 are research papers.

The work of ICT4D reflects how the gender dimension has been mainstreamed within their portfolio of work (Box 29).

Box 29 Examples of gender work within the ICT4D programme

Gender and ICTs in Acacia and Pan (ICT4D)

Evidence suggests that there is an important gender gap in ICT access and usage in most, if not all, African countries. In some countries, the gap is dramatic — less than 10% of Internet users in Guinea are women (Sciadas, 2005). Acacia-funded research has demonstrated that in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mali, Mauritania, and Senegal, women have 36% fewer ICT-related opportunities and benefits than men (Mottin-Sylla et al. 2005).

Addressing these issues is therefore clearly important, and PAN and Acacia would seem well placed to be able to support research into gender and ICTs. However, independent external reviews of both programmes in 2005 showed that gender was one of the areas of potential improvement. Since then, both programmes have developed more robust Gender Strategies.

PAN has created a taxonomy to help assess and monitor the body of projects and their relation to gender, as well as making imperative that all project appraisals include commentary on gender aspects of the project (using the assumption that there are no gender neutral projects). The 2006- 2011 prospectus sets out how the programme will build and support a group of Asian researchers who can generate new knowledge on gender transformative aspects of ICTs on Asian communities. The twofold goal is of the Gender Strategy is to a) ensure that PAN-supported projects do not create additional development problems by neglecting the social/gender implications of a research issue; and b) support research on ICTs in Asia for gender transformative outcomes. To ensure that gender is adequately and appropriately integrated into PAN-supported projects, the team will develop a simple monitoring tool that can be used to analyze each project's integration of gender and social analysis.

Acacia has recruited a gender consultant and a gender champion within the team and has commissioned an external evaluation of gender programming within the programmes which will 'provide recommendations for capacity-building within the team on engendered analysis and project development and to assist in the development of a gender programming framework for Acacia that will cut across all projects'. A range of research questions on gender and ICTs have been developed and Acacia funds research on the implications of ICT policies and innovations (applications) for gender equality and women's empowerment.

One example of these is **GRACE** which is **Gender Research in Africa into ICTs for Empowerment**. Launched in early 2005, GRACE is a network of researchers on gender and ICTs in Africa examining how ICTs are offering African women new opportunities. By providing intensive research training as well as ongoing mentoring and support to fifteen research teams in 12 countries, this project will encourage the establishment of an African community of gender and ICT researchers. This will build a more substantial body of research on how African women's lives and livelihoods are being changed by ICTs.

Source: DR

5.5.5 Key researchable themes related to knowledge management and M&E

The most urgent researchable theme, expressed by representatives of almost all programmes, is to address the challenge of proving the causal link between provision of information and impact on poverty. Tools and methods need to be researched, tested and developed. Part of this may be to find ways in which those programmes using log-frames can develop SMART-er (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) indicators by which to assess their own results. Log-frames, when written well and used properly can be a good M&E tool. We understand that DFID is in the process of refining and changing their log-frame format to capture outcomes better and to force their programmes to select SMARTer indicators, which is a good start.

There is also a need to research the whole process of policy-change in relation to communication. More, specifically, there is a need for research that measures increases in public debate, then tracks the influence of media debates on policy. SJCOP asks: *'"Can the media influence policy makers in Africa?" People say yes but we are not sure. This has to be in situ training so that we can see exactly how it happens.'* Others, such as BBC, CommGAP and RELAY echo this sentiment - and the need is everywhere, not just limited to Africa.

5.5.6 Key emerging issues related to knowledge management and M&E

The overriding message is that almost all programmes find M&E a serious challenge and that there are still major research issues as to how to measure the development impact of, and assign attribution to, communication programmes.

The programmes that have been running for some time and that have invested significant time and energy into KM and M&E - such as ICT4D and MK4D are sources of experience and should be encouraged to be convenors and thought-leaders for the wider of DFID's research communication portfolio.

There is clear demand addressed to DFID from research communication programmes to convene learning events and generally provide guidance on M&E issues.

There are some serious gaps in programmes' current practice in terms of tracking the gender of their users, and in making their approach to gender equality explicit in their log-frames and in their strategy documents.

This review therefore fully endorses DFID's stated commitment to: "commission an agency or consortium to develop and trial robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to show impact of research communication and uptake and mainstream adoption across funders of development research". (DFID 2008)

We would recommend that once these mechanisms have been identified, developed and trialled, DFID convenes a series of learning events around best practice in M&E of research communication which bring together all the research communication programmes in the portfolio - and perhaps others beyond the present group of 17 - to learn from each other.

We would also recommend that DFID requires - as a minimum - that research communication programmes ensure they are reaching both female and male users by differentiating their users by gender.

5.6 Research on communication

5.6.1 Research on communication in the current programme portfolio

The following programmes in the portfolio have research on communication as a key focus area: CommGAP; InfoDev; and BBC WST. Others such as ICT4D, MK4D, RELAY, WRENmedia, R4D and SciDev.Net devote a proportion of their work to research on communication as part of their own learning process, to inform their own strategies and work programmes, and to generate good practice. For the majority of the 17 CPs, however, 'research on communication' is not a core activity although implicit in their work - for example undertaking user-surveys - there is an element of research.

Research on communication and media accounts for nearly 30% of all the research communication programmes' portfolio with an annual spend by DFID on research on communication of approximately £2.9m. Substantial grants to CommGAP (£1m/annum), InfoDEV (£1m/annum) and BBC WST (£.5m/annum) account, in large part, for this commitment.

Box 30 provides some examples of the working now being undertaken by the research communication programme portfolio.

Box 30	Examples of ongoing research on communication within the DFID CP portfolio
CommGAP	<p>A randomized study of the deliberative spaces created through development interventions in Karnataka, India. This study will analyze the impact of efforts to improve the quality of deliberation, social accountability and citizen participation under conditions of sharp increases in the budgets of democratic village governments.</p> <p>Communication, Coalition-Building and Development: The Experience of Public Enterprise Reform in West Bengal and Orissa States, India. This study examines the different approaches to communication around similar reform programmes in two states in India.</p> <p>Book (in press): Public Sentinel: News Media and Governance Reform. This publication is coming out of a workshop jointly organized with Prof. Pippa Norris at the Harvard Kennedy School. It seeks to capture the best available evidence from around the world on the contribution of news media to good governance.</p> <p>Survey of NGO Practitioners about Communication and Social Accountability Tools. This is a quantitative survey of NGO practitioners to probe issues around communication processes and practitioners' views on the role of communication and public opinion in the use and effectiveness of social accountability tools.</p>
InfoDEV	<p>Survey of ICT and Education in the Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean (March 2009). This study comprises 16 country reports that provide an overview of the current activities and developments related to ICT use in education in each country.</p> <p>ICT, Innovation, and Economic Growth in Transition Economies: A Multi-Country Study of Poland, Russia and the Baltic Countries (August 2008).</p>
BBC WST	<p>Research symposium on media and democracy in fragile states (February 2009). This gathering, organised with the IDS, brought a group of development thinkers and think tanks from different disciplines together with</p>

	<p>media researchers to discuss a future research agenda on media and democracy.</p> <p><i>The Kenya 2007 elections and their aftermath: the role of media and communication</i> (April 2008). This policy briefing paper argues that changing media is fundamentally changing how people access information, and that Kenya provides an example of what can happen when those changes are ignored or poorly understood.</p>
Panos RELAY	<p><i>Getting into the Kitchen - Media strategies for research</i> (February 2006). This paper explores the linkages between policy, research and media. It considers some of the dilemmas faced, and the options and approaches available when a research programme, institute or researcher is constructing a media strategy. http://www.panos.org.uk/?lid=20949</p> <p><i>Reporting research - using evidence for effective journalism</i> (December 2008). This briefing offers support and ideas on using research to create debates and inform people of problems and possible solutions that can change or even save their lives. http://www.panos.org.uk/?lid=25835</p> <p><i>Policy reports - How media debate about research influences policy: findings from case studies in Jamaica and Uganda</i> (forthcoming)</p> <p><i>Policy reports - Research communication challenges: findings from case studies in North East India, Malawi and Uganda</i> (forthcoming)</p>
Mediae Trust (Makutano Junction)	<p><i>Research on primary numeracy and literacy skills and television</i> - Mediae is conducting research into ways and means of promoting numeracy and literacy skills amongst primary children, using television. Research is being undertaken both in UK, Kenya and other countries including South Africa. http://www.mediae.org/Current%20Research.htm</p>
ICT4D	<p><i>In South Africa ICT4D is looking at alternative approaches for African universities in accessing academic information</i> and how to make African peer review journals available. It involves 'everything...from convincing people of the value to copyright to the capacity of universities to publish online.' ICT4D</p> <p><i>ICT4D is also exploring the area of visual communications</i> - e.g. maps – and particularly looking at how to make data visual and therefore more accessible.</p>

5.6.2 Modalities for managing research on communication

Several of the 17 CPs have research on communication embedded within their programmes, almost as a by-product of their daily work of synthesising, aggregating and disseminating research findings. This research mainly informs these programmes' own internal working methods and focus. This includes, for example, researching media-use patterns by target audiences in a new geographical region - done routinely by, for instance, RELAY, Mediae Trust (Makutano Junction) and WRENmedia.

The DFID funded research communication programmes which have large and/or dedicated research programmes about media and communication (e.g. CommGAP and BBC WST) use a wide range of methods to carry out the research, from convening workshops of academics from diverse backgrounds, to sub-contracting in-country consultants, to using in-house research capacity.

Other modalities include the sharing of research on communication learning within networks of common practice, for example, the Research Communications Monitoring and Evaluation Group (see Box 28), which as yet is informal, but could perhaps become more formalised.

The Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP) is another example of a multi-stakeholder group focusing on shared learning about ICTs and other knowledge areas. The GKP with over 100 members is governed by an elected Executive Committee and is supported by a secretariat based in Malaysia www.globalknowledge.org. However, it is not known how many of the research communication programmes in this study know, or are part of, this knowledge partnership.

Researchers in this field have a responsibility to disseminate their findings and help to guide and inform other related investments in research communication. To what extent those programmes researching communication are actually communicating and disseminating their own research findings to a wide audience is a moot point. For instance, in a recent mid-term review of CommGAP's programme (Godfrey and Myers, 2009), it was found that most users of its website were from the North. Furthermore, it was found that despite it being DFID-funded, and located within the World Bank, there was almost no knowledge of its activities or its research products among DFID's governance advisers. However, it should be noted that CommGAP is a relatively new programme and is working on dissemination and take-up in various ways, including rolling out a training programme for developing country officials and policy-makers informed by its research. Nevertheless, it is ironic that some of the programmes doing research on communication seem to be encountering the same difficulties as some of the RPCs, and, just like them, appear to be finding communication a challenge.

Building on and moving beyond the current DFID investment in research on communication

During the interviews with research communication programmes staff, we invited them to identify key areas of research work that they considered to be important. These are presented in Table 21. They have been clustered into the following four broad thematic research areas and have been edited where there was repetition of the same idea by more than one programme:

Theme 1	The changing communication and media landscape
Theme 2	ICTs as part of a rapidly changing communication environment
Theme 3	The role of media and communication in development
Theme 4	The influence of communication on policy change

Based on these themes we have reflected on what research is already being done within the DFID research communication programme portfolio, the emerging lessons from the wider document and questionnaires review, and have developed proposals for new work.

Table 21 Key areas for possible further research suggested by the research communication programmes	
Theme	Possible new areas of research
Theme 1 The changing communication and media landscape	Researching how funding impacts on research communication - How do research funding structures affect how research is communicated in the countries it is about? For example, does the fact that a piece of research about Bangladesh is British-funded affect how that research is received by Bangladeshi authorities and public? (RELAY)
	Benchmarking of best practice in research dissemination - Benchmarking best practices in research dissemination - looking at how donor agencies are using the web for research dissemination, for example. (InfoDEV)
	Research on the effect of liberalised broadcast environments - how can liberalised media systems enhance accountability within government? (For example there has been sizable impact in India, but little in Uganda). (BBCWST)
	Research on TV and radio - More research on how effective these channels are in communicating research in general, and specifically about changes implied by new technology, such as digital TV. For instance, how will digital TV impact on research communications? Could it go the same way as the liberalisation of radio which resulted in a fragmented radio landscape? At present there are few TV channels and each has massive audiences, in the future there will more channels and segmented and smaller audiences - how will this impact on development communications strategies? (Mediae) (WRENmedia)
	Research on TV edu-tainment as a model -. Questions include: how cost-effective is edutainment?; how can social effects of edu-tainment messages be reliably attributed? How to transfer the model of edu-tainment to other media (Mediae)
	Research on alternative intellectual property, e.g. open access - Copyright and patents are an important area requiring further research because they dictate how people access and use information. How can the barriers to researchers sharing their findings online be overcome? <i>'Research in Africa shows that more researchers have access to journals through open access than in other ways so this is a very important issue. Access to knowledge is a whole theme area us.</i> (ICT4D)
	Research on the constraints to sharing research - particularly online - and what is holding people back and how these constraints can be challenged. So open source and open access debates. (AGRIS)
Theme 2 ICTs as part of a rapidly changing communication environment	Research on the 'openness issue' - With more access to technology such as Web 2.0, consumers are also becoming producers, which could mean a wealth of new knowledge. <i>'We are very interested in what that means for development. Is it an added opportunity for ensuring that more people have a voice? (ICT4D)</i>
	Research on barriers to accessing research via different communication routes - What are the key barriers to accessing research for different constituents? To what extent can new communications technologies address issues of access? (RELAY)
	Research on the impact of mobile telephony - Mobile telephony is identified as a challenging area for communication research and thinking. There is much hype and theory about the potential of mobile usage by communicators to directly reach and engage with audiences, but there remains insufficient research at this stage. <i>'Does a mobile information society afford the same kind of benefits as the internet? Can the mobile do the same thing? A lot of people think it can't'.</i> (ICT4D)
Theme 3 The role of media and communication in development	Historical development of media - there is a need for research communicators to have a better understanding of historical development of media in each country that they are working in. (RELAY)
	Researching communication, media and innovation systems - What role does the media, as an actor in its own right and as a platform for debate, play in successful innovations systems (which determine the extent to which research gets put into use) does it supply research information and also create demand for research? How does this happen in different country contexts? (RELAY)
	Communication options for promoting debate - What are the opportunities and constraints of different media platforms/technologies to be inclusive and spark debate and influence? What are the best ways to link different media

Theme	Possible new areas of research
	platforms strategically to increase the number of actors involved in the debate about research? (RELAY)
	Media debate methods - What methods best ensure the inclusion of - poor and marginalized voices / research subjects / those most affected by the issues raised by research - in media debates? (RELAY)
	Relationship between media ownership and democratic debate – How do media monopolies, for example, influence the space for democratic debate? How can pluralism be encouraged? (RELAY)
	Comparing the mass-media with other channels - Through which channels do the intended beneficiaries of research (e.g. poor and marginalized communities) hear about research? What role does the media play compared with agricultural extension workers or civil society organisations, for example? (RELAY)
	Communication and media needs of the poor - Research is needed on what media channels work best for reaching the poor and enabling them to have a voice. <i>'There is an appalling lack of data on the information and communication needs of people living in poverty – for e.g. levels of trust in the media, public opinion on media issues, what they want and need and how their needs are or are not being met.'</i> (BBC WST)
	Researching audience reception - What is known about audience reception of research communication? (ICT4D)
Theme 4 The influence of communication on policy change	Understanding research and policy environments – There is a need for more research contributing to a better understanding of the policy environments around different research issues at developing country level – <i>'how will the environment affect how research is debated, made more visible and acted upon?' (RELAY)</i>
	Researching the role of media in policy influence - Is quality media debate required to influence policy? Can policy influence be used as an indicator of quality media debate? For instance, Panos notes that their recent cases studies show that the quality did not correlate with the influence on policy. (RELAY)

Note: If an idea is attributed to one programme it does not necessarily mean that it was not also articulated by other programmes. The fact of having suggested a research idea does not mean that that particular programme necessarily wants to implement the research itself - or that this review is recommending that they do so.

Theme 1 The changing communication and media landscape

The changing media landscape has been identified as a key area for further research. This is relevant to research communication as it impacts on how communication is undertaken and how effective it can be.

The research questions that arise include:

- Reshaping distribution options
- Reshaping audience reach
- Reshaping audience reception
- Reshaping communications' impact on policy

These changes include regulatory and environment changes – such as liberalisation of the airwaves in Africa – as well as technological changes such as the rise of information communication technologies (ICTs).

In broadcasting, there has been significant change in many parts of the world: for instance in radio, rapid increases in the number of radio stations in developing countries due to liberalisation, coupled with the rise of community radio and the convergence with ICTs has meant that there are a great deal more opportunities to use radio. However, proliferation in the radio sector can mean an increasingly fragmented media landscape, making it harder to reach mass audiences. The BBC WST programme is examining this issue. WRENmedia is looking specifically at how this challenges their earlier model of partnering with national broadcasters; this probably requires more extensive research.

The rise of digital television is another area of interest, as it directly affects the levels of potential audiences that communicators may reach. In addition, it also presents new and innovative options for future communication of research. Several of the CPs, e.g. WRENmedia, Mediae and BBC WST have ideas for further research on such issues (see Table 21).

Theme 2 ICTs as part of a rapidly changing communication environment

Technological changes are taking place primarily in the area of new digital opportunities – computing, the internet, mobile telephony, the convergence of old and new technology and social media. Investigating how new technologies are impacting on communication – what ICTs are emerging and converging, what opportunities these present and how the digital era is changing the communication landscape, are obvious priorities. Programmes with particular current interests in this are ICT4D, InfoDEV and MK4D. *“Making the right choices about where to put resources into new technologies is a major issue”,* notes MK4D. *“We are convinced that we need to embrace new Web 2.0 technologies while not forgetting our core product and definitely not forgetting print....”*

The need for adaptation to rapid change presents new challenges as the advent of digital technologies and online routes alter the communication landscape. For example, FTTG is looking at how ICTs enable effective management of public records and is doing action research on adaptation to ICTs in low resourced contexts. *“Speed of technology change is one of our big challenges, often records management is technology-led, but it shouldn't be”* (FTTG).

Research on how communication can aid capacity development is a rich area of inquiry, particularly in the light of rapid development in online delivery of training resources, online mentoring and support. Research about how communication can contribute to enhancing the 'use' of research is also an area with great potential.

Despite digital distribution and provision being a key strategy for many research communicators and DFID itself, there is still not enough is known about the processes of information transfer and usage of research using online portals and resources.

In the light of apparent donor fatigue on 'ICTs for development' as a sector and the slowness in ICTs being mainstreamed as a theme within development organisations there is a desire for more research to inform strategy about how to ensure continued focus on ICTs, particularly in developing countries. ICT4D talks about *"keeping alive the whole debate on ICTs in developing countries". "So much of the emphasis now is on climate change. We were having a discussion with the climate change secretariat – how much of their work is done with informatics? Probably every one of their projects has an ICT component – but the international focus has moved on".* (ICT4D)

The mix of old and new technologies (such as TV plus mobile phone, or radio plus online) presents opportunities for all communicators. The convergence area is already being quite extensively investigated by ICT4D's programmes in Africa and Asia, and is ripe for future research. RELAY/PANOS and MK4D raise the point that many 'old' media are starting also to use new media options such as websites and blogs. There are many questions relating to how these new tools are best used; how the technology can be married with effective communication strategies rather than become a focus of attention in themselves; and how users can be assured of the validity of research data - or any information - when it is delivered on-line. *"There are more and more services online – we keep looking at how you can communicate the validity and quality of the material. We are finding that people find big difference between Google and ELDIS for example. It very much depends on what people want. We are looking at ways in which we can communicate research sources and structures online to give people the right degree of confidence"* (MK4D)

Social media is the range of new ICT enabled communication routes to greater social networking and peer to peer communication which are highly participatory and include user-generated content. This could represent a sea-change in communication and there is a strong case for further research about how this can and should relate to research communication in the future. The research communication programmes tell us: *"There is the challenge of getting information to where people want it – online routes are changing and a static website or portal is not necessarily the best route to reach people; rather Web 2.0 tools such as RSS feeds and search optimisation, social networking, use of video and audio are all important for the future. It is about 'social media' and few communication programmes are sufficiently engaging in this area."* (R4D/CABI), and *"There will be new opportunities that may help people have a lot more ability to produce goods. And communications is central to all of that – the way people speak together and tools they use. This will be the number one field for the future."* (ICT4D)

Theme 3 The role of media and communication in development

Research on communication includes reflection and learning about the role of media and communication in development. Research about how national media relates to development goals and processes, such as MDGs and good governance, is a core activity for BBC WST and CommGAP. It has been highlighted by Makutano Junction within the framework of planning their programme schedule. The BBC WST say: *"In the last one or two years there are major things happening with media and communications that make it increasingly hard to ignore as a*

research and policy issue. But the amount of data on the issue is still seriously limited." The BBC WST's work on the media's role in the Kenya elections in early 2008 looked at the role of vernacular radio stations, possible links with violence, and the role of regulation and state control. They say: *"It [Kenya research] resonated with mainstream thinking on democracy and governance by demonstrating a clear impact of the media at a time of major political crisis"* (see also Box 12).

CommGAP's work concentrates on communication flows and media systems which, they argue, are an essential, but often an overlooked part of securing good governance and accountability. Their research priorities are:

- The public sphere, media systems and the quality of governance
- Sustainable governance reform under real world conditions
- Communication and social accountability mechanisms
- Communication in post-conflict environments/fragile states
- Communication for poverty reduction and national development strategies.

For example, CommGAP's most popular research report (in terms of downloads) to date is 'Towards a New Model: Media and Communication in Post-Conflict and Fragile States' (Kalathil, 2008).

Both these examples are among several pieces of work that these organisations are doing on conflicted and fragile states – states which are a DFID priority. The BBC WST has recently re-organised itself so as to be able to provide bespoke guidance to DFID governance advisers on the media situation in specific countries, especially at times of potential friction such as elections. However the BBC WST would like to see more research on the question: *"under what conditions does a free and independent media contribute to state fragility or enhance sustainable political settlements?"*

Table 21 offers further suggestions from programmes for research on media and communication in development.

Theme 4 The influence of communication on policy change

Investigating how research can influence policy change through the route of communication – what are the steps in this process, who are the participants, what is the role and nature of intermediaries - is seen as a key theme.

For instance, ICT4D's PAN programme and the Acacia Initiative, focus on amongst other issues, theories of how to influence policy and change practice on ICT4D issues. They have also been researching how communication aids policy impact of research. To this end they have been supporting a network of researchers looking at telecoms (Learn Asia and Research ICT Africa Network) and in taking forward the work of these networks researchers present their research on telecoms to policymakers, and hold regular working sessions with policymakers to discuss the research. Looking at the process of policy-influence, ICT4D evaluators are developing the idea of windows of opportunity in terms of communicating with policymakers. *"There are only so many opportunities for influencing and timing is crucial. For both these angles we hope we will be able to learn a lot."* One of their findings is that the whole issue of policy enlightenment doesn't necessarily have a causal chain. *"The situation is often quite complex and the best we can hope for is that more people are aware that research is done."* (ICT4D)

RELAY has recently completed case studies on the pathways of influence from the researcher to the policymaker via the media and other intermediaries through case studies from Uganda and Jamaica (see Box 31).

Box 31 RELAY programme – case studies on “influence pathway” of research communication
<p>In 2008 Panos RELAY programme undertook research, entitled ‘<i>Research, Media, Policy</i>’ which examined the issue of the influence pathway between research and policy change; and specifically how media debates about research contribute to influencing policy. The report compares findings from four case studies - two each from Jamaica and Uganda – that tracked the influence of specific pieces of research that have resulted in policy change.</p> <p>These case studies identified important common factors that had a critical role in contributing to the quality and influence of media debate on policy; they also highlighted how different media, policy and research environments affected the impact of media debates.</p> <p>Key findings of this study show that in each case influential media debates were predominantly driven by civil society organisations or advocacy networks that pro-actively communicated with the media, and secured media interest.</p> <p>Other findings revealed that professional networks between researchers, policymakers, civil society and media are highly effective.</p> <p>Source: RELAY DR and interview</p>

CommGAP's approach to this kind of research is that it is often necessary to do action research. For example they are supporting the Bangladesh Government's promotion of a new Right to Information Act - in order to then learn the lessons about paths of influence and communication flows - and blockages. They are currently undertaking action-research projects of this kind in eight different countries from Cambodia to Moldova.

The BBC WST Policy Programme is centrally focused on communication and policy influence.

The Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE), interviewed for this study stated: *“[there has been a push for us to map influence and we do what we can] But I think this would be better done by independent researchers. i.e. looking at how research filters through to policy and gets taken up. IDS did some research and interviewed various policy makers or influencers and wrote this up but more could be made of it. They found that paper and personal contacts (phones) were much more important than internet and e-mail in Africa - although that was a couple of years ago. It was useful for us. Something like this or mapping an example of how research gets into policy would be fascinating”*

5.6.3 Key emerging issues related to research on communication

The communication of research findings

‘Communication’ is a subject area in itself and so research on communication can be thought of as one research field amongst many within the DFID portfolio. As an area of research its findings need to be communicated, in order for

stakeholders to access the research information and act on it as appropriate. There is a need for this research to produce evidence of the impact of communication in development and to produce new learning about themes such as ICTs. This evidence in turn needs to be examined as to how it is used for better decision-making.

Setting up a mechanism for gathering learning about research on research communication and media is called for. DFID already supports two such groups at the World Bank, i.e. CommGAP (wholly DFID funded, but intended to be a multi-donor trust fund) and InfoDEV (a multi-donor trust fund), but these are limited in their coverage dealing with communication within the governance sector and ICTs, respectively. Their roles could be revised and set within the context of wider framework and or network for learning.

Using developed country evidence on the use of research in development. There is a large body of literature exploring the use of evidence by practitioners and policy makers (see the Research Unit for Research Use (RURU) – www.ruru.ac.uk), but very little of this appears to filter through to development research. It would be useful to explore to what extent the findings from research use in the developed world can provide new and relevant insights for research communication in developing and emerging market economies.

Address further key areas of research

The field of communication in which communication of research fits is changing rapidly. Those interested in the communication of research need to keep abreast of these wider changes and specifically those that relate to the communication of research evidence, knowledge and products.

The BBC WST said: *"What I would like DFID to do is to set up an RPC on media and communication in development. No such centre exists anywhere. It would be a central place for research and for people to come for information on media and communication. It would bring academics and practitioners of the North and South together. It would need to have credibility with development research institutions. It would stimulate research."* This was a view shared by others, but broadened in scope to accommodate not only research but lesson learning, advisory and other service functions – in particular in the area of performance and impact monitoring. There is a call for a central Resource Centre, which would combine elements of a RPC with a facilitation and support role as usually done by a Resource Centre (similar to e.g. the Livelihoods Resource Centre – <http://www.livelihoodsrc.org/>).

6 Implications for research communication

6.1 Research communication and the research strategy results areas

Each of the thematic areas have reviewed the evidence, identified key issues and possible areas for further research relating to the current portfolio of research communication programmes and DFID's future research communication programmes. Before these are drawn into a set of recommendations, it is necessary to examine the wider context of research communication in the light of the research results areas as presented in DFID's Research Strategy 2008-2103.

Table 22 presents each results area, to which this review team have identified possible actions that will need to be addressed through a research communication framework and associated action plan, if the set objectives are to be met. The thematic areas, with which these actions are most closely aligned, have also been mapped.

Table 22 The review themes mapped against the research strategy result areas and possible actions

DFID research strategy result areas	Sample outputs	Possible research communication actions	Theme
1.New policy knowledge created for developing countries, the international community and DFID	Global research partnerships strengthened to better respond to developing country and regional research needs e.g. DFID's joint programmes with UK research councils develop partnerships between northern and southern organisations	<i>Increase provision of research communication services and platforms to differentiated users: developing countries; the international development community; and, DFID</i> <i>Embed communication of research within research partnership programmes</i>	CR EE RC
	DFID partner countries better able to predict and respond to emerging global development opportunities and threats e.g. Deeper scientific understanding about climate change impacts on weather patterns in Africa	<i>Build capacity of policy makers to access scientific understanding</i> <i>Build both the supply and demand side of research evidence.</i> <i>Foster debate on policy options and implications in partner countries</i> <i>Strengthen local information intermediaries, knowledge brokers and media</i>	CR/EE
	Priority policy knowledge gaps are identified and filled e.g. New knowledge about the links between social exclusion, inequality and growth inform economic policies in Africa and South Asia	<i>Build capacity of policy makers to access scientific understanding</i> <i>Build both the supply and demand side of research evidence.</i> <i>Foster debate on policy options and implications in partner countries</i> <i>Strengthen local information intermediaries, knowledge brokers and media</i> <i>Strengthen shared learning between developed and middle income countries and those in Africa and South Asia on other alternative strategies and options</i>	CR /EE
2.Evidence and new research are used for better decision-making	International development policy actors are better informed by research evidence e.g. Timely synthesis of research evidence influences landmark international development events of the next 5 years	Combine DFID funded research evidence /knowledge with others Communicate to DFID staff, country partners, international community and across UK government Ensure research evidence feeds into international policy actors (IFIs, UN, Bilateral etc) Plan for key landmark events and work with research and research communication mechanisms to enrich key events	CR EE CR/EE CR/EE
	High quality research from developing countries is better known about and more effectively used e.g. Approaches to scaling-up effective HIV and AIDS interventions based on southern experience	Support capacity building of developing country researchers including secure access to international and developing country research outputs/journals (On-line and print); strengthen research methods, write up and communication skills Strengthen developing country research peer review mechanisms Foster platforms of researchers and research users Strengthen local information intermediaries, knowledge brokers and media	RC/EE RC/EE EE/RC CR

DFID research strategy result areas	Sample outputs	Possible research communication actions	Theme
	DFID's development action is strengthened through more effective use of research evidence e.g. DFID draws on the latest research evidence to work more effectively in fragile and conflict states	Develop processes for increased review and use of research evidence within DFID through direct linkages with research and through research - research communication – DFID – country partnerships and platforms DFID internal benchmarking by regions and by sectors	CR KM
3.New technologies developed and used in developing countries	New technologies increase poor and excluded people's resilience to climate change, poverty and ill-health and create new opportunities for growth e.g. New crop varieties in widespread use that are higher yielding, more nutritious and more tolerant to drought and pests	Research into communication (including ICTs) for the poor and excluded Remove barriers to uptake and use Researchers, research communication programmes and users work towards South-South learning Strengthen local information intermediaries, knowledge brokers and media	R R/EE CR/EE CR
	Long-term investment partnerships address the most pressing needs for technologies for poor people e.g. Affected countries have access to new, safe and effective TB and malaria drug treatments	<i>Long-term investment in ICT</i> Removal of barriers within the enabling environment	EE R
	Global technology transfer and uptake supported as a result of improved knowledge, policies and institutions e.g. Common understanding of regulatory barriers affecting technological innovation for poor people	Common understanding of regulatory barriers affecting technological innovation for poor people and plans of action in place Platforms for knowledge transfer strengthened	EE/R CR
4.Capability to do and use research strengthened	Southern institutions better able to set the research agenda and to lead development research e.g. Increased number of southern researchers with the skills to demand, analyse and use disaggregated data	Open access to research information and resources, including top journals Support researchers communicate Peer review and mentoring supported Revisit how RPCs and DRCs work with south partners – their role in research capacity building and the southern researchers' role in communication	RC/EE RC RC/EE RC/CR
	Developing country users' needs for relevant research are supported and effectively met by research organisations e.g. Skills among policy makers to use research effectively are enhanced as a result of multi - donor action	Build capacity of policy makers to demand and use research Build capacity of wider users and champions of change – civil society, parliamentarians, etc Strengthen local information intermediaries, knowledge brokers and media Support platforms between researcher- intermediaries - users	CR/EE CR/EE CR CR/EE
	Low-cost access to research knowledge enhanced for developing country researchers and policy makers e.g. Appropriate research products more available to end users through electronic media	Remove barriers to access	RC/CR/ EE

DFID research strategy result areas	Sample outputs	Possible research communication actions	Theme
	South-south and north-south lesson learning strengthened e.g. African countries benefit from relevant lessons from the newly powerful economies about tackling a rising non-communicable disease burden	Translation services Networking of national research communication actors	RC CR
Crosscutting themes		Knowledge management and M&E across all of the above DFID's enhanced role in research communication/better use of research outputs Donor platform on research communication Competitive funds for innovation Regional and international lessons sharing on research communication incl. working meetings/conference	KM CR EE CR CR/EE

Key: EE-Enabling environment; CR-Communication of research; RC-Supporting researchers to communicate; KM-Knowledge management; R- Research
Notes in italics are indirect linkages

Three of the four results areas implicitly or explicitly call for action which directly aligns to the communication of research. This has clear implications for DFID's future investment in the communication of research.

Some of the identified actions have emerged as a result of this study and the implications already embedded in the emerging thematic debate and recommendations. There are however others which come across less forcefully and or were not identified as a result of our lesson learning process. These are discussed below and inform our final recommendations.

6.2 Strengthen the demand side as well as the supply side of the communication of research knowledge

DFID's research strategy states that DFID will "*strike a balance between creating new knowledge and technology and getting new knowledge and technology – both new and existing – into use*". Thus the results areas listed above place explicit emphasis on building the demand side for research knowledge, evidence and products for the range of users from international and national policy makers to end beneficiaries.

Our study shows that whilst much material is made available through the CPs, it is often not well targeted at specific user groups – or if targeted then the actual user profile is not well understood. This applies most to the "*the knowledge publisher*" and "*knowledge pump*" categories of CPs. Of course there are exceptions. Further in relative terms, little effort is made to strengthen the demand side and to create the enabling environment (beyond the legal and regulatory environment) in which research findings/ options may be debated and their uptake supported.

We know from the "10% review" (ODI 2008) and from other evidence presented here that there are good examples of DFID funded research through the RPCs and DRCs that link national and international research (supply) to policy or investment change processes (demand) but rarely where these innovations are found is there a link with services that the research communication programmes' could offer such as help with media training; support to researchers on writing policy briefs and indeed support to help ensure that the widest access to policy options and evidence is made available.

The research communication programmes in the DFID portfolio clearly have a role to play in contributing to understanding and strengthening the user or demand side of knowledge uptake, building the supply side and as well as undertaking their intermediary functions. Whilst this needs to be strengthened it will not alone deliver the results. New partnerships and alliances – whether at international level, regional or country levels or indeed within DFID itself need to be supported to strengthen the demand side for research and to create learning institutions and knowledge "economies".

6.3 Build the capacity of developing country researchers

There is a strong call in the DFID research strategy for the capacity of developing country researchers to be strengthened – this comes through also in this lesson learning study review. It calls for DFID to revisit the role of research communication programmes in capacity building of researchers.

In addition, there is a need to explore how the RPCs and DRCs (and indeed other research funding lines) are constructed and how much time and effort is being spent on capacity building of southern research teams for research communication as a direct programme objective and how the allocation of communication resources (the 10%) is being used to build southern capacity and to enable south based institutions to take forward a communication agenda.

It would also be useful to have in place a mechanism whereby emerging capacity building issues identified through RPC/DRCs such as open access; writing skills development, etc., or wider research communication issues at national level can be fed back systematically into DFID Research and the research communication programmes.

6.4 Understand the pathways of research evidence on development outcome

The new research strategy calls implicitly for a *"deepening of the understanding of the pathways of research evidence on development outcomes"* to be better understood and thus supported. This CP study endorses this and calls for new research; learning by doing through working in selected countries and/or with selected user groups; and developing best practice in M and E as well as new models for understanding and measuring uptake and impact.

6.5 Enabling environment and access

Both the new DFID strategy and the review findings place emphasis on the need to work at all levels to remove the barriers to access of research knowledge whether the legal or regulatory environment, the mode of knowledge delivery or the social and or institutional barriers that limit access. Key issues for further research and for action have been identified.

7 Recommendations and the way forward

7.1 Introduction

The DFID research strategy 2008-2013 calls for a balance between creating new knowledge and technology and getting knowledge and technology – both new and existing – into use and to make the most of DFIDs ability to influence policy to make sure research makes an impact. The DFID seeks to invest, by 2010, up to 30% of its research budget in making research available, accessible and useable through a range of means, i.e. some £60m of the anticipated overall allocation of £200m.

This review sought to:

- Understand the lessons emerging from across the current DFID funded research communication programme portfolio, and consider the implications for DFID to deliver commitments in the new research strategy; and to
- Examine how the current portfolio reflects and supports DFIDs commitments in the research strategy, so that DFID can enhance and modify it as appropriate.

The review has examined the portfolio of 17 research communication programmes; invited research communication programmes, researchers and users to complete questionnaires and undertaken key informant interviews. This work has been framed around five broad themes: the enabling environment; the communication of research; supporting researchers to communicate; knowledge management, and research in communication. The findings have been reviewed in the light of the results areas defined in the DFID research strategy.

The current average annual spend by DFID on the 17 research communication programme portfolio is estimated as £8.7m⁸. Over 50% of the CPs have an annual contribution from DFID of between £100,000-300,000 and three programmes have an annual budget of over £1m/annum. Some 30% of the overall budget is allocated to research on issues of communication of research. Across the portfolio the range of activities, modalities, methods and approaches relevant to the communication of research is broad, from websites dedicated to collating and archiving material to specialist training of journalists and the media.

In examining this diverse portfolio and reflecting on it in the light of DFIDs research strategy 2008-2013, it should come as no surprise that there are gaps and misalignments between the current portfolio and the demands of the new strategy and thus the portfolio's fitness for purpose against the new strategy. The current portfolio was initiated before the new DFID strategy and CPs could not have anticipated the significant changes in DFIDs thinking that the new strategy calls for.

These recommendations seek to address the portfolio of programmes in relation to their potential capacity of contribute to the strategy, to identify gaps and interventions that could be expanded and or adapted to help the research

⁸ This estimate is based on the information available to the review team at the time of writing, by dividing the total budget for each programme by the programme duration, and then adding up these averages. In the Financial Year 2008/2009, the actual spend on the 17 programmes was £11m, according to information provided by DFID during an earlier review of this report.

communication programmes' contribute significantly to the results areas of the research strategy. It identifies additional activities that DFID may wish to consider in order to support the communication of research. These latter may be implemented either through new modalities and actions and or together with the current research communication programme partners.

The recommendations seek to recognise and build on what is working well, and on the significant human resources, skills and experience of the teams working within the research communication programmes and their partners and networks.

Whilst we do not believe that there is a case for a radical restructuring of the portfolio, DFIDs should at key points in the life of the individual programmes i.e. mid-term reviews, end of programme evaluations, etc., review both the planned and intended outputs from the given programme, and their capacity and interest to realign with the new strategy. In this way, a transition over time can be made. Those programmes willing and able to adapt should be strengthened and supported to enable the future portfolio to better deliver on DFID results areas.

Whilst the recommendations seek to address the portfolio as a whole, in some cases specific programmes are identified to illustrate or contextualise.

The **six main recommendation** domains emerging from this review are:

- Strengthen the research communication programmes portfolio and begin a process of alignment with the DFID research strategy
- Add value to DFIDs overall investment in research and research communication
- Strengthen user demand
- Raise the international profile of research in development change
- Build research and research intermediary capacity in developing and middle income countries
- Increase support to research on research communication

The section 7.2 below details these recommendation domains. This is followed by a section outlining the proposed way forward in section 7.3.

7.2 Recommendations

7.2.1 Strengthen the research communication programmes portfolio and begin a process of alignment with the DFID research strategy

Re-enforce the overall portfolio

The principle activities/mode of operation of the research communication programmes in the DFID portfolio fall into four broad categories – the “knowledge attic”, the “knowledge publisher”, the “knowledge pump” and the “knowledge wheel”. The level of interactivity between the demand and supply side of knowledge – a key to the implementation of DFIDs research strategy - is weakest in the “knowledge attic”, and highest in the “knowledge wheel”.

The following actions relate to the specific categories of programmes.

Improve sign-posting and search engines to increase usability of programmes

Given a felt concern by users of information overload and the increasing use of on-line services as a key mechanism to search for research knowledge and evidence, the need for better sign-posting mechanisms to help users find the portal to meet their needs is evident. DFID funded and non DFID funded communication programmes which seek to collect, store and enable access of research papers and resources, function in a competitive market place. They also compete with specialised websites and information portals of centres of excellence, academic associations, and professional journals as well as portals of research institutions including those of DFID funded RPC/DRCs and other research programmes. A better means to enable users to identify portals that best meet their needs and/or to enable them to move between portals is required.

Action

Opportunities for enhanced networking, in particular for those research communication initiatives that have a global focus and large-scale 'supply' of research findings (*"the knowledge attic"* and *"the knowledge publisher"*), should be considered, including AGRIS, R4D, SciDev.Net, GDNNet and MK4D. This should involve also strengthening links with non DFID funded research communication programmes and or other search engines. These programmes should systematically improve their usability, in response to feedback from users, to ensure that users can quickly and easily find the information they are looking for.

DFID should, ideally together with other donors, support a mechanism that enables users to find the most appropriate research communication tool for their purpose. This could be web based and include an easy to use search facility that will guide users to the programme most appropriate for their needs. Incremental investment should be allocated to enable this to happen.

Strengthen the "knowledge publisher" and "knowledge pump"

The link between CPs that produce research products such as syntheses, policy notes, etc., for specific users and the user is weak. Although programmes perceive that their products are targeted to particular user groups, the evidence that these reach and are used by such target groups is inadequate.

Action

The level of investment in the *"knowledge publisher"* and *"knowledge pump"* programmes should be increased as and when the relevant programmes demonstrate systematic linkages with target audiences, and where a clear demand structure and embedded feedback mechanism is in place.

The lack of or inadequate support to strengthen users' capacity to demand knowledge needs to be addressed. This may be undertaken in partnership with specific CPs or through separate mechanisms. Thus incremental support to *"knowledge publisher"* and *"knowledge pump"* type programmes should go hand in hand with support to user groups.

Enable "knowledge wheel" programmes to be better embedded within the wider development process

Considerable innovation has been shown by the research communication programmes which focus effort within the *"knowledge dialogue /wheel"* and indeed those CPs with elements of such work. Such work should be expanded including building stronger links with regional and national development institutions. Good practice should be scaled up.

Action

For those programmes that are directly engaged at the level of the "*knowledge dialogue /wheel*", DFID needs to provide increased support to ensure that their activities add value to new investments in for example strengthening the user demand side and linking local researchers into the knowledge process. These programmes can play a key role in any DFID support to devolved regional structures.

For those programmes offering highly specialist training such as Fostering Trust and Transparency in Governance and SjCOOP, there is scope to increase both their coverage and outreach, including strengthening linkages with south based institutions and networks.

Address longer term sustainability

Funding mechanisms

Whilst the majority of programmes receive funding from other sources additional to DFID, some seven of the 17 research communication programmes are solely funded by DFID approximately 33% by value of the portfolio. These programmes are particularly vulnerable to changes in DFID priorities and funding ability. Some programmes have time-bound activities such as the research-focussed programmes and as such may not be cause for concern however those programmes with longer term institutional commitments including Agfax/New Agriculturalist and Practical Answers who are solely dependent upon DFID for funding are placed at risk as they are subject to single donor decision taking processes.

Nearly all programmes raised their concern about funding variability and short term funding commitments of donors including DFID. Research communication programmes called for longer term funding commitments and policy consistency by donors including by the DFID.

Action

For co-funded programmes and those funded solely by DFID who are seen to be effective and efficient in their contribution to the global development objectives and who offer specific services, new modalities for funding need to be sought to place them on a more sustainable funding base. DFID should play a role with other potential sponsors to help to develop new financing modalities.

Efforts could also be made to link smaller programmes either with larger research communication programmes, where they may offer unique incremental services and/or with south-based institutional structures where they might both attract additional funding as well as demonstrate greater impact through working in partnership. Examples of such structures include the regional centres of excellence in research communication, regional economic communities in Africa and their respective thematic working groups, country level sector platforms (agricultural working group etc.), and other DFID convened working groups at country, regional and international levels.

Programme evaluation and review

It was not the responsibility of this lesson learning study to comment in specific programmes. However, it is noted that many CPs complete their current phase of funding during 2009. Mechanisms to guide DFIDs investment choice and to help DFID to guide and advise programmes on how best to prepare funding proposals needs to be put in place.

Action

DFID should establish a set of benchmarks against which to guide future research communication programme (re)investment and to inform its own discussions with donor partners where current and new programmes are co-financed. This should be guided by findings of this review and would include for example, sectoral and geographic coverage; how and in what way the outputs link to the DFID results areas; whether and how linkages are established with DFID funded research, the nature of those linkages, capacity to demonstrate linkages with users, etc.

Provide a balanced sectoral coverage for research communication

In reviewing the DFID supported research communication programme portfolio, there is under-investment in the communication of research findings and evidence in the sectors of health and sustainable agriculture relative to DFID's current and planned commitment to the generation of research outputs in these sectors.

Action

Together with key interest and user groups, DFID should review whether this shortfall is a barrier to knowledge transfer in these two sectors. Such a review should be done in conjunction other DFID funded communication investments not covered by this review such as Research Into Use (with its focus on agriculture) and non DFID-funded research communication programmes working on agriculture and health to ascertain the real level of shortfall.

If there is a shortfall, it is recommended that DFID seeks to redress the imbalance of sectoral coverage within DFID funded CPs and non DFID funded research communication programmes as necessary to align with the current and anticipated levels of investment in research generation for these key sectors.

Strengthen sourcing of knowledge from the south

Whilst the geographic focus of research communication aligns well with DFID's geographic focus of interest in SSA and South Asia, the sourcing of research knowledge requires some rebalancing in favour of material generated in the south and in particular from SSA.

Action

In addition to longer term efforts to strengthen south based researchers' quality and output of research findings, DFID should explore with key research communication programmes innovations to secure greater southern researcher-generated content through, for example, additional support to GNet and other relevant programmes. This might include increasing the level of awards available to south based researchers for the writing up and sharing of research evidence and support for translation facilities (in particular Spanish-English-French) for sharing within SSA and between Latin America and SSA/South Asia.

Ensuring that work undertaken by south based researchers is properly acknowledged and highlighted within RPC/DRCs also needs urgent attention. Attention to these needs to be carried through to the DFID supported R4D.

Upgrade programme quality within the portfolio and support a community of practice

Although shared events and networking takes place between the different DFID funded research communication programmes, this is weakly formalised and is largely unsupported. Different programmes have developed good practice in particular areas, but do not systematically share this with other CPs. The different programmes, all with relatively small discretionary budgets, need to work together to share learning and upgrade practice to the standard of the 'leaders' in the field.

Action

DFID should support a structured mechanism to generate and apply good practice. This should, where applicable, lead to:

- collection, review and sharing of best practice
- generation of guidelines on: training and mentoring of researchers, media and journalists; M&E; guidelines for research communicators on the preparation of synthesis and short policy notes, better user targeting, enabling relevant outputs from DFID-supported research on communication to be reviewed and taken up through CPs
- harmonisation of practice and development of codes of practice on for example - synthesis of research and ethical practice; quality assurance
- agreed standard practice - as a minimum - that research communication programmes demonstrate their commitment to reaching both female and male users by differentiating their users by gender
- taking forward of structured peer review mechanisms for example on M&E.

This could build on existing communities of practice, for example the UK based Research Communication M&E group and foster regular shared learning events. It may also call for new structures to be supported in particular those that engage the participation and leadership from south based research communication intermediaries.

Communities of practice in the south should be supported independently and be able to draw down support from northern communities as required.

Specific effort should be made to link northern communities of practice with existing and or new communities of "research communication" practice in the south. A network of communities of practice could be envisaged.

Secure more equitable dialogue between DFID and the research communication programmes

Managers of research communication programmes supported by DFID felt that a more open and equitable dialogue between them and DFID's Policy and Research Division to take forward the undoubtedly complex range of issues on the communication of research would lead to better understanding by both parties, shared learning and would help DFID to develop and implement better their medium and longer term investment in this sector.

Action

DFID should open up space and support better and more strategic dialogue between DFID and DFID-funded research communication programmes to explore linkages, value addition and to identify key gaps and future partnerships both between DFID funded research communication programmes and other interest groups inside and outside of DFID.

It should also put in place a research communication framework and action plan, in line with the new DFID research strategy and the wider communication strategy. This would lay the ground for transparency and a more open dialogue.

7.2.2 Add value to DFIDs overall investment in research and research communication

Strengthen the links between DFID funded research and the research communication programmes

The research communication programme portfolio does not seem to be well known by or linked to the majority of the DFID funded RPCs/DRCs and other supported research programmes such as the CGIAR, either for the purposes of communication of findings, for capacity building of researchers - in particular in the south, or in the development of researcher-led outreach or communication strategies. The "10% review" is almost silent on the relationship between the RPCs' allocation to communication and activities within the research communication programme portfolio.

Action

A concerted effort should be made to "market the research communication programme portfolio" to DFID-funded research programmes – the RPCs, DRCs and other key DFID research investment. The following action should be considered:

- Assist DFID supported RPCs and DRCs to understand better the services that are available for the communication of research in partnership with DFID supported research communication programmes and non DFID-funded research communication programmes, e.g. an annual fair or open day.
- Common interest CPs could be encouraged to market jointly their services e.g. training of researchers in writing, awareness of the role of research and researchers in policy processes and development change, etc.
- Seek to realign the mechanisms for research communication within the RPCs and DRCs to ensure that the southern partners are empowered to take forward research communication relevant to their constituencies and are supported by the work of CPs as applicable
- Support researchers to learn by doing, i.e. set up a responsive fund for innovative initiatives on getting research into policy and/or development change and uptake, potentially in partnership with research communication intermediaries including where relevant DFID supported CPs.

7.2.3 Strengthen user demand

Decentralise and work at different levels and with different user groups to remove barriers to access and increase impact

The relationship between research generation, the work of research communication programmes and the use of research by all type of users is weak.

At present CPs are relatively unfocussed in their targeting of user groups and the mechanism and constraints on uptake remain poorly understood. However,

through working together in a given context (regional – country – thematic) research communication programmes will learn more about the specific users' needs and engage within a research – intermediation - policy change process. DFID's proposed work through for more devolved structures offers such a setting. Selected and relevant CPs should be key partners in such.

To be effective, both the supply and demand sides of knowledge generation and uptake need to be strengthened. In general, research outputs must be seen to generate options, not simple or single answers. Such options can be taken forward into debate by the different interest groups (civil society, donors, public sector, private sector, parliamentarians, etc) thereby working towards policy change or investment decisions.

By working at local level, DFID should also seek to raise the profile and value of research i.e. the building of "knowledge economies" where research is valued as a driver of development.

DFID should seek to address the incentive framework for both research institutions and researchers to engage in research communication.

Action

At country/regional level: Working in selected countries, DFID should build on or create new platforms, coalitions and fora for multi-stakeholder interactions to enable research uptake and secure enhanced development impact through better use of evidence, knowledge and research products. This should bridge key gaps e.g. between users' needs for practical, contextualised information and the research providers' information delivery.

In order to support the demand side of research, in addition to continuing to 'pump' research to users, DFID should develop a mechanism (e.g. a challenge fund) to support existing or newly emerging user networks (fora / stakeholder platforms etc.) and facilitate the interface between the research generators and users. This could add substantial value to platforms already supported by DFID at national or regional level.

Whilst seeking new ways to strengthen the capacity of users to demand and use research, the need to work with secondary intermediaries to ensure development impact needs to be better understood.

Work on the above could initially be done on a pilot basis, and potentially be aligned to any support by DFID for more devolved structures, with strong lesson learning and monitoring and evaluation components. A special focus should be given to fostering South- South learning on good and innovative practice.

At international level: Strategies to support key user groups at international level such as sectoral donor platforms on e.g. health or education or NGO/civil society platforms to link with research providers, should also be explored.

Enable DFID to utilise research evidence better for policy and development investment

DFID is a major intended beneficiary of research outputs, however, structural linkages between RPC/DRCs, the CPs, and DFID at HQ and country offices are weak. As a learning organisation DFID should seek to ensure that research communication is mainstreamed within its policy and bilateral programmes and investment.

Action

Raise the profile of the DFID-supported research communication programmes within DFID.

Stimulate demand for research outputs and evidence within DFID's policy processes at HQ level. The targeting of landmark events in international development (for example UN meetings on MDGs, Food Security, etc) may be one key entry point for joint action between the CPs, DFID supported research and DFID as a user. This may align with above recommendation on strengthening international user demand.

DFID should seek to build strategic alliances between specific research communication programmes, geographic departments and country programmes. For example, DFID is undertaking significant investment on the legal and regulatory framework for communication e.g. within governance programmes for fragile states such as Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq and Afghanistan, yet linkages are not being made explicitly between relevant CPs such as CommGap and the DFID governance and conflict/humanitarian HQ and country teams. In the same vein, InfoDEV has done some important work on ICT regulation; DFID HQ and country programmes could encourage use of these guidelines at national level, as part of governance reform programmes around the world. DFID is supporting the demand side of governance through the GTF (Governance and Transparency Fund), yet the GTF together with DFID does not encourage grantees to promote evidence-based decision within public policy.

DFID should also support DFID country offices to identify research information and knowledge needs among its development partners, including aid recipients at national and regional levels, and link them with research communication programmes and relevant primary research generators. Specifically, DFID should strengthen its brokerage role in ensuring that relevant evidence can contribute to evidence based policy making by national partners in for example taking investment decisions within the framework of direct budgetary support, poverty reduction strategy papers and related national plans.

7.2.4 Raise the international profile of research in development change

Strengthen and support donor dialogue on research communication

DFID is committed to the harmonisation of development assistance through the Paris Declaration. Research communication has been on the agenda of the International Forum of Research Donors (IFORD) but has yet to be taken forward with a high level of commitment. Through this platform and/or others such as those within the OECD DAC (Development Assistance Committee) or the OECD POVNET (Promoting Pro-Poor Growth) groups, donor partners need to work together with increased commitment to address systemic issues of both the communication of research as well as the wider issues of ICT access in developing and emerging market economy countries.

Action

Initiate and develop a joint programme of work with international research funders and bi and multi-lateral development agencies to:

- Raise the profile and debate around the importance of research communication within the development community and partner countries. This might build on the work of BBC WST on building links and sharing

practice between the media and communications' community on the one hand, and development researchers and practitioners on the other

- Learn lessons, innovate and promote good practice in research communication, including specifically deepening the understanding of the impact pathways of alternative models of delivery to different user groups
- Foster better co-ordination of funding in the field of research communication and seek new funding modalities
- Promote open access to research knowledge (in particular where it has been generated with public funding)
- Develop new frameworks for an internationally acceptable peer review process that gives easier and faster access for southern researchers
- Support more effective research communication at national and regional levels, including and mechanisms for engagement with national policymakers
- Stimulate demand for research evidence within global development policy communities.
- Develop and trial robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to show the impact of research communication and uptake, and to mainstream adoption, share outcomes of this work and review implications for future funding of research and of mechanisms and structures to foster research uptake.

Through the provision of professional and financial support to partnering with other donors, DFID will increasingly be recognised as a lead contributor on research communication. DFID may wish to establish formal linkages with key like-minded donors working in this field.

7.2.5 Build research and research intermediary capacity in developing and middle income countries

Strengthen the capacity of developing country researchers

DFID needs to work with selected research communication programmes and others to build the capacity of south-based researchers. This should focus on both the quality of research and the communication of findings.

Action

Activities would include:

- Ensure increased access to online journals and off line services for researchers
- Provide bursaries to support travel of south based researchers to international conferences
- Support, as part of a multi-donor initiative, the development of new frameworks for an internationally acceptable peer review process that gives easier and faster access for southern researchers
- Support global initiatives and systems that establish and maintain quality-assured science
- Support more effective communication of quality-assured Southern research both within countries and regions and contributing to the international discourse
- Support national research institutions in their communication strategies and in their linkages with research intermediaries and end users
- Pilot new models/platforms and partnerships in selected countries

Strengthen national and regional centres of excellence in research communication and ICT

Much of the capacity building expertise in research communication is held within development focused institutions and organisations in the north. There is a need to build strong centres and networks in the south of both trainers and research intermediaries – media, journalists etc. In developing such a programme DFID should draw on both north and south based expertise. It should include developed countries' own experience and skills in applying research knowledge and evidence within developed countries' own policy and investment.

Action

DFID, working with others, should seek to strengthen regional and national bodies and networks who offer services in training and capacity building of researchers and intermediaries, for example the Information Training and Outreach Centre for Africa (ITOCA) whose aim it is promote and build capacity for scientists, researchers and information professionals on the use of electronic resources in Sub Saharan Africa (linked with MK4D); the Associations of Science Journalists in Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda and Ghana (linked with SjCOOP), who seek to build capacity of science journalists; the proposed Centre of Excellence in public record management (linked with Foster Trust and Transparency in Governance); networks of librarians; and, the work of key regional bodies, for example UNECA, in their efforts to strengthen the role of science and technology, including ICT, within the knowledge economies of SSA. This may be undertaken in partnership with research communication programmes already working with such bodies and/or through direct support.

In taking forward capacity-building efforts in the south with researchers and communication intermediaries, DFID should call for joint proposals from within and outside of the DFID funded research communication programmes and with partners in the north and south. DFID should also look at research on communication and ICTs development in the north (e.g. work on the uptake of research in the Canadian national health service) and screen its applicability for development.

7.2.6 Increase support to research on research communication

Strengthen research on research communication and improve the outreach and uptake of research findings

Approximately 30% of the current DFID portfolio is committed to research into research communication. Most of this work is in areas which are relevant to both international and local policy and practice in research communication. The mechanisms to ensure that the findings of this research are disseminated and taken up by interest groups, varies by programme. The evidence of use and uptake is patchy. In a few cases, the research is directly linked to DFID's country programmes' policy or investment, however there is little evidence that research findings have influenced substantively the workings of the remainder of the research communication portfolio.

There is a relevant body of knowledge on research uptake and use available in the developed countries (in the UK for example the work of the Research Unit for Research Utilisation), which is currently little known and little used in development research and communication circles. This shortcoming needs to be addressed.

Finally, a set of new research themes have been identified through this review and in preliminary discussion with CPs. Many of these areas of research warrant additional funding support. These include work on: the changing communication and media landscape; ICTs as part of a rapidly changing communication environment; the role of media and communication in development; and, the influence of communication on policy change.

Action

- Build on and share what is known in the developed countries to inform development support. Undertake critical literature review and case study evidence on findings from research use in the north which can provide new insights for research communication in the south, share lessons and review implications
- Work with those programmes that undertake research into the communication of research and explore improved and new modalities for uptake by relevant user groups including donors and other CPs
- Support an ongoing programme of research which builds on the current portfolio as necessary and takes on new priority areas of work.

7.3 The Way Forward

7.3.1 Develop a research communication framework and action plan

The research communication programme portfolio is one part of DFID's programme of work which seeks to ensure that research knowledge and technology generated is put into use including enabling evidence based policy to deliver positive development outcomes.

The recommendations from this review must be set alongside the emerging debate on how to embed research communication within the RPCs and DRCs (the "10% review"), and how DFID can develop new approaches to enhancing development impact through working more strategically at national and regional levels i.e. the Regional Research Units' review. In so far as it was possible this review has reached out to both the RPCs/DRCs and the linkages between them and the research communication programmes as well as addressed wider issues that could be taken into account in the development of more devolved structures.

This review endorses the proposal by DFID to prepare a research communication framework and an associated integrated action plan set within the framework of the DFID 2008-2013 research strategy. Such a framework would bring together the various streams of work.

Whether or not such a strategy is prepared, there are a series of steps – listed below - that can be taken to strengthen both the research communication programme portfolio and to embed research communication services, policy and practice into the wider work of DFID, DFID's developing country partners, other development partners including other donors.

7.3.2 Strengthen DFID as a user of research and as an international champion of research into use

Strengthen DFID's capacity to use research and value research communication

Supported by senior management, DFID should put in place an enhanced structure to strengthen its internal capacity as a learning organisation to increasingly use research outputs, knowledge, evidence and products both for its own policy and investment and to assist country partners.

Specifically in line with the implementation of the new research strategy and as a practical means to take this forward, DFID could:

- Hold open days/events to provide the research communication programmes with the opportunity to share their ideas and approaches with policy and geographic divisions and to foster linkages between CPs and DFID teams. Such a series of events may be undertaken in conjunction with RPCs/DRCs on a geographic or thematic basis
- Identify landmark international events and develop a programme of action to ensure both that relevant research evidence informs policy and that a communications' programme is in place at all levels to support dialogue and debate around the key issues by relevant users e.g. civil society, parliamentarians etc.
- Set up a challenge fund for use at country level by DFID staff and their national partners to support to strengthen research uptake
- Work with fragile states and DFID teams on new models of research communication

Strengthen and support donor dialogue on research communication

Fund and actively support donor dialogue and develop multi-donor joint programmes of work on the communication of research.

Establish a multi-country investment fund to strengthen southern research communication networks and centres of excellence

For the longer term sustainability of communication of research and ensuring research is put to development use and that policy is informed by evidence, networks of southern communication practitioners including networks and centres of excellence need to be strengthened. Ideally this support should be embedded within DFID and or multi-donor programmes of institutional capacity building within a given country or region rather than as stand-alone projects.

Such support should draw on the skills and expertise of DFID supported research communication programmes as necessary. This activity maybe embedded and operationalized through the proposed Resource Centre (see below).

Establish a draw down fund to service developing country needs for advisory support for legal and regulatory reform of the ICT sector

The work of CommGAP, ICT4D and others, has made major inroads in developing good practice and other guidelines for legal and regulatory reform. Indeed DFID is working in key countries to address these issues. There may be a case to speed up the pace of change by making available a drawdown or challenge fund to support countries utilise in a practical manner the guidelines and expertise available internationally. The need and processes should be explored further with interested partners. This activity maybe embedded and operationalized through the proposed Resource Centre (see below)

7.3.3 Establish a Resource Centre on "Communication and Media"

The overall objectives of such a Resource Centre would be to support:

- DFID to become a leader in the field of research communication providing strategic support to DFID Research and to key DFID Departments embedding research knowledge into policy and investment
- the CPs in their lesson learning and improved practice
- the RPCs/DRCs in their direct communication efforts and capacity building of southern partners in communication
- possible future DFID investment in more devolved structures for taking forward better research communication at local and regional levels.

Value is added by creating a Resource Centre which operates a research component together with lesson learning, and service provision. It would strategically facilitate linkages between research communication programmes, between the research communication programmes and DRCs/RPCs, and between research communication programmes funded by DFID and those funded by other donors.

Specifically, it would work on the following activity areas:

- Undertake or commission action research into key priority themes
- Identify innovation, validate and share good practice including work and approaches generated in developed countries
- Sponsor and support strategic training of researchers for better communication, and research communication intermediaries in particular those in the south
- Provide an advisory service to researchers, users and CPs. This might include: support to RPCs in the development of their communication strategies; to CPs on M and E; to DFID in their work in more devolved structures and with fragile states
- Host learning activities and networking between research communication networks of practitioners including shared learning events
- Manage a challenge fund for groups/networks or platforms to develop processes, systems and structures to enable them to use research more effectively. This would be demand driven and focus mainly on setting up processes for using evidence better
- Act as a secretariat and resource for DFIDs' participation and input into a donor dialogue and joint action
- Act as an anchor/resource to link and network with other research communication bodies/networks on behalf of DFID.

On mode of functioning, it would:

- Comprise a consortium of individuals and/or institutions in both the north and south with expertise to both manage the programme of work and undertake specific streams of work including some advisory functions
- Host a series of accredited expert individuals or groups that can be used on a draw down basis by agreed users (RPC/DRCs, CPs, and other networks)
- Manage an award challenge programme for innovation in, for example, M&E
- Manage a competitive fund for researchers and user groups to take forward pilot work in research communication.

This programme should be largely undertaken in the south and by southern teams. It would not seek to duplicate the efforts of the research communication programmes but to add value.

When piloting innovation and new approaches at country, regional level or in undertaking research, the Resource Centre would work whenever possible in partnership with interested research communication programmes, RPCs/DRCs, and or user groups /networks to ensure maximum uptake and to build capacity within programmes through practice.

7.3.4 Strengthen selected research communication programmes

In the light of the recommendations, develop a detailed action plan to strengthen and support research communication programmes within the current DFID supported portfolio. Accompany the current portfolio as it transitions from its current profile to one that better meets DFID results areas as outlined in the DFID research strategy. This requires both an increase in investment in the portfolio and accompanying new investments in particular for support to the "demand side" of research uptake and use.

Annex 1 Terms of Reference

Title

Learning lessons on research uptake and use: a review of DFID's research communication programmes

Background

DFID's new Research Strategy

DFID published its new research strategy for 2008 – 2013 in June of this year [<http://www.research4development.info/FeatureResearchStrategy.asp>]. The strategy pledged to:

- Strike a balance between creating new knowledge and technology and getting knowledge and technology – both new and existing – into use;
- Make the most of our ability to influence policy to make sure research makes and impact;
- use different methods of funding to join up national, regional and global research efforts, so that they are more relevant to what matters most to developing countries and to achieve a bigger impact on poverty reduction;
- Redouble our efforts to strengthen developing countries' capability to do and use research; and
- Help our partners predict and respond to development challenges and opportunities beyond the 2015 target date for achieving the MDGs.

The emphasis on the uptake and use of research in these pledges is high, and DFID has committed to spend up to 30% of the total £1bn committed to research 'in making research available, accessible and useable through a range of means.'

The working paper on research communication which accompanies the Strategy [http://www.research4development.info/PDF/Outputs/Consultation/DFIDWPRescomm_LOWRES.pdf] sets out five key areas of work which will need to be addressed in order to deliver against the 'uptake and use' elements of the strategy. These are:

- **Research on Communication** including research into the media and it's role in research uptake; partnerships and processes of engagement and how this supports the use of research; the role of ICTs in research uptake and development more generally, and research uptake and evidence informed policy
- **Supporting researchers to communicate** including improving the incentives to communicate research; building skills at individual and institutional level to communicate; and strengthening the demand for evidence in policy and practice.
- **Communication of research** including making existing information more accessible; analysis and synthesising research to provide tailored information services; and more harmonised and effective communication of research

- **The enabling environment for research uptake and use**, including building coalitions at national level to use research better, supported by international learning networks, and supporting intermediaries.
- **Knowledge management** including more systematic M&E of research so that its contribution to outcomes can be made visible; more robust processes to assess the impact of research communication on development outcomes and; more systematic learning across DFID based on its research portfolio.

Delivering the research strategy: uptake and use

Central Research Department's communication team is responsible for taking the lead on delivery of the uptake and use components of the research strategy. That does not mean that the team will undertake all the work required, but that it will also support others, within DFID and externally, to deliver against them where appropriate. This will include integrating communication into existing and new research programmes, as well as supporting stronger links between research and policy.

The team is also responsible for guiding and quality assuring the communication components of Research Programme Consortia, who are required to spend 10% of their overall research budgets on communication and engagement activities as defined by a Communication Strategy.

The Communication team already has a large programme portfolio which supports the commitments in the strategy relating to uptake and use. They include long-standing contracts with research intermediaries, programmes working with the media in-country to get research to those who need it, research programmes on ICTs and development, and a number of 'development communication' programmes looking at the role of the media in development. The 2008 budget for these programmes is £11M.

This portfolio has developed over a number of years through an organic process, and although it has served DFID well to-date, may not provide the most strategic response to delivering the new strategy. We need to learn from what we have supported so far, and bring this learning to bear as we look to the future.

In particular, we need to understand what lessons are emerging from across the portfolio of programmes, and the implications of this for DFID. We need to get a sense of what activities have the potential to go to scale, what opportunities there are for expanding the funding base for programmes, how we can make more use of programme outputs, and how to be more strategic in our funding decisions.

We need to review how the current portfolio of activities reflects and supports our commitments in the research strategy so that we can enhance and modify it as appropriate. This could include looking at the way the programmes are managed; their strategic approach to delivery; their 'cross-fertilisation' of results between projects; and their 'value-added' over and above the programme objectives.

We need to get a sense of how to balance the portfolio in terms of supply and demand-driven activities, as well as how to balance sectorally specific and more cross-cutting work.

Linking to other processes

The '10% study': DFID has also commissioned a review of our communication support to Research Programme Consortia (RPCs). A minimum 10% of an RPC budget should be allocated to communication, and DFID has provided guidance as well as technical support to the consortia to help them deliver against this commitment. It will be important to consider the learning from this study when making recommendations to DFID about its research communication programmes.

Regional Offices: DFID is now in the process of planning how to structure itself to deliver the new research strategy. A major new component of this structure will be decentralised research services, aimed at promoting South-South learning and research to policy linkages. It will be important to consider the role that the communication programmes could play in supporting these offices, and the consultants will need to work closely with the team tasked with designing them.

Annex 1: – Summary of CRD communication programmes - http://www.research4development.info/PDF/Articles/Comms_Team_Activities.pdf

Objectives

The objectives of the lesson learning exercise are to:

- Understand what lessons are emerging from across the portfolio of programmes, and the implications of this for DFID to deliver commitments in the new research strategy
- Examine how the current portfolio of activities reflects and supports our commitments in the research strategy, so that we can enhance and modify it as appropriate.

This should be achieved by:

- Drawing together and analysing existing learning from across the current portfolio (as well as the Mid-term reviews of the Health RPCs and the Research-into-Use review).
- Identifying key learning points from this analysis which can inform DFID's future work in this area
- Understanding of other donor-related programmes
- Identifying gaps in this learning which are needed to inform DFID's future work in this area, and undertaking work to fill these gaps, where appropriate
- Making recommendations based on this learning to DFID about how to modify its current portfolio of programmes to better support the delivery of the research strategy.

Outputs

1. A lesson learning report which includes

- A summary of existing learning resources across the Communication programmes
 - Key lessons learnt from the programmes as they relate to the new research strategy
 - Observations from other key donors, in particular co-funders of DFID funded communication programmes, on their research communication strategies and relevant interests
 - Recommendations to DFID based on this learning on how to build on and strengthen the programmes it supports in order to deliver the research strategy
2. Bespoke, in-depth studies of specific issues to address gaps in the learning provided by existing reports / evaluations etc.
 3. A presentation to DFID staff outlining the above
 4. A presentation to DFID-funded programmes to share the lesson-learning component of this work.

Scope of work

This work will take part in two phases. Phase 1 will include a review and analysis of the current material relating to the research communication programmes. Phase 2 will include undertaking bespoke, in-depth studies identified in phase one.

Phase 1

The consultants will:

- Use a short inception phase to plan for the review, which will include in-depth discussions with DFID, *[September 2008]*
- Review of documentation and data gathering. *[Oct 2008]*
- Undertake the review itself, including consultation with all 17 communication programmes (as per list from DFID – excluding the Africa Health Infoway), and in-depth interviews with research generators and at least 40 programme stakeholders (including users / 'recipients' of programme outputs, research generators, DFID and international organisations, to be agreed with DFID). *[Oct to Nov 2008]*
- Undertake a donor survey *[Oct 2008 to Jan 2009]*
- Present a first draft report to DFID for response and comment *[Nov/Dec 2008]*
- Incorporate comments into a final report *[Dec 2008/Jan 2009]*
- Present the lesson-learning component of this work to the programmes themselves *[Jan 2009]*

Phase 2

The consultants will:

- Identify a number of gaps in the learning which require further study and analysis *[Dec 2008/Jan 2009]* (requires first analysis of phase 1 data)
- Agree with DFID which of these areas should be taken forward as bespoke pieces of work *[Jan 2009]*
- Draft (with DFID) Terms of Reference for these pieces of work. *[Jan 2009]*
- Undertake the studies, including visits to a number of key programmes (identified by DFID), and in-depth interviews where required *[Jan/March 2009]*
- Present a first draft report to DFID for response and comment *[Mar 2009]*
- Incorporate comments into a final report *[Mar 2009]*

The consultants should work closely with the lead DFID Adviser (Fiona Power) throughout the life-time of the consultancy.

The review itself should cover lessons learnt (and implications for) the following:

- Research on Communication
- Supporting researchers to communicate
- Communication of research
- The enabling environment for research uptake and use

Research on Communication

We have committed to researching the role of the media in research uptake and use; the role of ICTs in supporting an 'enabling environment' for research uptake; and how evidence informs policy in different aid environments. We have also committed to researching the role of the media in good governance, as part of our governance in challenging environments work stream.

Key learning points to look for here are:

- Have the programmes identified some key research questions in the field of research communication which could be worked up into a substantive study or research programme? What are they?
- To what extent do these research questions support DFID's objectives in this area, and to what extent are they new? (NB: DFID's priorities in areas such as media and governance, and ICTs go beyond CRD and the research strategy).
- How have the programmes assessed the impact of good communication on research outcomes, particularly in getting research into policy and practice?
- From what we have learnt so far, what modalities could be employed to undertake such research (e.g. through existing or new partnerships, funding an RPC, etc.)?
- What does DFID need to do differently to deliver this work stream?

Relevant programmes: InfoDev; ICT4D (IDRC); BBC Research and Policy programme; CommGAP; PANOS Relay; New Agriculturist/AgFax; WFSJ; SciDev.Net; MK4D

Supporting researchers to communicate

We have committed to improving the incentives of researchers to communicate, building the communication skills of researchers, and to strengthen the capacity to use and demand evidence.

Key learning points to look for here are:

- What can our current programmes tell us about providing incentives to researchers to communicate? What are the implications of this for DFID? [NB: this needs to draw on the '10% study']
- What new opportunities have our partners identified for building the capacity of researchers to communicate? How can DFID support this?
- What good practice has been identified by programmes in strengthening the demand for evidence? How can this be replicated and scaled up? Does this learning have policy implications for DFID?
- What role do knowledge brokers play in helping researchers to communicate? What are the implications of this for DFID?
- What influence do stakeholders and research users have on defining the research agenda? How can we strengthen this?
- To what extent have communication initiatives empowered intermediaries and end users of research findings to influence research prioritisation and strategy?
- What does DFID need to do differently to deliver this work stream?

Relevant programmes: PANOS Relay; Fostering trust and transparency in Governance; Agfax and New Agriculturist; WFSJ, Information systems in Agricultural science and Technology (FAO); MK4D; PERii; SciDev.Net

Communication of research

We have committed to making existing research more accessible; analysing and synthesising research to provide tailored information services; and promoting more harmonised and effective communication of research.

Key learning points to look for here are:

- Who is using research, and how?
- Do existing services meet the demand of stakeholder groups already reached (both qualitatively and quantitatively)?
- Are there other (perhaps less visible) stakeholder groups who are missed by the programmes, and if so, who are they?
- Does the existing portfolio of work support the research strategy commitments?
- What is the balance of approaches to the communication of research across the portfolio?
- What are the limiting factors for timely and comprehensive synthesis of research findings? What can DFID do to address these?
- What good practice has been identified in reaching key audiences with relevant and accessible research? How can DFID use this good practice in the future?
- Do any of the programmes focus on enabling equitable access to research users, such as women? What lessons have emerged from this approach and what are the implications of these for DFID?

- What do we know about measuring the impact of research communication on policy and practice? How have the programmes addressed this?
- How can DFID continue to support greater harmonisation of research communication?
- How have current research communication initiatives balanced the need to communicate a diverse range of issues with effectively targeting end users?
- What does DFID need to do differently to deliver this work stream?

Relevant programmes: PERii/INASP; SciDev.Net; Research4Development; Makutano Junction; Mobilising Knowledge 4 Development; GDNNet; Research Africa; PANOS Relay; AgFax/ new Agriculturist; Practical Answers;

The enabling environment for research uptake and use

We have committed to strengthening the enabling environment for research uptake and use, by for example, supporting greater access to intermediary services for getting research into use; and building national-level coalitions and international networks which bring together researchers, communication specialists and NGOs to bridge the gap between researchers and users.

Key learning points include:

- How have the programmes defined the enabling environment for research uptake and use? Does this have implications for DFID's thinking in this area?
- What have the programmes identified as the key impediments to the enabling environment in developing countries? What are the implications for DFID?
- What is the role of South-South collaboration in research communication and how can this be effectively supported by DFID?
- Have the programmes identified researchable themes/questions around this area? What are they?

Relevant programmes: All programmes

Knowledge Management

The Research Strategy commits to developing more robust systems to monitor and evaluate research, in order to show more clearly the contribution of research to positive development outcomes. The issue of Knowledge Management in research will be the subject of a separate study. We have also committed to developing the science of evaluating research communication and its contribution to achieving both research objectives – if within research programmes – and development outcomes.

Key learning points include:

- How do the projects currently evaluate impact and how does this measure up to 'best practice' in the field of M+E of research communication?
- What approaches to knowledge management best identify and communicate issues around research communication that can be used for improving policy and practice?
- How should DFID manage future programmes in order to maximise learning, both within individual programmes, and to show how communication contributes to research uptake, and positive outcomes?

Across all the programmes, consultants should also consider to what extent they have addressed gender equality issues, and what the future opportunities for the programmes are to strengthen the use of a gender perspective in their work. Particular attention should be paid to R4D (www.research4development.info)

Donor priorities

Although DFID is seen as a significant contributor to research uptake and use, there are other established and emerging donors interested in supporting research communication initiatives. Combining and coordinating our efforts with these donors as we deliver the strategy to achieve maximum impact is extremely important.

It is also important that we build greater commitment among donors to support research communication by demonstrating the value it can add to their research portfolio and the global knowledge base.

Key learning points include:

- What are key donors funding in the field of research communication?
- Which donors have made explicit reference to research communication in their policies and funding frameworks? How does this compare with DFID's approach?
- For those donors who do not make reference to this field, what do we know about their views on research communication?
- What, if any, advocacy initiatives (targeted at donors) on research uptake and use exist (this might include production of flyers / workshops, events etc)?

Competencies

The consultancy team should include the following skills:

- Broad expertise and practical experience of Research communication or related disciplines (such as Development Communication, knowledge management and so on)
- Social Development expertise
- Knowledge of DFID, particularly an understanding of DFID's research priorities; experience of working with DFID, both at HQ and country levels.
- A good understanding of M&E, Impact Assessment and lesson learning methodologies.
- Strong organisational skills

Timing

This is an urgent piece of work which requires a relatively quick turn-around, given its scope.

If possible, phase 1 should run from October 2008 to January 2009, with a maximum of 138 consultancy days.

Phase 2 should run from Late 2008 to March 2009, with a maximum of 55 consultancy days.

DFID advisers: Fiona Power, Policy and Research Division

Annex 2 Team composition

Felicity Proctor (Team leader)

An international development consultant, specialising in technical, institutional and policy capability building relevant to rural poverty reduction and economic development. Broad-based understanding of the Department for International Development's (DFID) research strategy, development programmes and policies. Worked for the World Bank on rural strategy development and investment portfolio enhancement and for DFID as a Senior Natural Resources Adviser. Experience of linking evidence-based research to policy and change processes of both the public and private sectors and that of civil society. Current work focuses strengthening of South-South linkages for poverty reduction and rural development, agrifood market development and capacity building of south based institutions.

Barbara Adolph (Project Manager)

Consultant and researcher, with over 18 years experience in advising government agencies, research organisations and civil society organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. Barbara's main area of expertise is supporting sustainable livelihoods through the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of targeted programs and policies, including organisation development and training. Barbara has worked on the challenges in reaching diverse stakeholders and ensuring equitable access to research users. She has undertaken previous work for DFID's Policy and Research Division on lesson learning studies. Barbara has a sound understanding of the processes leading up to the new DFID research strategy, and extensive experience in monitoring, evaluation and lesson learning. Before joining Triple Line Consulting Ltd, Barbara worked as a researcher for the Natural Resources Institute in the UK, ICRISAT (the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics) in India, and the University of Hohenheim in Germany.

Nicholas Atampugre

Over 17 years of experience in development, research and communication with UK based NGOs, DFID, and as a consultant. He combines knowledge of research approaches and methods with in-depth experience of working with government agencies and civil society at a strategic level. He participated in the joint learning review of the outreach and impact of selected CTA products, projects and services, and in a wide range of other strategic development reviews. Atampugre specialises in communicating (through writing) complex issues in clear and simple language and style aimed at a wide readership. He is an experienced PLA practitioner with competence in a broad range of participatory methodologies and is particularly strong in Participatory and Gender Sensitive Monitoring and Evaluation.

Liz Carlile

Communications and marketing expert with a particular expertise in research communications and communications in the development sector. Over ten years senior management experience including founder member, Head of Information Marketing and latterly acting Director Panos London, and currently Director of Communications at the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). Working in organisations with a research focus or a media/campaign style focus. Ten years experience as a freelance consultant and mentor evaluating and advising organisations in the development/voluntary sector and small businesses on their marketing/communications work and strategic planning. As Director of Communications IIED has built up strategic communications across the

organisation – including work to strengthen and share learning from the organisations' experience in research communications and the resulting impact as well as to introduce into IIED more robust monitoring and evaluation and organisational learning of communications activities.

Jackie Davies

An independent communication consultant specialising in development communications, with a key focus on monitoring and evaluation and research communication. Experienced in developing assessment strategies and in reviewing and analyzing effective research communication, Ms Davies also has a solid background in media and ICTs for development including the use of the internet and radio for development communication and advocacy; in participatory developing country radio; in interactive technologies; and in developing radio projects and training. Clients have included a broad range of international non-governmental organisations and UN agencies. Before establishing the Communication for Development (C4D) consultancy in 2005, Ms Davies headed the development of the Oneworld Radio network of websites, and the Radio Unit of the Institute for Democracy in South Africa.

Nikki van der Gaag

Specialises in communication for development, with a focus on gender, refugees, and poverty. She has held senior editorial and communications posts in the voluntary and non-profit sector and now carries out evaluations and strategy work on a wide range of development issues and writing and editing development reports and materials. Her particular strengths include an understanding of challenges related to reaching poor and marginalised groups in society through appropriate media, and giving them a voice to demand relevant information in formats accessible to them.

Mary Myers

An experienced development communications specialist with a good understanding of research communication issues. Main area of specialisation is the use of radio in Africa, particularly in Francophone countries. She has worked on many DFID-funded programmes, notably as media adviser to DFID in the Democratic Republic of Congo. She also spent some time as a consultant within DFID's Social Development Division. She prepared DFID's guidelines on Monitoring and Evaluating Information and Communication for Development Programmes and co-authored the background paper on communications in development for the Commission for Africa. Current interests include the promotion and regulation of the media sector in Africa, using radio for better governance, entertainment-education, gender issues in communications, and evaluating the impact of media interventions in developing countries.

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Annex 4 List of research communication programme staff interviewed

	Programme	Name of person interviewed	Date	Team interviewer
1	Agfax/ New Agriculturalist (Communicating research / contributing to sustainable development) - WRENmedia	Susanna Thorp Director, WRENmedia	20 January 2009	Jackie Davies
2	AGRIS (Information Systems in Agricultural Science and Technology) - FAO	Stephen Rudgard Chief WAICENT Outreach, FAO	15 January 2009	Jackie Davies
3	BBC WST Policy and Research Programme on Role of Media and Communication in Development	James Deane Programme Manager	15 January 2009	Nikki van der Gaag
4	CommGAP (Mainstreaming communication in development) - Multi-donor trust fund with World Bank	Sina Obugbemi Director	14 January 2009	Mary Myers
5	Fostering Trust and Transparency in Governance - Systems in the ICT Environment/ International Records Management Trust	Andrew Griffin Director International Records Management Trust	14 January 2009	Mary Myers
6	GDNet (The electronic voice of GDN) - Global Development Network	Sherine Ghoneim Director	21 January 2009	Nicholas Atampugre
7	ICT4D (Information and Communication Technologies for Development) - DFID – IDRC	Laurent Elder Acacia Heloise Emdon Pan Chaitali Sinha	19 January 2009	Nikki van der Gaag
8	infoDev (Information for Development) - World Bank	Ana Carrasco – Research Communication Tim Kelly ICT Policy Specialist	12 January 2009	Mary Myers
9	Makutano Junction (TV Drama) – The Mediae Trust	David Campbell Director, Mediae	21 January 2009	Jackie Davies
10	MK4D (Mobilising Knowledge for Development) - IDS	Isabel Vogel Director Strategic Learning Initiative Geoff Barnard Head of Information Unit IDS	14 January 2009	Liz Carlile
11	PERii (Programme for the Enhancement of Research Information) - INASP	Sara Gwynn Director, Programmes	16 January 2009	Jackie Davies
12	RELAY (Research Communication Programme) - PANOS	Joanne Carpenter	21 January 2009	Nikki van der Gaag
13	Research Africa – SARIMA / Research Research Ltd. / Research(Africa)(Pty) Ltd, Association of Commonwealth	Diana Coates, Executive Director - SARIMA	14 January 2009	Nicholas Atampugre

	Programme	Name of person interviewed	Date	Team interviewer
	Universities (The ACU)	Peter van Eldik, President-SARIMA	22 January 2009	
14	Practical Answers - Practical Action	Zbigniew Mikolajuk, Programme Manager - knowledge Robert Cartridge, Head of Knowledge and Communications	13 January 2009	Nicholas Atampugre
15	R4D (Research4Development) - CABI / DFID	Martin Parr Project Manager	15 January 2009	Jackie Davies
16	SciDev.Net (The Science and Development Network)	David Dickson Director and Editor	16 January 2009	Jackie Davies
17	SjCOOP (Peer-to-Peer Development and Support of Science Journalism in the Developing World) World Federation of Science Journalists	Jean Marc Fleury, Executive Director, WFSJ	14 January 2009	Liz Carlile