NEW DFID RESEARCH STRATEGY

COMMUNICATIONS THEME

Final report

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AGORA	Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture
ASARECA	Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa
AVLIN	Africa Virtual Library and Information Network
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CIMRC	Communications and Information Management Resource Centre
COARD	Client Oriented Agricultural Research for Development
CRT	Central Research Team
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development
EC	European Community
ELDIS	Electronic Development Information Service
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
ID21	DFID funded Development Research reporting service run by IDS
IDRC	International Development Research Centre, Canada
IDS	Institute for Development Studies
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IFRTD	International Forum for Rural Transport Development
INASP	International Network for Access to Scientific Publications
ILO-ASSIST	International Labour Organisation Advisory Support, Information Services and Training for Employment-Intensive Infrastructure Development Project
Infodev	Information for Development project of the World Bank
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
ISNAR	Institute for Strengthening National Agricultural Research
KaR	DFID's Infrastructure and Urban Development Department's Knowledge and Research Programme
KFPE	Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PERI	Programme for the Enhancement of Research Information
RAWOO	The Netherlands Development Research Assistance Council
SADC	Southern Africa Development Centre
SciDev	Science and Development Network
SDNP	UNDP sponsored Sustainable Development Networking Programme in India
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations program on AIDS/HIV
WB	World Bank
WEDC	Water, Engineering and Development Centre at Loughborough University, UK
WHO	World Health Organisation
WTO	World Trade Organisation

Summary and key recommendations

The *Research for Poverty Reduction* report (Surr et al, DFID 2002) identified the need for better communications to enhance the pro-poor impact of DFID's research programme. This review of Research Communications, subsequently commissioned as one of five studies to develop a new DFID research strategy, maps existing understanding and activity in this area, identifies DFID's comparative advantage and develops a set of proposals for the communications element of the new research strategy. These proposals will enhance the pro-poor impact of DFID's own research and enable the Department to lever the impact of other donors' research programmes by promoting better development research communication throughout the international development research community.

The review identified an emerging understanding that simply communicating the results of research more effectively is not enough to achieve impact on policy or practice (and poverty). Policy processes are complex, and research-based evidence is only one of many competing influences on policy makers, development practitioners and end users. The political context within which research takes place and the complex relationships between research suppliers, users and an increasing range of intermediaries, are often more important than simply delivering the research information. Communication plays a vital role in all three of these processes, and a holistic, systemic approach is required. To achieve impact, development research needs to be undertaken such that it both makes the relevant information accessible, and promotes an enabling environment in which it can be adopted. By repackaging and circulating information between research suppliers and research users, intermediaries and networks are a vital part of this process.

The review identifies four key 'gaps' in the flow of development research information:
- Between the international research community (where most development research is carried out) and international policy makers and practitioners (Gap 1);
- Between the international level and national level (Gap 2);
- Between national level researchers and national level policy makers and practitioners (gap 3);
- And Between the above and end users (Gap 4).

DFID could, through strategic investment in research communications that targets these 'gaps', significantly increase the impact of research for poverty reduction.

While there are many examples of successful approaches to development research communication that address these issues, as well as many successful intermediaries and networks, there are fewer examples of success in creating an enabling environment and indeed very few that approach development research communication in a holistic, systemic way. The review identifies four areas where DFID could develop greater understanding that would improve approaches to development research communications: impact assessment; systemic approaches; the communications context; and the power of incrementalism.

The scale of DFID's research programme and its engagement with many of the more innovative approaches to development communication provides a strong foundation for a more coherent approach to communication in the new research strategy. If DFID can improve its own development research communication, which has been undermined by a supply-driven research agenda, sectoral fragmentation, under-investment and a piecemeal approach to communication, the Department could also lever significant improvements in the impact of other donors' development research.

The following strategy aims to address both issues. It will improve DFID's own development research programmes directly through greater involvement between policy makers, users and researchers in the whole research process, enhance knowledge management, and produce more effective communication. It will also establish a leadership role for DFID in promoting a more systemic approach, and standards and tools for improved development research communications throughout the international research system. This will lead to an improvement in the impact of development research on policy and practice, and ultimately on poverty.

The recommendations are grouped under two key objectives at international, cross-country and national level:
1) Increasing the volume of useful research information that is available, and
2) Creating an enabling environment for research uptake.

Recommendations

At international level (addressing gaps 1 and 2):
Objective One: Increasing the volume of useful research information available
- Strengthen existing and new mechanisms to improve the flow of appropriate research information.
- Improve research knowledge management, communication and dissemination systems within DFID.
- Sift and market new research information through appropriate mechanisms.
- Support global initiatives to create and promote standards for electronic information management.
- Stimulate the development of a single electronic portal through which all DFID and other donor-funded research can be accessed.

Objective Two: Creating an enabling environment for research uptake
- Support collaboration with other organisations to promote a more systemic approach.
- Create international fora and networks for the improvement of research communication.
- Expose policy makers to emerging research results with policy implications for poverty eradication.

Within CRT multi-country research programmes (gaps 2 and 3):
Objective One: Increasing the volume of useful research information available
- Digitise and make existing DFID research knowledge available through the research portal.
- Establish an internet-based database of basic information about all DFID-funded research.
- Develop guidelines to ensure all DFID-funded research activities adopt an effective communications strategy.
- Provide communications training for researchers.

Objective Two: Creating an enabling environment for research uptake
- Provide long term funding for research programmes with a proven record for uptake.
- Develop guidelines to ensure all DFID-funded research programmes engage users and policy makers.
- Encourage greater involvement of Southern researchers, research institutes and think-tanks.
- Undertake research on key research communication issues.

Within countries (gap 4):
Objective One: Increasing the volume of useful research information available
- Provide support in partnership with DFID country offices to synthesise and disseminate country-sponsored research, support in-country communications strategies, ensure all DFID-funded research activities include an appropriate communications strategy.

Objective Two: Creating an enabling environment for research uptake
- Provide support in partnership with DFID country offices to expose policy makers to emerging research results; ensure all DFID-funded research programmes engage users and policy makers; help identify national processes which could strengthen research effectiveness; undertake action-research projects.

Resources

It is difficult to estimate DFID expenditure on research communication activities, but it tends to be around 4% whereas other knowledge agencies spend between 10% and 15%. To be more effective, DFID should aim to spend at least 10% of its research budget on knowledge and communication activities outside the research projects themselves, and to insist that 10% of funds for specific projects are for communication activities. Also, it should reserve between 10% and 25% of the total research grant for research and action-research on communication issues.

The proposed budget seeks to realise the communications objectives outlined in this paper at three different levels. First, to improve procedures within DFID's own research; second to strengthen international systems so that research is easier to access; and third to create more innovative, demand-led research systems. The budgets are allocated to these three strategic areas.

Outcome One: Good communications in the research programmes we commission based on establishing working partnerships between researchers and policymakers or users throughout the research timetable.
- Research knowledge system established for DFID-funded research that generates essential internal and external information building on existing systems and linking with other DFID policy and knowledge systems. (£0.8m p.a.)
- Existing and new DFID research results marketed to northern and southern stakeholders using international protocols and systems. (£2m p.a.)
- Research procedures within DFID-funded research developed and adopted to mainstream communications best practice. (£0.2m p.a.)

Outcome Two: Better international systems for managing research knowledge, so that those who need it can access it.
- Communication best practice promoted through existing international and regional fora of development research stakeholders and intermediaries and though the establishment of a multi-stakeholder consultative group on development research communication. (£0.5m in yrs 1 & 2 *increasing to 2m p.a by yr 3.*)
- Financial support to existing and new international development research communication technologies, networks and initiatives (£0.5m in yrs 1 & 2 *increasing to £5m p.a. by yr 3*).

Outcome Three: Innovative research systems, nationally and internationally, that respond to demand, are evidence-based and improve uptake.
- A bilateral action-research programme exploring innovative communications techniques; the impact of communication activities; the constraints to uptake of research by different user groups; research–policy linkages, the nature of demand, and the potential of communications communities of practice to promote uptake (£0.5m in yr 1, £1m in yr 2 to develop the overall research communications programme *increasing to £4m p.a. by yr 3*).
- Collaborations with (a) existing international development research initiatives e.g. GDN, KPFE, RAWOO, CGIAR etc to explore new communications systems to reflect demand and improve uptake (£2m in yr 2 increasing to £5m p.a by yr 3.) and (b) with IDRC and 3-6 DFID country offices to build capacity and explore new communications systems between research users, producers and intermediaries in their regions (for creating an enabling environment) (£2m in yr 2 increasing to £5m p.a. by yr 3).

Initial Staffing: 2A, 1B, 1C + consultants in 2004,
                            4A, 2B, 2C + consultants in 2005

Funding:

	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3
Outcome 1	£3m	£3m	£3m
Outcome 2	£1m	£1m	£7m
Outcome 3	£0.5m	£5m	£14m
	£4.5	**£9m**	**£24m**

N.B. 10% of bilateral research spend within projects (c.£3m) will be reserved for communications activities, bringing the total research budget expenditure on communications-related activities to £32m

It is also difficult to estimate the number of people involved in DFID-funded research communications since most of the communications activities take place in research projects, resource centres and DFID-funded communication and information services. However, to be more effective and to be able to implement the more strategic approach suggested by this review, an increase in the current number of communications staff located within the CRT (1.5 at professional level) will be necessary. As an example, IDRC employs approx 2.2 communications staff per £million of research spend.

The review suggests that as a minimum DFID would need an extra 5 professional staff within the CRT Communications Section.

1. Introduction, objectives and methods

"Positive and sustainable development, including the eradication of poverty, requires the development and use of new knowledge. New knowledge is also required to provide a basis for development work that goes beyond the mere solving of acute problems[i]." But the process of transforming knowledge – both new and existing – into actions that eradicate poverty is complicated, varies both across culture and within regions, and is not well understood. Strategic communications is vital to this effective transformation.

Following the Surr Report, *Research for Poverty Reduction[ii]*, the Central Research Team (CRT) has commissioned five reviews of different ways of working that will inform the new Research Strategy in December 2003. The review of Research Communications aims 'To develop a set of proposals for the communications element in the Department for International Development (DFID)'s new research strategy. They should enhance its pro-poor impact, develop a better understanding of DFID's comparative advantage in this area at global and national levels, and stimulate better communication of demand and feedback within the overall strategy.'

The communications review was implemented by the Communications and Information Management Resource Centre (CIMRC). It consulted across a wide range of organisations, commissioned a literature review and a series of background papers, and held a workshop to discuss the emerging results with, and gather examples of, best practice from the UK-based Non Government Organisation (NGO) community. A full description of the research process, together with summaries of commissioned work and the workshop, is included in the appendix.

2. The research communications landscape and DFID's role

Research is defined as knowledge activities that deliver a wider 'public good'. It ranges across policy analysis, social science research, scientific and technical research and development of technology[iii]. The methods of conducting research vary across a spectrum extending from 'pure scientific research with global application' (e.g. organic pesticide development) to action research (e.g. gender-sensitive, labour-based road construction approaches). Different kinds of research need different communications approaches to make them useful, accessible and taken up by intended target audiences. There are many institutional actors (public, private and state) and individuals involved in all stages of research generation, dissemination and consumption at local, national, regional and international levels. They interact with each other within formal and informal structures, and collaborate virtually and physically in patterns that are constantly moving. While it is impossible to capture this dynamic research landscape in full, it is useful to try to provide an overview of stakeholders in order to identify gaps and opportunities.

Figure 1 is based on the work of Geoff Barnard at the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) from a DFID-sponsored workshop on Coherence in International Agricultural Information Systems. It underlines the gulf that exists between those that conduct most of the development research and the ultimate beneficiaries, the poor, and helps to indicate where some of the greatest communication challenges lie.

2.1. Dynamics of research communications and identification of gaps
Most development research is carried out by the 'scholarly' research community[iv] (in Box A) within which communications are generally very good, via a whole host of academic and professional publishing channels and networks, both formal and informal. The majority of DFID's research outputs reach this audience through publication in journals.[v] Communication between this 'scholarly' community and development policy-shapers, international media, and international NGOs is generally weak. This is acknowledged by the Royal Society who have set up a Working Group to review the strengths and weaknesses of current practices by researchers in communicating their results, and possible alternatives[vi]. This is the first key communication gap (Gap 1). Research is strongly supply-driven (particularly by Box A).
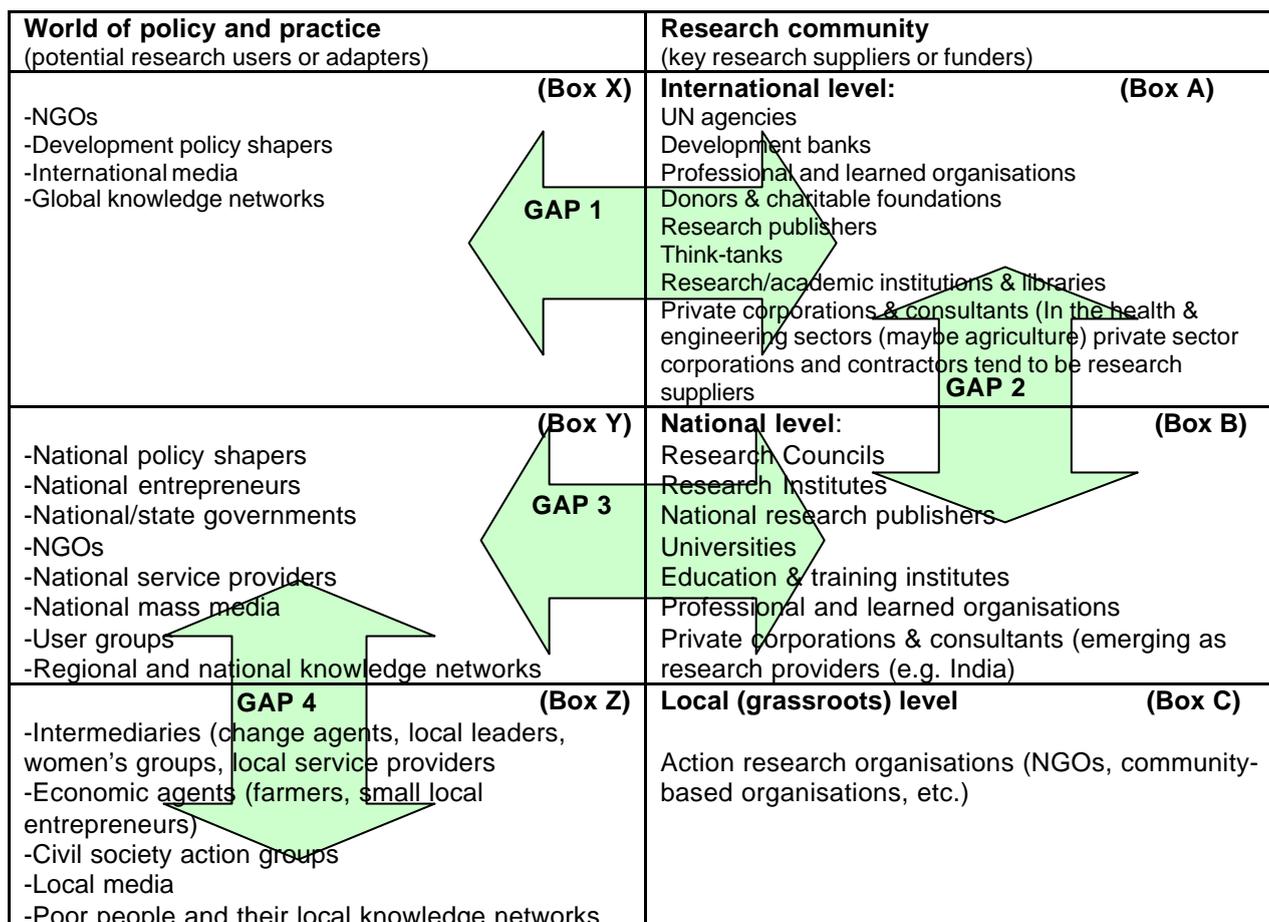
Research is communicated to an international community on an enormous number of web sites maintained by international development and research organisations including The World Bank (WB), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) institutes, Universities, Development Research Institutes, NGOs and think-tanks. Some

focus specifically on research; others include research as part of a wider range of development-related information. Some simply publish raw research reports, others like ELDIS summarise information into and across themes. Some sites, e.g. InfoDev and the Communications Initiative, repackage research information for further distribution to specific audiences by communications professionals (although these have a 'communication for development' rather than a specific research communication focus).   ID21 repackages relevant research findings for policy-shapers and journalists, and forms partnerships with communications organisations such as Panos to reach other audiences. The service uses a number of mechanisms to solicit user comments and gauge demand. Few examples exist of international inter-agency communication initiatives that translate evidence-based research from the global level down through to the grassroots level and vice versa.

Research is also carried out at the national level in developing countries (Box B). While some have thriving and well-connected research communities, most poorer countries do not, so national researchers are largely cut off from international debates – this is the second key communication gap (Gap 2). Where initiatives to coordinate donor support to research are already in place, such as through the regional research networks, these offer good opportunities for simultaneously building capacity in communication for research. In East Africa, the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) Regional Agricultural Information Network provides such an opportunity.

At both international and national levels, there is a significant gulf separating the research community on the right of the diagram, from the worlds of policy and practice on the left. Research findings are not communicated effectively and feedback loops that might indicate demand for research are weak (Gap 3).

Figure 1 - Research Communication Landscape – Architecture and Gaps

World of policy and practice (potential research users or adapters)	Research community (key research suppliers or funders)
(Box X) -NGOs -Development policy shapers -International media -Global knowledge networks	**International level:** **(Box A)** UN agencies Development banks Professional and learned organisations Donors & charitable foundations Research publishers Think-tanks Research/academic institutions & libraries Private corporations & consultants (In the health & engineering sectors (maybe agriculture) private sector corporations and contractors tend to be research suppliers
GAP 1	**GAP 2**
(Box Y) -National policy shapers -National entrepreneurs -National/state governments -NGOs -National service providers -National mass media -User groups -Regional and national knowledge networks **GAP 3**	**National level**: **(Box B)** Research Councils Research Institutes National research publishers Universities Education & training institutes Professional and learned organisations Private corporations & consultants (emerging as research providers (e.g. India)
GAP 4 **(Box Z)** -Intermediaries (change agents, local leaders, women's groups, local service providers -Economic agents (farmers, small local entrepreneurs) -Civil society action groups -Local media -Poor people and their local knowledge networks	**Local (grassroots) level** **(Box C)** Action research organisations (NGOs, community-based organisations, etc.)

Within developing countries, there is another big gap (Gap 4) that prevents knowledge that is available at the national level from reaching down to the grassroots level (e.g. farmers, village health

workers, or local community groups) – and vice versa. Language and literacy issues come into play here, among others that include government policies, legislation and investment. A gulf also exists between those who commission research, conduct research, intermediaries and the ultimate beneficiaries (the poor). For the poor "Not only is their access to information limited, but they are not normally able to make their voices heard and therefore can not engage on equal footing in that communications debate."[vii]

2.2. DFID's current role

DFID is committed to both generating new knowledge and encouraging its take-up into policy and practice[viii]. It supports a range of communications initiatives at different levels, and has shown an increasing commitment to dissemination within research projects as well as funding research projects that explore how different users e.g. the poor, access information[ix]. The establishment of an Information and Communications for Development (ICD) Team with DFID's Information Division, and the increasingly strategic approach taken by other parts of Information Division, will expand DFID's role, understanding and comparative advantage in the broader field of information and communication.   DFID-supported communications activities could therefore be placed in most of the boxes in the above matrix.

Putting a figure on how much DFID spends on communication of research overall is difficult to assess. At the individual research project level and at a programme level, funding arrangements vary considerably and guidelines tend not to be written down.   A recent review of Knowledge Management in the new Policy Division[x] estimates spend on knowledge, information and communication to be between 2% and 5%. This corresponds with other assessments of between 3.3%[xi] and 10%[xii].

2.3. Other bilateral donors' role

Most bilateral and multilateral donor agencies are aware of the importance of communicating research appropriately, and approach it in a variety of ways. First, by developing detailed guides for researchers and practitioners on how to plan their research and communicate in order to influence policy[xiii]; the World Bank's online Development Communications pages[xiv], and guides to field projects – admittedly from the 1990s – are based on the now discredited assumption that improved communication alone will lead to improved participation which will lead to improved development[xv].

Many agencies including the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Dutch donor agency (DGIS), the European Commission (EC), the United Nations (UN) and the Nordic donor agencies believe that 'strengthened research capacity in the South will also improve Southern institutions' capacity to access and take up research produced outside their own national context'[xvi]. The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) places special emphasis on research produced within and by countries in the South and therefore funds at least ten Southern regional research networks[xvii], while the Danish International Development Agency (Danida) and Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD) aim to enhance research capacity through coordination and North-South partnerships[xviii]. Danida has also taken steps to improve communication of its own research and knowledge through maintaining a Research Project Database, containing descriptions of approximately 430 research projects from the 1990s onwards (hosted by the Danish Institute for International Studies, Department for Development Research, www.cdr.dk).

While the majority of the donors still commission most research from research Institutes[xix] and hope better communication will improve its impact, some are exploring a broader range of research approaches that promote evidence-based policy, for example the Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council's work on 'knowledge creep'[xx] and the Joint United Nations programme on AIDS/HIV's (UNAIDS) new framework for communication for HIV/AIDS prevention[xxi] which emphases the importance of the wider environment in research uptake.

Organisations with specific interest in, and commitment to, communications (of both knowledge and research) have a wider range of activities[xxii]. Rockefeller Foundation in particular has spearheaded the debate on innovative ways to assess impact of development communications activities.

3. Findings and analysis

For research-based information to be transformed into actions that reduce poverty, it needs to be accessible and useful. But that on its own is not enough: there needs to be 'an enabling environment'

for research-based information to be translated into action. This section presents the results of the study in these two broad areas and identifies some gaps in current understanding.

3.1. Making knowledge more useful and accessible

Users and potential users of research want 'old' as well as new research knowledge[xxiii]. Users are less interested in whether the knowledge is the result of project experience or academic study, whether it was commissioned from DFID's central or country offices, or who has funded it. They prefer to access a wide range of knowledge from different organisations in one place, than individual pieces of research from different sources, because it saves time and provides an overview[xxiv], or an efficient signposting service, that points to where it is available[xxv]. Information brokers (e.g. International Labour Organisation Advisory Support, Information Services and Training for Employment-Intensive Infrastructure Development Project, Exchange for health etc.) can provide 'intelligent' knowledge services to the user. Where there is too much information, strategic filtering undertaken by credible intermediaries is popular (e.g. WHO's Blue Trunk Libraries for essential medical and health information). But organisations tend to create new communications delivery systems rather than 'plugging in' to existing systems which confuses an already complicated 'knowledge map' for users and contributes to 'information overload'.[xxvi] Research generators keen to communicate should be identifying existing information dissemination routes that service known communities, and placing their research findings on them[xxvii].

Tensions exist between 'global public goods' that are imported 'from outside' and local knowledge that is generated and embedded 'from within'.[xxviii] Predominant communications systems do not enable users to 'add' their knowledge onto global communications highways, and getting people to contribute their own knowledge to shared systems is not easy. Issues of incentives, power structures, trust, familiarity with the technology or the language, and time availability, all play a role in determining people's comfort and willingness to contribute. Guidance is needed at an international research system level on World Trade Organisation (WTO) and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues, e.g. medicinal properties and herbal remedies/indigenous knowledge. Considerable thought is needed to nurture budding communities, and given that face-to-face interaction is nearly always the preferred way of sharing knowledge, a blended approach is needed that combines different methods[xxix].

Making research-information more accessible at national and regional level
There are many examples of effective research information communication at national level for many reasons:
- Many projects engage repeatedly with the same community, building links, trust and the necessary relationships for learning (e.g. DFID's Infrastructure and Urban Development Department's Knowledge and Research Programme (KaR) projects in South Africa)[xxx].
- 'Communities of Practice' can be physically brought together to identify potential user needs (for research) and to collaboratively design research methods and outputs that will achieve desired uptake. Often, policymakers and researchers know each other; and in some instances policymakers are drawn from the research community, making connections and influence easier.[xxxi]
- Intermediaries that already provide 'bridging services' between research producers and users exist in some countries and can be used to facilitate better communication of research, e.g. Journ-Aids in South Africa equipping journalists covering HIV/AIDS with both necessary skills and up-to-date information to deliver quality multi-media services to a range of audiences[xxxii].
- Multi-stakeholder forums already exist around themes or common goals (e.g. Poverty Reduction Strategies) and can be used as entry points to strengthen and identify knowledge needs and research communication.
- Some national information systems explicitly include research, Tanzania On-line[xxxiii] and the UNDP sponsored Sustainable Development Networking Programme (SDNP) site in India[xxxiv].

Within DFID-funded projects, communication of research activities to national audiences include: joint authorship or dissemination with research partners in peer-reviewed or grey literature, popular press (newsletters, etc), final 'dissemination' workshops, e-conferences, video conferences or 'real conferences' (e.g. Water, Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC) to discuss research findings or provide platforms for national researchers to present peer-reviewed papers). Particularly innovative and wide-ranging approaches have been used by Natural Resources International in communication of rural livelihoods work across a spectrum of media and using different media partners.[xxxv] The NGO community use a range of innovative approaches to engage broader

ownership over learning (including both action research knowledge and project experiences). Methods include policy and evidence seminars, policy breakfasts, targeted issue briefs (e.g. used by International Institute for Environment and Development IIED). Common formats include print or CD-ROMs for multi-media information compilations, innovative formats-calendars, interactive learning materials, and on the job use of research links.

Communications Officers in some DFID offices[xxxvi] provide focus for liaising with external audiences, and have a remit for promoting the work of the organisation, including research, although this has not explicitly been done yet. Communications Frameworks exist for Nigeria and Southern Africa and provide fertile ground for engagement with national users of research. National communications infrastructures exist that have an interest in repackaging and repurposing information for different audiences. Knowledge and use of these 'communication communities' (e.g. radio listening groups, community newspapers, commercial and community radio, video producers, information brokers and networks etc.) for research communications is low, and could be more strategically exploited.

Examples exist of regional networks and structures that facilitate knowledge sharing and learning. Most convene around sector themes, e.g. health and agriculture. Some focus on using research (Regional Agricultural Information Network), while others communicate general information (e.g., Arid Lands Information Network and Africa Virtual Library and Information Network (AVLIN)). A small number focus on strengthening communications capacity (Southern Africa Development Centre (SADC) and the Centre of Communications for Development in Botswana).

Despite this spread of activities, there remain many gaps where knowledge intermediaries could play an important role, but no such organisation exists. This applies particularly where public sector services and infrastructure are weak, having been eroded in recent decades, and where private sector equivalents have not taken their place. Teachers, district-level health workers, community organisers, and agricultural extension agents are all examples of key groups who work directly with the poor and who are often badly serviced in terms of access to relevant and up-to-date information. [xxxvii]

Making research-information more accessible at an international level
There are also many examples of good research-information provision at international level. DFID plays a role in contributing to the international research system through several initiatives:
- Global standards for communication and information dissemination (e.g. Workshop on Coherence in Agricultural Information Systems with FAO);
- Access to research information initiatives for researchers, for example by encouraging north-south, south-north and south-south access to formal scholarly communication routes through engagement with the private sector (e.g. Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture (AGORA) and, Programme for the Enhancement of Research Information (PERI) and includes improving access to libraries and databases located in the UK;
- Access to re-purposed research information for researchers, policymakers etc. (ID21, GDNet and the Science and Development Network (SciDev));
- Information intermediaries that exist to understand and service the knowledge needs of particular constituencies (e.g. PANOS, Exchange);
- Re-packaging research information and using the media to reach end users (WRENMedia's AGFAX radio packs and New Agriculturalist, and TVE's Hands-On videos); supporting web-based communities that network information (e.g. oneworld.net etc.);
- Sharing information on development communications (Communications Initiative).

Different communications channels are appropriate for different users and their respective needs and patterns of information access. Attempts to provide 'one-stop shops' for all development information tends to standardise the way knowledge is presented and overlooks the basic tenet of effective communication that is 'one size doesn't fit all'. [xxxviii]

DFID already supports a number of these, but doesn't systematically use them to disseminate its own research findings. No formal mechanisms were found for knowledge sharing between DFID programme and sub-programmes, and between DFID and other international development agencies and Southern agencies[xxxix].

There is also a gulf in the established scholarly communication route between developed and developing countries. Access to Northern research information is seen as a major constraint to developing national research infrastructures, and it is difficult for Southern researchers to publish in Northern journals. The DFID-funded PERI and AGORA initiatives are trying to address this[xl]. DFID is also involved in a number of initiatives that seek to create frameworks that support and promote equality of access to global information spaces, including its recent strategy 'that helps to make rules and practices pertaining to International Property, both nationally and internationally, more beneficial for developing countries and poor people'[xli].

The importance of knowledge intermediaries
Knowledge intermediaries are important at both levels. Key roles include converting research messages into a language that non-specialists can understand, putting research into context so its relevance becomes clearer, assembling research from different sources so differences of opinion and areas of consensus are made more explicit, playing a multiplier role in spreading research messages more widely and getting them to audiences that researches cannot reach, connecting different communities with different languages and worldviews, providing a channel for communicating feedback to researchers and (potentially) for articulating demand and connecting the local to the national and the global[xlii].

There are already many different kinds of intermediaries in existence. Some have an explicit research communication mandate, but most have a broader purpose. Each has its own particular niche and sphere of influence, and uses different methods to communicate with its audience. Rural Livelihoods research managed through NR International has collaborated with a number of intermediaries to produce videos, a radio soap in Kenya reaching six million listeners, comic books carrying livestock advice for children and their parents in east Africa etc.[xliii]. Disseminating knowledge through networks has the advantage of bringing research users and generators into one (often virtual) community, where constant dialogue has the effect of 'bespoking' research findings (HIF-net hosted on the WHO website[xliv]). Membership-based networks of researchers and users create demand for different kinds of research packaging[xlv] and create an audience that is primed to consume the results.

The importance of knowledge management and organisational environments
The majority of donors now see knowledge management as an important part of becoming more strategic and effective communicators. A recent evaluation of DFID's research dissemination showed internal knowledge sharing to be weak, with few incentives or mechanisms for staff to become consumers and advocates of their own research. Research products are hard to locate, even on internal systems (e.g. there is no one electronic portal through which all research results can be found), and opportunities for staff to influence on the basis of their own research are lost.[xlvi].

For DFID, the evolution of its research programme has produced fragmented dissemination activities, rather than a strategic and holistic approach to research communication. Like other donors, DFID tends to focus on communicating its own knowledge and research outputs rather than providing platforms for a broader spectrum of knowledge that would be useful to users. There is a recognised need for a more coherent approach to knowledge management at an international level, and DFID is already working with FAO to develop coherence in agricultural information systems[xlvii]

Recent restructuring, and in particular the intention to develop a Communications Strategy for the Policy Division and to consider research dissemination and promotion as part of broader knowledge management within Policy Division[xlviii] (rather than in isolation from it), will improve the impact of its research.

3.2. Understanding and creating an enabling environment for uptake

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[xlix]. 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[l]. The Overseas Development Institute (ODI)'s 'Politics, Evidence and Links' framework for understanding and improving research-policy links[li] explicitly recognises the importance of the political and institutional context and two-way interactions between research suppliers and

users. Engaging users, using appropriate networks, helping people to learn and strengthening Southern research communication capacity are vital for research uptake into policy and practice.

Engaging users in research and communication of research
User engagement is the key to taking communication beyond dissemination. In particular, initiatives such as mapping existing information demand and information use environments, and promoting participative communication for empowerment, will improve communication of research to end users[lii]. This ambition to move beyond dissemination to uptake is shared by others[liii].

There are many forms that user involvement can take, including users helping to define *what* is researched; helping to shape *how* it is conducted; and playing a role in its communication and uptake[liv]. Mechanisms and structures for promoting engagement vary for different user groups and include: involvement of partners in all stages of research including definition of research itself (e.g. Interagency Livestock Production and Animal Health Programme[lv]), research methodology, execution etc. (e.g. the International Forum for Rural Transport Development (IFRTD) 'networked research'[lvi]); identification of key national policy influencers and influencing strategy (IIED-ITAD-Bangladesh Fisheries, HR Wallingford-South Africa Limpopo Province) but requires long-term engagement; continuing dialogue with local government (WEDC urban sector work[lvii]); use of national and regional networks (IFRTD, ITDG[lviii], Healthlink-Exchange etc); strategic engagement with media (PANOS[lix], CommsConsult, WRENmedia); user group engagement in the water sector (HR Wallingford); and engagement of users in the application and dissemination of research (DFID Uganda COARD project, FAO farmer field schools).

Joseph Rowntree Foundation has developed a model of research and research management that uses a multi-stakeholder approach to identify issues and their conversion into research questions, and adopts a partnership model to ensure rigorous standards are upheld. This systematic and participative approach has implications for the way that research is managed (mainly through Project Advisory Groups) and the dissemination of research findings is funded[lx].

Specific inclusion of Southern researchers is important, both to increase Southern researchers' access to the international debate, as well as to enhance their status both nationally and internationally. Increased status and capacity can lead to greater opportunities to exert policy influence nationally[lxi]. There are many ways to strengthen Southern research capacity, including at a programmatic level (e.g. The Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE) [lxii]); at individual research project level (e.g. by systematically including Southern researchers in stages of research design, implementation and dissemination); by sponsoring specific joint partnerships (e.g. CIET in Mexico which partners local people with an academic institute to develop research projects on social issues and build community capacity[lxiii] www.ciet.org); and to systematically promote the inclusion of Southern researchers in the world of international scholarly debate (e.g. The International Network for Access to Scientific Publications (INASP) improving access to scientific and scholarly information www.inasp.info and CAB International facilitating joint publishing www.cabi.org).

Creating opportunities for effective uptake of research
The conditions under which research is communicated[lxiv] and the institutional environment into which it is received[lxv] 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. 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.[lxvi] Networks that bring together different stakeholders around common concerns and thematic issues show signs of sustained dialogue and increase chances of research uptake.[lxvii] 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[lxviii].

Multi-stakeholder conferences (researchers, policy-shapers, NGOs, and sometimes service delivery providers) focusing on recently completed research outputs and their possible application are used by many research contractors and NGOs to encourage understanding and take-up. Action research/reflective learning approaches that promote take-up also show evidence of impact in the

form of strengthened communication skills and closer engagement in wider processes of development and social change[lxix]at a community level in the longer term.

Ways of facilitating Southern research communication are not well documented or understood but the ability to use and shape communications processes is often correlated with the ability to engage in and shape decision-making processes. Therefore, providing platforms for other actors (the poor and intermediary organisations) to communicate would at the same time (as improved access to research) address the issue of their engagement in national and international decision-making[lxx]. Understanding how people learn – i.e. by engaging with knowledge rather than simply receiving it – underpins effective communication and helps identify what kind of communications environment would encourage research take-up. The internet facilitates this kind of engagement through communities of interest, and also provides a platform for joint action[lxxi].

3.3 Identifying the gaps (in knowledge and activities)

The study revealed a number of areas where more evidence is needed to guide the development of better research communication: impact assessment; systemic approaches; the communications context; and the power of incrementalism.

Impact assessment
Current tools for assessing the impact of research communications (and other kinds of knowledge) are inadequate. A range of indicators are in general use that look at different elements of change including the demand for the research findings (e.g. requests for copies of reports[lxxii], translation of videos/information leaflets[lxxiii] etc.); tracking 'knock on activities' (e.g. influencing the World Bank to adopt new procedures[lxxiv], Governments of Vietnam and Cambodia securing Asian Development Bank loans to mainstream DFID research ideas[lxxv]) and seeking evidence of policy change (e.g. Uganda government modifying Poverty Eradication Action Plan as a result of research conducted by East Anglia University[lxxvi]). Although these are all useful, they fall short of an overall 'evaluations toolkit' that would enable researchers and other stakeholders to look for the different elements of change (e.g. institutional, behavioural, capacity etc.) that collectively show the developmental impact of communications interventions. One of the problems is that research project timeframes are currently too short[lxxvii] to show developmental impact. There are some interesting approaches currently being trialled[lxxviii] and **CRT should play a leadership role in filling this gap in understanding and mainstreaming good practice within other research funders and implementers**.

A systematic approach
The literature review and other investigations revealed that few organisations see communication as a systemic issue (i.e. linked to economic and political processes in a society), but instead focus on communication options for individuals and local or project-level activities. A systemic approach would involve taking a more holistic view and working with others to address issues at multiple levels. This might involve: working on global communications frameworks that promote equitable access; working at the institutional level, e.g. strengthening networks or communities of practice that re-package and re-purpose research for known users; and working at the procedural level, e.g. advocating for others to adopt more systematic approaches, 'best practice' standards and tools for improved research communications etc. It might also mean working with other donors who have not yet examined the questions of 'How does communication of research relate to utilisation of research?' and 'How does communication/utilisation of research relate to the wider environment and to national systems?'[lxxix]. **DFID, as one of the largest development research donors, with substantial experience and a wide range of relevant activities, credibility and reach at the international policymakers' table, is uniquely placed to address this issue**.

The communications context
The success (or not) of communication at an individual, local or project level is largely determined by wider systems – including the political environment and socioeconomic conditions. The conditions under which research is communicated can have a far more decisive effect on whether the research is taken up or not than the actual communication content, channel or strategy[lxxx]. **CRT should develop a better understanding of these issues that would substantially improve research communications, leading to greater impact.**

The power of incrementalism

Most literature and current practitioners focus on communication of research for direct impact on policy/practice rather than on a more gradual or indirect impact. In other words, the aim is instrumental impact through immediate and identifiable change in policies, rather than change in the enabling environment and the concepts used to understand it. Current approaches tend to be short-term and limited to individual initiatives – how can a particular project influence a particular policy. This single loop learning (i.e. learning how to improve the impact of a pre-defined outcome) largely overlooks the important but gradual contribution that individual research projects can make to longer-term policy changes. Research into how a number of projects have cumulatively contributed to a policy shift over a longer time frame would help to improve understanding of what forms of communication (sometimes referred to as double loop learning) can contribute to improved incremental research impact. **DFID, with its long history of development research across a wide range of issues, is well placed to undertake this research**.

4. Recommendations

The scale of DFID's research programme, its emphasis on and reputation for poverty reduction, and excellent internal and external capacity for analysis provides a strong basis for promoting research-based knowledge for development. But a supply-driven research agenda, sectoral fragmentation and piecemeal approach to communication have undermined impact and overshadowed many examples of good practice.

This communications strategy aims to increase the impact of DFID's development research programmes directly through greater involvement between policy makers, users and researchers in the whole research process, improved knowledge management, and more effective communication. It will also establish a leadership role for DFID to promote a more systemic approach and develop standards and tools for improved development research communications throughout the international research system, leading to an improved impact on policy and practice and poverty reduction. The recommendations are grouped under two key objectives at international, cross-country and national level. These are: 1) increasing the volume of useful research information that is available; 2) creating an enabling environment for research uptake. A brief description of specific activities at each level is followed by a discussion of investment options and some issues for further discussion.

4.1. At international level (gaps 1 and 2):

Objective One: Increasing the volume of useful research information available
- Strengthen existing and new research networks (e.g. PERI), intermediaries (e.g. One-World Net, ID21 and Panos) and communities of practice to improve the two-way flow of appropriate research information between key users including policy makers, researchers, practitioners and civil society.
- Improve research knowledge management, communication and dissemination systems within DFID, mainstreaming communication 'best practice' to meet the needs of the new Research Strategy.
- Actively manage and market new research information: 'sift' through new research, identify appropriate networks/communications channels for it to reach defined audiences, and 're-package and repurpose' it for those audiences.
- Support global initiatives that encourage the creation and adoption of standards for electronic information management, support open access systems and facilitate retrieval of research.
- Stimulate the development of a single electronic portal through which all DFID and other research can be promoted, with links to repackaging services like ID21, ELDIS etc. and broader learning platforms e.g. Livelihoods Connect.

Objective Two: Creating an enabling environment for research uptake
- Support and establish collaboration with existing international development research communication initiatives e.g. the Global Development Network, IDRC, KPFE, The Netherlands Development Research Assistance Council (RAWOO), the Institute for Strengthening National Agricultural Research (ISNAR) to promote a more systematic approach.
- Create international fora for the improvement of research communication: including policy makers, researchers and practitioners, and/or an expert consultation group to identify and research gaps in understanding, promote a more systemic approach, and develop best practice guidelines.
- Use DFID's convening power to expose policy makers to emerging research results with policy implications for poverty eradication (e.g. through workshops and seminars, short courses, meeting series and public affairs programmes).

4.2. Within CRT multi-country research programmes (gaps 2 and 3):

Objective One: Increasing the volume of useful research information available

- Digitise and make existing DFID research knowledge available through the research portal (and for further synthesis by existing and new research information providers for specific audiences etc).
- Establish an internet-based database of basic information about all DFID-funded research, both project information and research outputs, accessible through the research portal. Rationalise project information across the CRT and make it available externally.
- Develop and enforce guidelines and benchmarks to ensure all DFID-funded research activities include an appropriate communications strategy from the start including basic information for the Research Database/Portal and appropriate communications activities for priority audiences.
- Provide communications training for researchers: introductory training to (a) understand the research-policy linkages (b) promote the role of information brokers in knowledge sharing etc and (c) to understand research-practice linkages and successful uptake mechanisms; and preparing non-academic materials ('popular' articles for science magazines, newsletters, CD-ROMS, web sites etc.).

Objective Two: Creating an enabling environment for research uptake

- Fund research outcomes rather than research projects: provide long term funding for research programmes with a proven record for uptake and/or a clear strategy for achieving it; reserve funds for specific "research communication and influence projects";
- Develop and enforce guidelines and benchmarks and promote mechanisms to ensure all DFID-funded research programmes engage users and policy makers in the identification, implementation and follow-up of research projects as appropriate:
- Develop mechanisms – including appropriate criteria for funding - to encourage greater involvement of southern researchers, research institutes and think tanks.
- Undertake research on key research communication issues: how to measure the impact of communication activities; the constraints to uptake of research by different user groups; research-policy linkages; and pilot-testing innovative communications techniques.
- To enable the digitisation of the archives and future research outputs using common information management approaches for research.

4.3 Within countries (gap 4):

The ToR for the communication element of the research strategy requires the development of proposals for a research communications strategy and an action-research programme at country level in collaboration with the country study team. This was not possible within the time frame of this study. The following recommendations are presented as a starting point for those discussions.

Objective One: Increasing the volume of useful research information available

- Provide support in partnership with DFID country offices to:
  - Synthesise and disseminate country-sponsored research and provide appropriately synthesised results of central research to DFID offices and in-country infomediaries,
  - Support in-country communications strategies,
  - Ensure all DFID-funded research activities include an appropriate communications strategy.

Objective Two: Creating an enabling environment for research uptake

- Provide support in partnership with DFID country offices to:
  - Create fora that expose policy makers to emerging research results with policy implications for poverty eradication (addressing Gap 2)
  - Ensure all DFID-funded research programmes engage users and policy makers in the identification, implementation and follow-up of research projects as appropriate,
  - Help identify national processes which could strengthen research effectiveness (e.g. PRSPs, Civil Society Organisations, National R&D systems etc)
- Undertake action-research projects in collaboration with country offices to pilot and test new approaches to research communication (Uganda, India and Bangladesh have relatively well-developed national research communication systems, options to explore could include strengthening national communication service communities)

4.4. Investment Options

As described in section 2.2, it is extremely difficult to estimate the total cost of communications work within the current research programme, although an overall figure of c.4% (i.e. £3 million out of £75 million) would not be unreasonable. Most international commercial sector management consultancy organisations, which rely on efficient knowledge processes to survive, spend between 10% and 15% of their annual budgets on information and learning systems and processes[lxxxi]. The International Development Research Centre (IDRC), which is widely regarded as an extremely effective development research organisation, spends 14% of its annual budget on what it calls "knowledge-intensive activities in support of development research programmes", over and above the very substantial communication element within the research projects themselves[lxxxii]. It is also difficult to estimate the number of people involved in DFID-funded research communications, since most of the communications activities take place in research projects, resource centres and DFID-funded communication and information services. It is interesting to note, however, that 59 out of the 213 staff at IDRC HQ in Canada (i.e. 28%) are involved in general information, communication, knowledge management activities and another 38 (18%) work on the specific information projects Information Technology for Development and Bellanet. On an annual research budget of £ 44 million, that equates to 2.2 people per million pounds of research.

DFID should aim to spend at least 10% of its research budget (i.e. c. £ 7.5 million) on knowledge and communication activities outside the research projects themselves in order to ensure effective uptake of the results of its research programme, and should require 10% of funding for specific research projects is spent on appropriate communication activities. Within the research programme itself, the CRT should reserve between 10% and 25% of the total research grant for research and action-research on communication issues. If DFID wishes to learn effectively from its own and other research, promote effective learning and communication among researchers working on DFID-funded and other development research and improve the impact of research on poverty, it will need to have more people/staff focusing on communication issues. While IDRC is a very different organisation to the DFID CRT, it is interesting to note that if IDRC's annual research budget were £75 million and it maintained the same staff/budget ratio it would have around 165 communications-related staff!

Resources

It is difficult to estimate DFID expenditure on research communication activities, but it tends to be around 4% whereas other knowledge agencies spend between 10% and 15%. To be more effective, DFID should aim to spend at least 10% of its research budget on knowledge and communication activities outside the research projects themselves, and to insist that 10% of funds for specific projects are for communication activities. Also, it should reserve between 10% and 25% of the total research grant for research and action-research on communication issues.

The proposed budget seeks to realise the communications objectives outlined in this paper at three different levels. First, to improve procedures within DFID's own research; second to strengthen international systems so that research is easier to access; and third to create more innovative, demand-led research systems. The budgets are allocated to these three strategic areas.

Outcome One: Good communications in the research programmes we commission based on establishing working partnerships between researchers and policymakers or users throughout the research timetable.
- Research knowledge system established for DFID-funded research that generates essential internal and external information building on existing systems and linking with other DFID policy and knowledge systems. (£0.8m p.a.)
- Existing and new DFID research results marketed to northern and southern stakeholders using international protocols and systems. (£2m p.a.)
- Research procedures within DFID-funded research developed and adopted to mainstream communications best practice. (£0.2m p.a.)

Outcome Two: Better international systems for managing research knowledge, so that those who need it can access it.
- Communication best practice promoted through existing international and regional fora of development research stakeholders and intermediaries and though the establishment of a multi-stakeholder

consultative group on development research communication. (£0.5m in yrs 1 & 2 *increasing to 2m p.a by yr 3.*)
- Financial support to existing and new international development research communication technologies, networks and initiatives (£0.5m in yrs 1 & 2 *increasing to £5m p.a. by yr 3*).

Outcome Three: Innovative research systems, nationally and internationally, that respond to demand, are evidence-based and improve uptake.
- A bilateral action-research programme exploring innovative communications techniques; the impact of communication activities; the constraints to uptake of research by different user groups; research–policy linkages, the nature of demand, and the potential of communications communities of practice to promote uptake (£0.5m in yr 1, £1m in yr 2 to develop the overall research communications programme *increasing to £4m p.a. by yr 3*).
- Collaborations with (a) existing international development research initiatives e.g. GDN, KPFE, RAWOO, CGIAR etc to explore new communications systems to reflect demand and improve uptake (£2m in yr 2 increasing to £5m p.a by yr 3.) and (b) with IDRC and 3-6 DFID country offices to build capacity and explore new communications systems between research users, producers and intermediaries in their regions (for creating an enabling environment) (£2m in yr 2 increasing to £5m p.a. by yr 3).

Initial Staffing: 2A, 1B, 1C + consultants in 2004,
4A, 2B, 2C + consultants in 2005

Funding:

	Yr 1	**Yr 2**	**Yr 3**
Outcome 1	£3m	£3m	£3m
Outcome 2	£1m	£1m	£7m
Outcome 3	£0.5m	£5m	£14m
	£4.5	**£9m**	**£24m**

N.B. 10% of bilateral research spend within projects (c.£3m) will be reserved for communications activities, bringing the total research budget expenditure on communications-related activities to £32m

It is also difficult to estimate the number of people involved in DFID-funded research communications since most of the communications activities take place in research projects, resource centres and DFID-funded communication and information services. However, to be more effective and to be able to implement the more strategic approach suggested by this review, an increase in the current number of communications staff located within the CRT (1.5 at professional level) will be necessary. As an example, IDRC employs approx 2.2 communications staff per £million of research spend.

The review suggests that as a minimum DFID would need an extra 5 professional staff within the CRT Communications Section.

Appendix 1 - Investment Options Table

The following table splits the activities in 4.2 and 4.3 into those that are considered essential and those which would further strengthen the programme if funds are available. To be more effective and to be able to implement the more strategic approach suggested by this review, an increase in the current number of communications staff located within the CRT (1.5 at professional level) will be necessary. The review suggests that as a minimum DFID would need an extra 5 professional staff within the CRT Communications Section.

At International Level		
	Essential	**Ideal**
Output 1	▪ Strengthen existing research communication initiatives. ▪ Improved research knowledge management within DFID. ▪ Actively sift and market new DFID research information and repackage for specific audiences and disseminate through existing channels ▪ Establish a single electronic portal for DFID research	▪ Identify and strengthen new research communication initiatives to fill gaps ▪ Expand the sifting and marketing activity to include all European/Northern research information and repackage for specific audiences and disseminate through existing channels. ▪ Expand the portal to include all European / Northern research ▪ Support Open Access initiatives
Output 2	▪ Support and establish collaborations with existing international development research communication initiatives e.g. GDN, IDRC, KPFE, RAWOO, CGIAR/ISNAR etc.	▪ Create an international forum for the improvement of research communication ▪ Create international fora that expose policy makers to emerging research results with policy implications for poverty eradication
Within CRT Multi-country research programmes		
Output 1	▪ Establish a single database of DFID-funded research. ▪ Enforce guidelines to ensure all research activities include an appropriate communications strategy from the start. ▪ Introductory communications training for researchers on research-policy and research practice linkages and the role of information brokers.	▪ Digitise existing DFID research knowledge ▪ Expanded communications training for researchers on how to prepare non-academic information materials
Output 2	▪ Fund research outcomes rather than research projects. ▪ Enforce guidelines to ensure all research engages users and policy makers in the identification, implementation and follow-up of research projects as appropriate: ▪ Research on: impact assessment of communication activities; the constraints to uptake of research by different user groups; research – policy linkages etc.	▪ Develop appropriate criteria for funding to encourage greater involvement of southern researchers, research institutes and think tanks. ▪ Action-research pilot-testing innovative communications techniques.

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Final

NEW DFID RESEARCH STRATEGY
COMMUNICATIONS THEME
Appendices 3 - 7
CIMRC/DFID

30 August 2003

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COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION MANAGEMENT
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DFID Department for
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Contents

THEMES FOR A NEW DFID RESEARCH STRATEGY
Appendix 3 - Communication - Terms of Reference

Background
DFID will be producing a new research strategy in December 2003, to be taken forward by the new Research Team. In preparation, we are commissioning studies of six particular ways of working that we expect will form part of the new strategy. The key criterion will be the likelihood that a particular approach will contribute to eliminating poverty.

DFID perceives research as an international public good, and therefore external communication of research findings is crucial. [1]

Communication is not just important at the end of a project. A research project's impact on anti-poverty policy is usually rather diffuse and long-term (even when the researchers themselves become policy-makers years later). Links and networks between researchers and policy-shapers are all-important, and partnerships between service providers (public and private), the media, civil society and research, both nationally and internationally, are also important if research is to have impact.

DFID's existing research programmes have a variety of communication channels which aim to reach a number of different target audiences including researchers in the north and south, the international community, service delivery organisations and intermediaries. It is important to make the outputs from DFID's global public goods research accessible using a range of media. For example, the id21 system was commended by the recent National Audit Office report. Natural resources research is helping FAO to develop international standards and norms that will enable others to access data on technologies, breaking down project and funding boundaries. TV, radio and newsprint have helped to increase impact across many of the different sectoral programmes. Bigger programmes have their own websites, though DFID provides no guidance in this area and there are problems with sustainability, duplication of effort, appropriateness of content to user groups etc.

Communication is complex, cross cutting and multi-level: if global public goods research is to be made applicable as well as accessible to national environments from the international system it must be responsive to demand, involve good two-way communication systems and be useful to those intermediary organisations that work with poor people.

International databases and information systems are one starting point, but there are a range of issues which need to be explored to improve access to information by poor people and those organisations that serve them, as well as the processes through which research communication contributes to societal learning, transformation and change. In order that research outputs benefit the poor, it is important to recognise the communication landscape and networks within which they and their policymakers, researchers and service institutes are part, including those within the international system.

As this is a broad agenda, the study will need to look strategically at how and where DFID should add value and at where it should not. It will need to consider where an international research programme should stop, since within DFID responsibility for support to the improvement of national systems and capacity lies with the DFID country offices.

There is clearly much existing, but disparate, experience of good and bad practice from within and external to current DFID research programmes. A major task for this study will be to synthesise lessons from this experience and apply these cross-sectorally to shape the new strategy.

Objective
To develop a set of proposals for the communications element in DFID's new research strategy. They should enhance its pro-poor impact, develop a better understanding of DFID's comparative advantage

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[1] **Conversely, DFID staff wishing to use research results to inform DFID decision-making need to access the best research on the topic – and not just that funded by DFID.**

in this area at global and national levels, and stimulate better communication of demand and feedback within the overall strategy.

Tasks
The team should prepare proposals in three areas:

1. <u>International</u>: Identify the different target groups at international level for communication outputs from research, and the nature of their demand for information. Make proposals to meet these needs. Include consideration of multilateral systems: is there one or more high priority area where a process to establish an improved global network might be achievable and within DFID CRT's comparative advantage?

2. <u>Within CRT multi-country research programmes</u>: what should DFID require by way of researchers communicating with policy-shapers and other stakeholders during the whole life of a research programme? Take into account the relative strengths and weaknesses of researchers vis-à-vis other intermediaries.

3. <u>Within countries</u>: Identify mechanisms that stimulate pro-poor demand for research, including links to national policy frameworks. Assess mechanisms for linking iterative research communication, learning, monitoring and evaluation processes. In conjunction with the country study, assess whether an action research programme could be developed in this area, in support of interested DFID country offices.

In each case the team should:
• Identify best practice in DFID's previous research communication, and to what extent this is transferable between sectors;
• Make a range of proposals, indicating the funding and staff resources required for each, and identifying what might be relatively <u>low</u> priority.

Process
Produce a report of no more than 10 pages, with annexes as necessary that will act as a proposal to senior management for DFID investment in research communications.
• Commission a team of consultants to review good and bad practice in DFID's existing research programmes, with specific reference to international and national experience, and drawing out cross-sectoral lessons.
•
• Hold one or two workshops/meetings to discuss key issues in research communications with selected experts and stakeholders
•
• With the country study, identify a number of pilot countries where DFID offices have or are developing programmes that the CRT could support.
•
• Develop engagement and ownership of the process by the new ICD team in Information Division.

Timetable

Report ready by end August.

Appendix 4 - Methodology

The communications review was managed by the Communications and Information Management Resource Centre (CIMRC). It consulted widely across different kinds of organisations, working first with an Informal Steering Group represented communications expertise (ODI, IDS, Wrenmedia, Exchange) to identify the key areas of investigation. 'Think Pieces' on various aspects of communicating research were commissioned from these experts. These included a Literature Review of more than 100 documents by ODI that mapped the current recommendations and emerging themes in the literature relevant to this issue, and 'lessons learned' from a range of research communications initiatives hosted by IDS. The use of networks in the water and health sectors was profiles, along with an overview of the effectiveness of the World Bank's Development Gateway as a method of communicating research. A workshop was held to harvest the views of the UK based NGO community, and interviews were conducted with researchers and DFID Resource Centre to 'sample' their view and existing communication practices. A case study of a communications initiative in South Africa that brokers information on HIV/AIDS - including research - was commissioned to complement a profile on the strategic use of the media in communication research. Summaries of these commissioned pieces of work are included in this Appendix.

Acknowledgements and Contacts
The authors would like to acknowledge the support and contributions of a wide range of people and organisations. The Informal Steering Group comprised of Andrew Chetley (Exchange), Geoff Barnard (IDS), Susanna Thorp (Wrenmedia), Fiona Power (DFID), David Ennis (DFID) and Manisha Prajapati (DFID).

Additional background work was produced by Ingie Novland (ODI), Farai Samhungu (Commsconsult), Michael Pickstock (WrenMedia), Geoff Pearce (HR Wallingford), Bridget Bosworth (HR Wallingford), Philip Edge (CAB International), and CAB International's African Regional Centre. Ineke Gijsbers (CAB International) was responsible for producing the summaries of the background papers and NGO submissions.

The participants of the workshop of August 8th - Janet Boston (TVE International); Felicity Chancellor (HR Wallingford); Robert Cornford (Oxfam); Kate Czuczman (IFRTD); Julie Fisher (WEDC, Loughborough University); Ingie Hovland (Overseas Development Institute); Saleem Huq (IIED); John Lakeman (ALNAP - Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action); Lucky Lowe (Intermediate Technology Development Group); Abigail Mulhall (ITAD Ltd.); Mary O'Connell (Water Aid); Neil Packenham-Walsh (INASP-Health); John Palmer, NR International; Tilly Sellers (International HIV/AIDS Alliance); Benedikte Siderman-Wolter (NR International); Catherine Slater (PSI /Europe);Rob Vincent (Health link); Isabel Vogel (Institute of Development Studies); Kitty Warnock (PANOS)

In addition a number of others were consulted including David Archer (Education Advisor) of Actionaid and his two policy colleages (Matthew Lockwood and Sonya Ruparel), Lucy Ambridge DFID, Alistair Wray DFID and Elizabeth Warham DFID, Andrew Barnett (Sussex Research Associates), Heather Briggs (Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research), and Janet Lewis (Rowntree Trust).

We were also provided with access to the themed discussions of the Central Research Team Sector Groups and a number of international websites were searched for the World Bank, FAO, USAID, and IDRC.

Appendix 5 - Summaries Communications Strategy Briefing Papers

Communication of research for poverty reduction: a literature review: With full annotated bibliography

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Executive summary

<u>1 Background</u>

In preparation for a new research strategy, the Central Research Team (CRT) at the UK Department for International Development (DFID) have commissioned a series of studies on relevant topics – among them the topic 'communication of research for poverty reduction'. This literature review contributes to the study by mapping the current recommendations and emerging themes in the literature relevant to this issue, drawing on an annotated bibliography of over one hundred documents from DFID and other development agencies, research institutes, academics, and practitioners.

<u>2 DFID on communication</u>

2.1 Recent DFID literature on communication of research has touched on four major themes: the importance of dissemination, 'joining up', Southern research capacity, and wider systems of knowledge. Although these four coexist and are all currently used, there is a certain progression to be noted:

2.1.1   *Dissemination* is associated with keeping partners and stakeholders updated;
2.1.2   *'Joining up'* is associated with engaging stakeholders in discussion and feedback;
2.1.3   *Building Southern research capacity* is associated with enabling stakeholders to access, produce and disseminate research themselves;
2.1.4   Locating research in *wider systems of knowledge* is associated with understanding and influencing the context that shapes stakeholders' ability to take up research, to use it, and to engage in discussion and agenda-setting on their own terms.

2.2 When comparing DFID literature on communication with literature from other bilateral or multilateral agencies, many of the same themes are evident. Other bilateral donors – particularly the Scandinavian agencies – emphasise the importance of building Southern research capacity. Strengthened research capacity in the South has an effect on user engagement, uptake capacity and national systems – thus also facilitating communication of Northern-produced development research. The Dutch have initiated discussions on the utilisation of research in development, working towards models of interactive communication and policy dialogues. DFID seems to have a slight comparative advantage in reflection on systemic issues due to the emphasis on national systems of innovation in the most recent DFID Research Policy Paper (Surr et al 2002).

<u>3 Recommendations in the current literature</u>

In the current literature from research institutes, think tanks, academics, intermediary organisations and practitioners, there seems to be broad consensus on the following recommendations for improved communication of research:

3.1 To improve communication of research to policymakers:

3.1.1   Strengthen researchers' communication skills (in order to get the target group right, get the format right, get the timing right, etc).
Aim for close collaboration between researchers and policymakers.
Construct an appropriate platform from which to communicate; a platform of broad engagement (e.g. a public campaign) is more likely to be heard.
Strengthen institutional policy capacity for uptake; government departments may not be able to use research because of lack of staff or organisational capacity.

3.2 To improve communication of research to (other) researchers:

3.2.1   Strengthen Southern research capacity in order to enable Southern researchers to access Northern-produced research.
Support research networks, especially electronic and/or regional networks.
Continue with dissemination of development research through e.g. the id21 format – popular with academics.

3.3 To improve communication of research to end users (i.e. the poor and organisations working with the poor):

Incorporate communication activities into project design, taking into account e.g. gender, local context and existing ways of communicating, and possibilities for new ways of communicating through ICTs.
Encourage user engagement; map existing information demand and information-use environment, promote participative communication for empowerment.
Create an enabling environment; failure to use research/information is not always due to lack of communication, but can instead be due to lack of a favourable political environment or lack of resources.

<u>4 Gaps and emerging themes</u>

There are a few issues that are underrepresented in the literature reviewed, but which nevertheless seem to be emerging as important themes.

4.1 Approach communication as a systemic issue: The most evident gap in the field is perhaps the failure to see communication as a systemic issue (i.e. linked to economic and political processes in a society). Many of the current recommendations offer several possible communication options for individuals and local or project-level activities, but have very little to say about how to approach or improve communication at a systemic level. The DFID Research Policy Paper has begun to address this issue.

4.2 Improve the conditions under which research is communicated: The success (or not) of communication at an individual, local or project level is largely determined by wider systems – including the political environment and socio-economic conditions. The conditions under which research is communicated can have a far more decisive effect on whether the research is taken up or not than the actual communication content, channel or strategy. While NGOs and other intermediary organisations have a comparative advantage to communicate at the project and interpersonal levels, DFID's comparative advantage as a bilateral agency may lie at a systemic level.

4.3 Facilitate different levels of user engagement in communication of research: User engagement is the key to taking communication beyond dissemination. It can be approached at three levels, in relation to: i) the importance of mapping Southern research demand; ii) how to strengthen Southern research capacity; and iii) how to facilitate Southern research communication. While the current recommendations from the literature focus on the first two points (Southern research demand and Southern research capacity), there is relatively little discussion concerning user engagement at the level of Southern research communication. The ability to use and shape communication processes is often correlated with the ability to engage in and shape decision-making processes. Therefore, a focus on providing platforms for other actors (the poor and intermediary organisations) to

communicate would at the same time address the issue of their engagement in national and international decision-making.

4.4 Invest in communication for double loop learning: Many of the current recommendations privilege communication of research for direct impact on policy/practice rather than a more gradual or indirect impact. The focus is on instrumental change through immediate and identifiable change in policies, and less on conceptual change in the way we see the world and the concepts we use to understand it. The current literature therefore tends to encourage single loop learning (i.e. bringing about corrective action within existing guidelines), but largely overlooks the important but gradual contribution that research can make for double loop learning (i.e. independent and critical debate). Some of these issues are beginning to be addressed through investment in networks, which frequently serve as venues for debate on development policy and practice.

INFORMATION SOURCES SUPPORTED BY DFID

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Name	Responsible	DFID Dept	Comment
ID21	IDS		id21 is a fast-track research reporting service funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). It aims to bring UK-based development research findings and policy recommendations to policymakers and development practitioners worldwide. http://www.id21.org/
NARSIS		Natural Resources	NARSIS database of DFID's Natural Resources, Environment and Livelihoods projects www.narsis.org
Infrastructure Connect	CIMRC	IUDD	Website and project database for IUDD Projects, success stories and links to Resource Centres www.infrastructureconnect.info
Health Portal	HPD	Health	http://appweb/chiportal/. Holds information on projects, recommended documents and latest reports
Livelihoods Connect	IDS	Rural Livelihoods	DFID's learning platform supporting the implementation of sustainable livelihoods approaches with information sources, distance learning guide, toolbox http://www.livelihoods.org/
GRC Exchange	Governance Resource Centre	Governance	Theme pages, information database, training and events, organisations database http://www.grc-exchange.org
Global Development Network		Supported by DFID amongst others	The Global Development Network (GDN) is a global network of research and policy institutes working together to address the problems of national and regional development. http://www.gdnet.org/
Development Gateway	World Bank		http://www.developmentgateway.org/
ELDIS	IDS	Supported by Danida, NORAD and SIDA	Gateway to development. Eldis is funded by Danida, NORAD and SIDA, and hosted by IDS. Eldis has 12, 000 online documents http://www.eldis.org/
Bridge	IDS	Supported by OECD/DAC WID Expert Group	BRIDGE supports your gender mainstreaming efforts by bridging the gaps between theory, policy and practice with accessible gender information set up in http://www.ids.ac.uk/bridge/index.html

JOURN-AIDS - providing a 'joined up' serviced on HIV-AIDS for the media in South Africa

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This case study profiles the activities of the JOURN-AIDS, an initiative established in 2002 to reach out to journalists in South Africa to provide them with information, sources of information and other resources to stimulate more in-depth and analytical reporting on HIV/AIDS. The initiative was borne out of recognition that despite the crisis levels of infections in the Southern African region, there are still worrying signs about the level of commitment and actions by the media. The media was also being criticised for a general lack of insight and forecast on the gravity of the problem. The Johannesburg-based Centre for AIDS Development, Research and Evaluation (CADRE) established this initiative. Eight factors are described that make JOURN-AIDS an effective model that could be mimicked in effective dissemination of research. These are: the capacity to repackage information; the repackaging is done by people who understand the media; providing links to other organisations and experts in the field; facilitating the monitoring of on-going debates and related issues; providing a forum for discussion; focusing on issues that matter to the target group; appeals to a multiple of audiences; and forging strategic linkages between the media and other organisations.

Networking and communicating research

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Different definitions of networking and communication are presented. The importance of networking in communication is discussed and the benefits of networking in research are outlined. Networking is fundamental to both doing and communicating research. When networking forms part of the process of doing research, a set of channels for disseminating and communicating the results of the research are already likely to be in place. Communicating research is essential to getting the results of research used. Everything we know about communication tells us that the more involved the receivers of the communication are in helping to develop the content of the communication, the more likely they are to respond to it and act upon it. Having a plan for communicating the learning, that comes from research, to those who most need to apply the learning is critical to achieving change. Examples illustrate the importance of the feedback loop in research. One of the tools, but certainly not the only one, for using networking to communicate research is via the internet. More generally, networking as means of communicating research is about ensuring that the spaces, time and opportunities are present to enable communication to take place. A large part of the design of future research needs to include networking and communication opportunities in order to be able to deal with the complexities that are faced in researching development issues.

Development Gateway: effective in communicating research?

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The Development Gateway is a portal website offering services and tools to access, share and discuss development-related information and knowledge. Originally set up by the World Bank, it has been governed by the Development Gateway Foundation since July 2001. Some of the controversy surrounding the development of the Gateway are explored. These focus on governance (role of the World Bank), control of the content, relevance of content to the needs of the users, and different understanding of knowledge, the role of learning and development. Key questions that need to be considered in the development of any such portal are discussed, and suggestions are presented as to what, if any, role the Gateway could play in helping to communicate DFID-funded research.

How can DFID improve its media approach—and communicate its own and others' research findings more effectively?

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Six questions are discussed related to DFID's media approach to research communication. They are: how can DFID improve its media approach? How can DFID communicate its own and others' research findings more effectively? What research should DFID be conducting? How should DFID research be conducted? How might DFID promote research findings generated by other institutions? How might DFID influence other organisations (such as the World Bank or FAO) to change their media approaches to make them more effective in communicating research results? DFID's comparative advantage in communication is described and the importance is outlined of defining the target groups for communication of research findings. Three aspects should be taken into account in order to obtain the best results from using the media. These are valuing the role of the media, understanding how the media works (its objectives and constraints), and devoting time to the media and being prepared (what is the message you want to get across and to whom?). Time is needed for DFID to improve its media approach and to build its credibility as a centre of excellence in communication and media approach. Common causes of failure in communication of research findings through the media occur because many communicators have a scientific background and are predisposed to use scientific/technical jargon, make assumptions that others understand the implications of their work as well as they do, try to be comprehensive (when the principles are more important than the detail), start with lengthy background information, and fail to treat the interlocutor or the target group with professional respect. Poor impact through the media is often the result of poor preparation by would-be communicators, and this in turn may be a consequence of lack of understanding of media practices. Ultimately, good communication occurs where there is a good relationship between the originator of the message (research scientist) and the interlocutor to the target groups (media personnel).

Review of networks to encourage uptake of water research

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The poor uptake of research results in the water sector is discussed. Four sub-processes are distinguished within the uptake gap. These are the production of research outputs, communication/dissemination, receipt and understanding, and uptake. The communications components of 37 major water sector networks are tabulated and their effectiveness is indicated. Nine communications components are distinguished, including research producer, communicator, disseminator, filter, listener, receptor, trainer, user, research needs identifier, and network organiser. It is concluded that a continuing need exists for high level research and its delivery through traditional processes. It is difficult to transfer this information to grass roots level and there is a need to either redefine research needs so that what is produced matches local requirements or to improve communication methods by which research results, conclusions and recommendations are dealt with in developing countries. Dissemination and uptake of research results should therefore become a significant component of the research package. Alternatively a local/regional mechanism (such as local sectoral resource centres) should be put in place whose purpose would be to listen out for, receive, understand and pass on effective information.

Making research connections – some (very) preliminary thoughts

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A simplified diagram is presented to identify some of the main communication gaps between the research community and the world of policy and practice at the international, national and grass roots level. The four main gaps include the gap between the international and national level within the research community, gaps at the international and national level between the research and the policy/practice communities, and the gap within developing countries between the national and grass roots level. The role of different communication vehicles (such as journals and web-based services) and knowledge intermediaries is outlined. The distance that separates research producers from research consumers is emphasised. The key roles of knowledge intermediaries are listed, including

converting research messages into non-specialist language, putting research into context, assembling research from different sources, playing a multiplier role in spreading research messages, connecting different communities with different languages and worldviews, providing a channel for communicating feedback to researchers and (potentially) for articulating demand, and connecting the local to the national and the global levels. Difficulties related to meeting the information and training needs of these intermediaries are outlined and the need for more attention to the role of knowledge intermediaries in the development sector is emphasised.

Lessons learned from IDS knowledge & information activities

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The IDS Information Unit has taken an active role over the last decade in establishing a number of new kinds of information services with a much broader knowledge sharing mandate. These initiatives can be broadly categorised into three main groups of functions: translating research into more accessible language and formats, organising and providing easier access to the "global knowledge pool", and providing tailored knowledge support to particular user groups by selecting and synthesising key material, responding to queries, and facilitating knowledge sharing and learning. Some of the main lessons learned from the challenges involved in communicating development research, and the scope and limitations of different approaches are outlined. These are grouped under the headings of: how research influences policy and practice; the idea of a "global knowledge pool", understanding the research user's perspective; research dissemination - improving the supply side; centralised versus decentralised approaches; how the internet is changing research knowledge flows; and providing tailored knowledge support.

Identifying DFID's comparative advantage in research communication

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The comparative advantages of the UK research community and some reasons for worldwide reputations of UK researchers and research organisations are discussed. These include a strong academic publishing industry, the presence of some outstanding development-related libraries, the active involvement of UK research organisations in developing their research communications sides, the pioneering of web-based development communications, the presence of a flourishing and diverse development communications community and a strong development education sector, and the existence of print and broadcast media with a global reach. DFID's comparative advantages include a strong reputation among donor agencies based on the technical competence and professionalism of its staff, a large budget for research, strong personal networks, and the support of a variety of research communications initiatives. The potential now exists for DFID to capitalise on what has up to now been a 'latent comparative advantage'. Future directions that DFID and the Central Research Team might follow include improving what is already working in research communication (especially securing long-term funding continuity for existing initiatives), encouraging linkages between different players, ensuring that research communication is integrated within DFID's overall knowledge thinking (with special attention to relations with country and regional DFID offices), and taking a leadership role within the (international) donor community in order to place research communication within a broader knowledge management and anti-poverty agenda.

Research with impact: 10 examples of research funded by DFID

Central Research Team, DFID

Ten research examples are described including the use in Uganda of cassava resistant to cassava mosaic disease; the development of a new anti-malaria drug for Africa; using locally-produced bricks for roads in Cambodia and Vietnam; providing guidelines on an integrated approach to water

resources planning, based on case studies in China, India, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe; reviewing the formula for oral rehydration salt solution (ORS); adapting the implementation of the government's Poverty Eradication Action Plan in Uganda to prevent punitive burdens on economic activity and rural livelihoods caused by decentralisation of taxation and privatisation of revenue; changing the teaching of reading and writing, using English, at primary schools in Zambia in favour of teaching these skills in the local language; designing smallholder irrigation and domestic water facilities that prevent the transmission of schistosomiasis in Zimbabwe; identifying innovative grassroots techniques for combating local corruption and enhancing public accountability to the poor in India; and managing the invasive weed *Prosopis juliflora* in India, thus providing an income for poor families when sold for fuel or dry season fodder.

Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)

DFID

The CGIAR is a global partnership of 62 members including 22 industrial countries, 22 developing countries, and 16 foundations, international and regional organisations. The CGIAR is co-sponsored by the FAO, the UNDP, the UNEP and the World Bank. The CGIAR oversees the work of 16 international research centres to contribute to food security and poverty eradication in developing countries through research, partnership, capacity building and policy support. Funding for the CGIAR centres is provided by voluntary contributions from its members. The relationship between CGIAR and DFID is outlined and ten bilateral research programmes are presented. All research programmes have the common goal of improving the livelihoods of poor people through sustainable enhancement of the production and productivity of renewable natural resources systems. The programmes are the Animal Health Programme (AHP), the Aquaculture and Fish Genetics Research Programme (AFGRP), the Crop Post-Harvest Programme (CPHP), the Crop Protection Programme (CPP), the Fisheries Management Science Programme (FMSP), the Forestry Research Programme (FRP), the Livestock Production Programme (LPP), the Natural Resources Systems Programme (NRSP), the Plant Sciences Programme (PSP), and the Post-Harvest Fisheries Programme (PHFP). Information is provided on objectives, funding procedures and contact persons.

Research up-take and experience of communicating research: examples from the water sector
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The idea of sharing knowledge for development is not new, though it is actually putting this concept into practice which causes problems, particularly as information and knowledge tend to stay where they are generated. This makes the need for improved communication and dissemination very important. The Water, Engineering and Development Centre from Loughborough University has produced some practical guidelines for research dissemination strategies. Two case studies are presented. The first is the Urban Waste Expertise Programme working in developing countries with intermediary organisations and local authorities on urban waste management. The second case study is the dissemination of the Hygiene Evaluation Procedures handbook aimed at field personnel working in water supply and hygiene education projects. Interviews with key informants from CINARA (Colombia) and the Institute of Hydrology (UK) are also presented. A project by HR Wallingford is described which examines the uptake of water resources research in institutes in Pakistan and Zimbabwe. A brief outline is provided of training and information dissemination via community learning and information centres (using community based focal points such as streets, bars, homes, schools, health clinics, and libraries). The development of community learning and information centres depends on a thorough analysis of the learning needs and resources of the community, its location (determining accessibility), ownership (determining operation and use), design (determining activities) and management.

Open access and scholarly communication
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The open access movement in scholarly communication defines 'open' as information which is openly and freely accessible to all over the Internet, whether in an institutional repository or the web site of a commercial publisher. It has developed in response to four main factors, including pre-existing

electronic communication systems allowing scholars to communicate research results to others in their field prior to publication in academic journals; authors and universities more frequently asserting their 'rights' in ownership of published articles; dissatisfaction with the current commercial model of scholarly publishing; and the development of low or no cost software allowing individuals and small groups of scholars to create information exchange and dissemination sites on the Internet. The Budapest Open Archives Initiative (BOAI) has provided both a philosophy and a technology to open up the web to structured and managed open access scholarly communication. Publishers of journals are now assessing how their business models would have to alter to move into an open access world. It has also been recognized that university institutions are places where repositories can be nurtured by subsidizing their start-up and providing robust infrastructures for their ongoing support. The JISC Resource Discovery Network hubs were early initiatives providing organized access to Internet resources for UK academic institutions. The importance of open access to current scholarly literature in developing countries is emphasized. Seven issues are briefly discussed related to this atmosphere of rapid development of the concepts and the ease of implementation of open access in different environments. They include intellectual property rights of content in repositories and journals; publisher business models; the role of peer review and other potential quality control regimes in open archives; ensuing that relevant materials are deposited in the archive; the types of content deposited in institutional repositories; the long-term stability and security of archives; and the need, especially in developing countries, for awareness-raising and training in the technologies and information management techniques involved. Five points are noted to maintain the current momentum for open access as a means to stimulating, democratizing and enhancing scholarly communication worldwide.

Communication for research: some thoughts from Africa
CAB International Africa Regional Centre

Experience of conducting and communicating research in East and Southern Africa is used to review different levels of communication (local, national and global). Interactions between these three levels are described, followed by descriptions of three interpretations of communication (aimed at dissemination, at dialogue, and at participation). Some suggestions and observations are presented for the improvement of communication for research in Africa.

Appendix 6 - Summary of the workshop held on 8 August 2003

This workshop brought together 20 participants from different NGOs and UK think tanks. Its objectives were:

- To identify the current niche of DFID research, its potential for generating knowledge for poverty alleviation and to raise awareness of current research products;
- To harvest communications approaches used by NGOs and UK think tanks that make research more useful, accessible to and taken up by target audiences;
- To identify opportunities for DFID's future research strategy to strengthen and complement current initiatives by building on its comparative advantages.

Specific questions to consider, based on best practices as known to the participants, were

- What techniques are employed to ensure that research is what people need and communicated in a way that is appropriate for the user?
- What communications techniques have been employed to get research products *disseminated to* desired target audiences, and *taken up by them* in policies and practice?
- The potential strengths and weaknesses of these techniques and their impact?
- The factors that deter organisations from investing in and supporting effective research communication?
- The factors that encourage or inhibit users from *making use of* research information that they receive?

A brief overview was presented of the reorganisation of the Policy Division and Central Research Team (CRT) within DFID and the objective and role of this Communications review. CIMRC has commissioned a number of studies related to current literature, use of networks, review of the Development Gateway, lessons learned from dissemination services, use of the media, and best practices identified by DFID resource centres. This workshop with NGOs is an important part of the review**.**

A SWOT analysis was made to discuss the current and future comparative niche of DFID's portfolio of research. See below. The SWOT analysis was followed by looking in more detail at what communications techniques work. What does 'useful to users' mean? What does 'accessible to users' mean? What does 'the take up of research results in policy and practice' mean? Different learning mechanisms and tools are listed.

- Issues emerging from the literature review were discussed included approaching communication as a systematic issue, improving the conditions under which research is communicated, facilitating different levels of user engagement in communication of research, and investing in communication for double loop learning.
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Ten broad categories of actions were identified that the Central Research Team should consider in order to improve research uptake. These include encouraging strategic thinking about communications, encouraging linkages build on synergies, listening to the poor, creating coherence within other actors, involving everyone concerned, communicating to divers audiences (including use of mass media), supporting of networks (to create dialogue), supporting the building of local capacities, learning from past experiences, and thinking longer term.

What is the comparative niche of DFID's portfolio of research: now and in the future?

Strengths	Weaknesess
• Wide range of long term established partners/networks ** • Some inclusions of communications throughout the process? Potentially • Involving communicators and their technologies • Build on good reputation/influence • Research already grounded in policy and practice • Capable research institutes in UK (with good networks/partnerships in the South) • Willingness to bridge gap between research and policy/practice • Focus on poverty • Consultative - willingness to learn (listen to experience of NGOs) • Surr report – consensus • Money maybe for research but not research dissemination • Credibility with practitioners & policy makers • Country presence • Has experience of reality check to research (links between research/operational policy) • Has variety of existing communications initiatives • Broad and dup. Coverage of subject areas • English as global language of research & communication • Capacity in critical analysis (paradigm & review)	• Problems with leverage to make research effective (post research continuum) • Who sets priorities (e.g. pro poor?) • Lack of transparency • Access to research difficult for southern researchers (procedures difficult, contract management capacity, not well informed -short time for proposal submission, use of log frames) • Not emphasis on communication strategy within research projects - over emphasis in generating research only) • ? Poor co-ordination with other funding bodies • ? Difficult to influence from outside • Capturing institutional learning because of contract short termism? • Poor communication between DFI and country offices • Lack of clarity of scope of research • Lack of support for replication and scaling up research • Gap between research findings and policy uptake including lack of understanding of how process might work • Lack of understanding of the potential of the media (international, local, regional) • Focus on academic/scientific vs local/practical/action research

Opportunities	Threats
• Great body of knowledge ** • To understand communication opportunities in the target groups - including ownership of knowledge ** • Listen - make research demand led ** • Opportunities to influence major donors in research results and ways of working (content and process) ** • To build stronger partnerships with southern researchers (as part of research) from all sectors) ** • Explicitly involving civil society & informal sector in demand, implementation & uptake of research _ also in research policy dialogue ** • Building on community based research traditions ** • Promoting south/south collaboration in research i.e. regional research collaboration ** • Action/operations research within rights/poverty framework to generate practice (quick use/ownership results) ** • Blank sheet • Learning and collaboration with other agencies • Great stories (collect, recognise and promote them) • Spread negative or positive experiences • Strategic use of all partners DFID has, including the poor • Capacity building at local level (publishers, libraries + information services, Research – cross sectoral); support multi-stakeholder networking; policy influencing capacity; advocacy link) • Closed cycle -problem identification to sustainable solution (national & international) • Existing knowledge: re-purposing and practice • Improve advocacy with policy shapers • Multiple media & formats for different clients	• Incentives for academics, academic culture (ivory tower) ** • Fear of communication / communicators ** • Focus on ICTs as universal solution, misunderstanding of scope of ICTs ** • Short termism - demand unclear ** • Duplication - waste of money and effort • National government (hostile policy environments) • Lack of clear identification of target audiences • Easily irrelevant/easy to get it wrong • Scientists /media/ bureaucrats • DFID branding (& bias) • Forces against open access (IPR) • Constraints to accessing research (by the poor, policymakers and other potential users) • Re-organization • Focus on "new" vs proven • Inertia in the system (reluctance to spend money in communication procedures) • Projectization • Management burden of collaboration • Greate systemaization reduces opportunities for creativity • Weak M& E of implementation of policy and practice • Lack of communication research (M&E capacity)

Appendix 7 - Summaries of NGO Submissions to the Workshop

The NGO and research community deploy a wide range of innovative communications approaches At the workshop on 8th August 2003 participants were invited to bring with them evidence of how their communications approaches have produced research that is (a) useful to the users (b) accessible by their target audiences (c) more likely to be taken up in the practices and policies of others. The summaries below have been taken from the two pages submitted outlining the key approaches and evidence of their positive results (e.g. reaching specific targets, greater levels of ownership by users, more useful to intended audiences etc.).

ALNAP key approaches and evidence of positive results: communicating research findings
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The active learning network for accountability and performance in humanitarian action (ALNAP) is a unique network of agencies involving all major stakeholders across the humanitarian sector to work collectively to improve performance, learning and accountability. The ALNAP secretariat is based at the Overseas Development Institute in London. Three examples are presented in which ALNAP has displayed initiative in impacting policy through research. The first one is the collection and on-line storage of evaluation reports of humanitarian work that are used for an annual analysis of weaknesses and strengths in various areas of the sector. The second one was a Learning support office, based in Malawi during the recent food crisis, focusing on encouraging learning and learning from best practices. The third example is a global study on consultation with and participation by beneficiaries and affected populations in the process of planning, managing, monitoring and evaluating humanitarian action.

Embedding critical enquiry and communication: making more effective use of research for social change
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Exchange emphasises the *process* of networking and communication rather than particular technologies or tools. Learning and critical enquiry are most effective when embedded in ongoing work, informed by the richness of contextual detail and the tacit knowledge of those involved. It is keeping this critical engagement process alive at a range of social levels, rather than particular research outputs, which is most important. Two examples are presented in which the research process, capacity development, communication and social change are integrated. CIET (Community Information, Empowerment Transparency) aims to bring scientific research methods to community levels, building capacity for such research with local people, and supporting them to inform the decisions that affect their lives. CIET is a non-governmental organization working in several countries with an academic institute in Mexico. Its local evidence-based planning work has looked at a range of issues stretching from input into public health priorities in Atlantic Canada to sexual violence in South Africa and corruption in Uganda. The second example is the Effectiveness Initiative (EI) links 10 different long-standing early childhood development projects around the world in an ongoing cross-site and cross-cultural dialogue based on the in-depth study of each. The aim of EI is to explore what makes a programme effective, under what conditions, and for whom; both what supports and what hinders a project under particular conditions and in particular contexts; and what these contours describe about effective programming more generally. Both of these examples touch on the difference between learning from projects and from formal research.

IIED fieldwork in the corridors of power
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IIED has developed a way of doing collaborative research that builds capacity and makes research accessible throughout the project – and keeps it alive long after. Pioneered by the Forestry and Land

Use programme, the 'Policies that Work' approach is described. This collaborative research approach grew out of a realisation that international enthusiasms and decisions can not easily be converted into workable plans at country level. The idea of the project was to look very explicitly at processes in policy and governance in six countries that affect the way people behave towards forests and forest resources, as what happens to forests are a result of influences of varying kinds, not just forestry policy. The key to this approach was an international team of smaller in-country research teams with team members being contracted part-time while continuing to work in their institutions. IIED's main role in the early stages, in addition to overall co-ordination, was to exchange information and try to spot gaps in the way teams were approaching things, thus enabling the teams to build each other's capacity. IIED was also used to back up the teams and to take the flak or to be the excuse for pushing at politically sensitive areas. Impacts of the approach in Ghana are outlined, as well the implementation of a 'Pressing Home the Findings' phase. All the teams developed a basic matrix of what their message was, who needed to hear it, how they were going to get that message across, and how they were then going to follow up with that message. The teams managed to do about 80% of the immediate activities, less of the more diverse long-term plans as the money ran out. One of the key results from this project overall was that the private sector is an extremely important player and is nearly always left out of this type of research. A follow-on project, 'Instruments for Sustainable Private Sector Forestry', used the same collaborative research approach to look specifically at the role of the private sector in sustainable forestry.

International HIV/AIDS Alliance

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The International HIV/AIDS Alliance (the Alliance) is the only international development NGO that focuses exclusively on mobilising and strengthening community responses to HIV/AIDS. Within a framework of NGO/CBO support, the Alliance supports poor communities in developing countries to play a full and effective role in the global response to AIDS. Since 1993 the Alliance has provided financial and technical support to NGOs and CBOs from more than 40 countries. The Alliance also seeks to influence and improve the HIV/AIDS policies and programmes of international agencies, donors and the international NGO sector with a particular emphasis on the role of community action.

As well as supporting NGO support programmes, the Alliance maintains other global and national partnerships for the development and scaling up of good practice. The Alliance seeks to bridge the gap between research and effective programming by finding ways to support the translation of research findings into locally owned implementation strategies and into the development and implementation of national policy. Three examples for making research accessible and enabling its use in policy and practice are described, including Building Blocks - Africa-wide briefing notes, a series of web-based toolkits, and Frontiers Prevention Project.

Multistakeholder networking: lessons learned from the INASP-Health programme

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INASP-Health is a specific programme of the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications. INASP was established in 1992 by the International Council for Science to enhance the flow of information within and between countries, especially those with less developed systems of publication and dissemination. INASP-Health is recognized worldwide as the leading focal point for international cooperation around issues of access to information for health professionals in developing and emerging countries. Nine lessons for its success are presented. These include involvement of all stakeholders around a common objective; facilitation of communication among stakeholders; organic growth of the programme based on demand; providing an open neutral space for international dialogue; keeping focused on providing a space for the sharing of experience; remembering the importance of interpersonal communication; focusing on the reader; use of language (multilingual networking); and facing the challenge of in-country networking.

Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG)

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The importance of information, knowledge generation and communication within ITDG's strategy for 2003-07 is emphasized. ITDG works in partnership to provide practical support to agents of human development and carry out action research to inform its own programmes and influence the work of others. Many stakeholder groups are involved in the design and delivery of action research, while ITDG Publishing builds on the skills and capabilities of people in developing countries. Methods used for research dissemination include the publishing of journals and newsletters, supporting professional networks, ITDG's technical enquiry service and distribution of technical briefs. A study on the information needs of urban poor is briefly outlined.

Making it happen: a network approach to communicating research

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The International Forum for Rural Transport and Development (IFRTD) is a global network with the overall goal of reducing poverty and isolation by improving the access and mobility of poor women, men and children in rural areas of developing countries. The IFRTD Secretariat is mandated to initiate national or international research programmes when members of the IFRTD network identify significant gaps in information about certain aspects of rural transport that restrict their ability to advocate or implement change. Where possible IFRTD aims to build ownership of the research programme, and its communication, into the research design itself. This 'networked research' methodology brings together people from different countries or contexts that are, at some level, engaged with the particular research issue. It encourages ownership of research and findings and stimulates debate at local and national level. It also establishes a small international community of practice that strengthens the research capacity within countries by unearthing local knowledge and experience and building upon latent research skills. Workshops are designed not merely to present findings but to engage participants in the application of the research findings to their own context, and to utilise opportunities for cross pollination of knowledge and experience. IFRTD believes that with increased involvement in a research programme the level of ownership of the issues, and hence 'take up', increases. For this reason when IFRTD becomes involved at the dissemination stage of research, a further stage of networked input into the project, or interactive dissemination is encouraged. Two examples of networked research (gender issues in the rural transport sector and waterways & livelihoods) are presented, as well as one example of networked input to dissemination (improving rural mobility).

A learning and communications programme for the PAPD methodology

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Experiences and lessons learnt from this NRSP-funded research are presented. The methodology is a participatory stakeholder based process (participatory action plan development, PAPD), which facilitates communities to build consensus for the way they manage their natural resources. The Centre for Natural Resources Studies (CNRS), a Bangladeshi NGO, became involved in the research after realising the potential use of community-based planning in their work. A communications and learning project was identified to develop promotion and training materials around PAPD, including ways to monitor and evaluate the process. Some of the man lesson learned are that identifying with stakeholders, understanding their needs and engaging them in the process is essential for scaling-up. Engaging those in a position to create or influence change and maintaining regular contact is essential. Building local capacity in communications is important. Regular monitoring and evaluation of the process and products is important, to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and quality products. Ideally measurable and useful indicators, to track process and change should be developed near the start of the research.

Oxfam

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The Oxfam research team aims to deepen and broaden research capacity and develop an information system that will facilitate sharing, improve access to resources, and expand the scope for dialogue. Its principles are based on the involvement of Southern institutions, capacity building, sharing and communicating information on research, and integrating gender into all of the major research programmes, provide overall advice on gender research methods, and respond to specific programme requests. Four examples are described, dealing with PRSP research in Uganda, research on labour issues, research for the Education Report, and the NGO Women for Change in Zambia.

Forestry Research Programme (FRP)

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Eight points are outlined related to successful forestry research programmes. They include paying attention to perceptions of the poor about their priority problems, use of demand-driven research, criteria for success of a research project, tailored outputs (types, formats and languages), training courses for researchers, policy briefs, advocacy of policy change, and coping with illiteracy.

Key approaches, evidence of positive results and innovative ideas from the five DFID-funded research programmes, managed by NR International: Crop Protection, Crop Post Harvest, Livestock Production, Forestry Research and Post Harvest Fisheries

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The use of different media to disseminate research findings are described, including radio (soap in Kenya and the documentary *In the Field* broadcasted on BBC World Service), TV (including video), national newspapers, a touch-screen diagnostic kit for livestock, Powerpoint presentation providing research overview, issues papers on future trends in the post-harvest sector, post-harvest bulletin, websites (the interactive children's website Focus on Forests and research programme websites), competition to obtain extra research funds, informal promotion (targeting women at markets and distribution of a CD on EU import legislation for foods), workshops to ensure that project stakeholders are fully apprised of progress and outcomes, research on trusted sources of agricultural information, demonstration plots, in-house media skills, biopesticides workshop in Kenya, integrated vegetable pest management manual, field manual on pest of vegetables, cartoon series for livestock keepers, posters, Animal Health and Production compendium, and photo stories using people-focused highlights at the Royal Show.

PANOS

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Panos London is an NGO working to stimulate informed and inclusive discussion on development issues including globalisation, poverty, environment, HIV/AIDS, reproductive health and gender, and media and communication. Target audiences are the mass media, but also national and international policy makers. Panos London works closely seven autonomous Panos Institutes in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas. Several examples are presented of Panos' research-communication projects, including id21 and Panos reports. The id21 project aims to popularise UK-funded development research through the Southern media, using 1,000-word print features & 5-minute radio features. The features are commissioned and edited by Panos London but are written/produced by local journalists. The project also aims to build the capacity of Southern journalists to produce features based on investigative research. Panos believes that popularising research through the media increases public understanding of complex issues, communicates the voices/opinions of those outside the political elite, informs and educates civil society, editors and journalists about poverty and development issues, and builds capacity and interest of Southern journalists to cover, analyse and critique research. Panos reports are c 15,000-word booklets, aimed at policymakers, NGOs and journalists. They give an overview of a (usually controversial) global development issue and the debate around it, explaining the principal arguments and the positions of key actors, with a focus on the experience of that issue in the south. The reports do not take a position on the issue. The aim is to facilitate understanding and inform debate, and to that end they aim to be objective as well as to use simple and jargon-free language.

Programme for enhancement of research information (PERI)

The programme for enhancement of research information (PERI) has four components in which input, feedback and consultation with partner countries are key factors. PERI should contribute to the alleviation of poverty in developing and transitional countries by materially enhancing access to national, regional and international knowledge and research. PERI staff work with teams of coordinators in-country, typically librarians, who themselves work with further networks of researchers and faculty staff to promote PERI resources, monitor usage and collate feedback. Component 1 deals with the delivery of international research information into 20 countries in Africa, Latin America, Asia and the NIS. Online resources are in demand and PERI communicates largely through email. Component 3 (enhancing ICT skills) deploys in-country methods of communication, as well as other channels. Component 4 (enhancing publishing skills) utilises a range of communication strategies including intensive in-country training and collaboration, visitor programmes for publishing colleagues and journal exchange programmes. Other support measures by INASP are described, such as a small publishing programme for manuals and other practical books on themes supporting access to

information in developing countries and the HIFNET list serv to disseminate news about medical or health-related training or research resources. Strengths and weakness of email and in-country training are outlined, as well as factors that deter organisations from investing in and supporting effective research communication. Factors that encourage or inhibit users from making use of research information are also listed.

TVE-Earth report presents: Hands on - communicating for development & change
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> " I am engaged in the design of development projects …and would appreciate it if you
> provide me with literature…which could assist me in my work" Goder Yohannes, UNDP

'Hands On – Earth Report' is an award winning international communications package which purposely combines the power of television, radio, the web and printed word to maximise impact with a range of audiences from practitioner to policy maker. Broadcast on a five times a week cycle, initially on BBC World Television, the project comprises TV programmes about appropriate technologies, sustainable development and enterprises from Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America, back up information, dedicated web pages and an enquiries service. 'Hands On' increases access to knowledge and ideas which can improve the lives of people and their environment through the use of a multi-media package combining the skills and expertise of partner organisations. Following audience reaction (the biggest response in TVE's history), feedback from partners and trials with target audiences, TVE is developing further 'Hands On' series to profile and provide information about initiatives which improve services, technologies and provide opportunities to economically 'poor' people while enabling them to increase their incomes and improve the environment. The programmes will continue to carry features revealing innovative sustainable practice in the North in order to show that appropriate development is not just regarded as an option for the 'poor'. Following the BBC broadcast, TVE uses a range of distribution strategies to ensure that programmes are picked up by terrestrial broadcasters, satellite stations, multiplying agencies and other user groups. This approach is illustrated through: regular 'Hands On-Earth Report' broadcasts by China Environment and Education TV and National Geographic; use of 'Hands On' material for international policy audiences such as the World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg and the UN Habitat Day 2002; and repackaging for secondary schools in the UK. TVE's Video Resource Centres have trialled selected programmes from the 'Hands On' package for use with women's groups, local education institutions and other multiplying agencies and they've been translated into languages including Hindi, Khmer, Sinhala and Tagalog. Importantly, a number of 'Hands On' features have inspired policy-makers and practitioners to implement changes which will improve livelihoods and the environment.

WaterAid's research dissemination methodology
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WaterAid's own research activities currently fall into four types, including research to 'scope' the policy environment, documentation and analysis of actual programme experiences, research and analysis of policy experiences and implications, and programme evaluations and assessments. Three categories of research are distinguished: programme learning (descriptions and evaluation of practices), situational analysis (including country sector reviews), and public policy analysis (understanding the implications of a given policy and highlight its negative or beneficial impacts on poor people's access to water and sanitation). Current public policy issues for WaterAid research are focused around sanitation; financing water supply and sanitation services; water supply and sanitation and poverty, sustainability, and water sector reform and role of private sector participation. Dissemination of research findings is based on the WaterAid website and magazine, international meetings, posting of WaterAid publications onto listserves and newsletters, case study reports, presentations at consultations, seminars and conferences, media reports, campaign leaflets, and issue sheets.

Water, Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC)

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Techniques employed to ensure demand for research are outlined, as well as factors to reach identified target groups effectively. The WEDC dissemination strategy is based on three factors: integrating the dissemination strategy into the research project cycle, careful planning and budget allocation, and a multi-channel approach to disseminate research outputs. Strengths and weaknesses of different communication techniques used at WEDC are tabulated and factors that deter investment and support of effective research communication are outlined.