

Working Paper 227

**Communication of Research for Poverty Reduction:
A Literature Review**

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Acronyms

AAPS	African Association for Political Science
AERC	African Economic Research Consortium
AgREN	Agricultural Research and Extension Network
AIDA	Accessible Information on Development Activities
CCP	Center for Communication Programs, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
CFSC	Communication for Social Change Initiative, Rockefeller Foundation
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CIMRC	Communication and Information Management Resource Centre
CLACSO	Latin American Council for Social Sciences
CODESRIA	Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa
CRT	Central Research Team, DFID
CSMP	Condom social marketing programmes
Danida	Danish International Development Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
DFID	The UK Department for International Development
DPU	Development Planning Unit, University College London
EDRM	Electronic Document and Record Management
EEPSEA	Economy and Environment Program for Southeast Asia
ENRECA	Enhancing Research Capacity (Danida programme)
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FICHE	Higher Education Links Scheme (funded by DFID)
FLACSO	Latin American Social Science Faculty
GDN	Global Development Network
GPA	Global Programme on AIDS (WHO)
HASHI	<i>Hifadhi Ardhi Shinyanga</i> (soil conservation and afforestation programme, Ministry of Lands, Natural Resources and Tourism, Tanzania)
HCP	Health Communication Partnership
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INASP	International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications
ISNAR	International Service for National Agricultural Research
IT	Information technology
ITDG	Intermediate Technology Development Group
IUD	Intrauterine device
KAP	Knowledge – Attitude – Practice
KFPE	Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries
KM	Knowledge management
LGA	Local Government Association
LRGRU	Local and Regional Government Research Unit
LSDA	Learning and Skills Development Agency
LSRC	Learning and Skills Research Centre
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MKSS	<i>Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan</i> (Workers’ and Farmers’ Power Organisation, India)
NARS	National agricultural research systems
NCDDR	National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research

NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OSSREA	Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa
PIEB	Strategic Research Programme in Bolivia
PRISM	Performance Reporting Information System for Management
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
QALY	Quality-adjusted life years
RAPID	Research and Policy in Development Programme, ODI
RAWOO	Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council
RRN	Regional research network
RU/EBP	Research utilisation and evidence-based practice
RURU	Research Unit for Research Utilisation, University of St Andrews
SANDEE	South Asian Network for Development and Environmental Economics
SAREC	Sida Department for Research Cooperation
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SEA-CSN	Southeast Asian Conflict Studies Network
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SPARC	Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centre
S&T	Science and Technology
STD	Sexually transmitted disease
TRISP	Transport and Rural Infrastructure Services Partnership (joint WB and DFID programme)
TRL	Transport Research Laboratory
UAPS	Union for African Population Studies
UK	United Kingdom
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
US	United States (of America)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank
WEDC	Water, Engineering and Development Centre (Loughborough University)
WHO	World Health Organisation

Executive Summary

Background

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 100 documents from DFID and other development agencies, research institutes, academics and practitioners.

DFID on communication

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:

- Dissemination is associated with keeping partners and stakeholders updated.
- ‘Joining up’ is associated with engaging stakeholders in discussion and feedback.
- Building Southern research capacity is associated with enabling stakeholders to access, produce and disseminate research themselves.
- 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.

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).

Recommendations in the current literature

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

To improve communication of research to policy-makers:

- 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 policy-makers.
- 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.

To improve communication of research to (other) researchers:

- 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 for example the id21 format – popular with academics.

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 for example gender, local context and existing ways of communicating, and possibilities for new ways of communicating through Information and Communication Technology (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.

Gaps and emerging themes

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

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 (Surr et al., 2002) has begun to address this issue.

Improve the conditions under which research is communicated:

The success (or failure) 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.

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 also address the issue of their engagement in national and international decision-making.

Invest in communication for double loop learning:

Many of the current recommendations on communication aim to maximise the direct impact of research on policy and practice. In the process they frequently lose sight of the more gradual and indirect impact that research can have. The current 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.

1 Background

1.1 Thinking strategically about research

In preparation for a new research strategy, the Central Research Team (CRT) at the UK Department for International Development (DFID) wrote in May 2003:

‘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.’ (Terms of Reference for background studies on research for poverty reduction)

This literature review aims to map some of the issues to be explored by drawing on an annotated bibliography of over 100 documents related to the topic ‘communication of research for poverty reduction’. Conclusions and findings from the documents have been summarised in the literature review, which consists of four sections. The first section sets out the background and, more generally, some links between communication and poverty. Section 2 presents previous DFID material on communication of research, and compares it to material from other bilateral and multilateral agencies. Section 3 summarises the major concerns and recommendations related to communication of research for poverty reduction in current literature from research institutes, think-tanks, academics, NGOs and practitioners. The third section is divided into three sub-sections: communication to policy-makers, to researchers, and to end users. Finally, Section 4 discusses some of the gaps in the field and emerging themes that seem to be potentially important issues in the near future.

1.2 Communication and poverty

The poor are marginalised not only in relation to economic processes in society, but also in relation to information and communication processes. The situation of the poor is frequently misconstrued or ignored in societal communication. At the same time, the poor are not able to make their voice heard and so are not able to communicate accurate descriptions of their reality or engage in decision-making processes (Burke, 1999; Hills, 2000). These two aspects of poverty – on the one hand, the undermining nature of communication (or lack of communication) about the poor in society, and on the other hand the inability of the poor to engage in those communication processes on equal terms – are mutually reinforcing.

Current communication initiatives in international development are starting to recognise this complex interplay between communication and poverty. While previous communication activities often focused on providing increased and more effective flows of development information ‘downwards’ to the poor, there is now far more emphasis on discussion, user engagement, and links to decision-making processes in society. It is no longer always assumed that ‘more information equals more development’ or that improved communication will necessarily reduce poverty (Hamelink, 2002; Kasongo, 1998). Instead, the interactive and changeable nature of communication processes, and their relation to wider political and economic processes, has brought to the fore the need to think strategically about communication in the context of the wider international development field, and how it can best contribute to poverty reduction.

2 Current Donor Themes

2.1 DFID

Appropriate production and use of research is an important and established part of DFID's overall strategy of poverty reduction (DFID, 2001a). The role that appropriate communication of research can play is perhaps less well established within the department. However, the issue has been included in some DFID-produced or funded literature over the past few years, mainly through a focus on dissemination and 'joining up'. Lately, reflections on development research have been coupled with discussions concerning Southern research capacity, and even more recently there has been a shift towards examining the wider environment and systems within which knowledge is produced.

2.1.1 Dissemination

The literature on communication that is a few years old emphasises the importance of dissemination. Saywell and Cotton (1999) and WEDC (2000) provide practical guidelines to researchers who, they argue, should consider the potential impact of their outputs much more carefully before producing reports. They offer researchers checklists and options between different dissemination pathways. Burke (1999) also provides practical advice on how to carry out communication activities. TRL (2000) reviews the dissemination of DFID-funded transport research in order to improve dissemination strategies, while Lloyd-Laney, Young and Fernando (2003) follow up on the issue of transport information, arguing that availability and packaging is still not optimal.

Most of the dissemination advice is logically aimed at one-way communication. However, the inherently one-way nature of dissemination activities is offset somewhat by an additional and more inclusive theme in a couple of these reports: Burke (1999) emphasises that if priority is placed on eliminating poverty, then it is vital that channels of communication involve poor and excluded people; while WEDC (2000) and Lloyd-Laney et al., (2003) point out that prior to dissemination it is important to understand and engage with the end users' information use environments.

2.1.2 'Join up' for better sharing

Some of DFID's internal strategies for handling knowledge emphasise the communication aspect through highlighting the need for 'joining up' (DFID, 2000; 2001b). In *Doing the Knowledge* (DFID, 2000), it is argued that better joining up internally and externally, through networks, would create more appropriate conditions for learning. The eBusiness Strategy (DFID, 2001b) makes a similar argument, stating that joining up, through e-programmes, will facilitate more effective knowledge sharing and information flows within DFID, as well as between DFID and its global web of partners.

2.1.3 Build Southern research capacity

In recent years several bilateral donor agencies have started funding initiatives to build Southern research capacity (see section 2.2.1), and DFID has followed suit. Although DFID – unlike many of the other bilaterals – has no single programme devoted solely to this issue, Clift (2001) presents various DFID-funded activities that contribute in different ways to the objective of building research capacity in the South. Southern research capacity is also strengthened through activities

that aim to publish more Southern research, an aspect that has entered some DFID-funded programmes (e.g. PERI and SCiDev.net). In addition, a DFID-funded workshop in June 2001 (Newman and de Haan, 2001) tackled the question of how Northern donors can best promote Southern socio-economic research capacity. The workshop emphasised the need to map broad new areas of research demands thrown up for example by PRSPs, to offer long-term and flexible donor support, and to examine the wider environment within which research institutions operate.

2.1.4 Locate knowledge in wider systems

The issues of the wider environment within which research is produced and used has recently been examined further in DFID's Research Policy Paper (Surr et al., 2002). The report argues that to be effective, research must be located more securely in the context of wider knowledge or innovation systems. This implies that the effectiveness and impact of communicated research is a function of a large number of other parts of the system being in place. Improved communication will depend, among other things, on analysis and strategic approaches to national systems, including elements such as user engagement and uptake mechanisms (cf Lundvall and Tomlinson, 2000, on national systems of innovation).

2.1.5 In sum

In sum, the question of how to communicate research in order to contribute to poverty reduction seems to have been approached at different levels of analysis over the past few years within DFID. The focus on dissemination is now a few years old, is mostly concerned with one-way communication, and often associated with practical advice (to researchers) and checklists. The themes of 'joining up' and Southern research capacity introduce a more strategic focus to the communication debate, bringing in concerns about organisational processes and partnerships. Most recently, the systemic aspect of knowledge and communication has been realised. This last point is elaborated on in Section 4 on emerging themes.

2.2 Other bilateral and multilateral agencies

Most bilateral and multilateral donor agencies are aware of the importance of communicating research in appropriate ways. Some have even produced detailed guides for researchers and practitioners on how to plan their research and communicate in order to influence policy (e.g. Porter and Prysor-Jones (1997) for USAID; the World Bank's online Development Communications pages at www.worldbank.org/developmentcommunications/index.htm), and guides to field projects – admittedly from the 1990s – are based on the assumption that improved communication will lead to improved participation which will lead to improved development (e.g. Fraser and Villet, 1994; FAO, 1999).

However, most donor agencies do not approach the issue from this project management perspective, but instead try to think strategically about how and where to invest in development research, in discussion with their Northern and Southern partners. The results of these discussions seem to be concentrated around two main concerns at the moment: enhancing Southern research capacity, and utilisation of research results in development policy.

2.2.1 *Enhance research capacity in the South*

The current challenges and ideas related to enhancing Southern research capacity are most comprehensively summed up in the volume *Enhancing Research Capacity in Developing and Transition Countries*, produced by the Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE, 2001). This edited volume includes several brief contributions, from the Scandinavian donor agencies, the Dutch, DFID, the EC, the UN and the WHO amongst others. The broad theme running through the individual contributions is the acknowledged need for more equitable participation in the generation and application of new knowledge within the development field. The WHO chapter highlights the profound inequalities that exist in the health research field: it is estimated that less than 10% of global funding for health research is spent on 90% of the world's health problems (Pang, 2001). Partnerships and Southern capacity building are seen as important ways to address the research imbalance. More indirectly, the contributions suggest 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. In this way it contributes to more effective and inclusive communication of development research.

Sida, Danida and NORAD all run aid programmes specifically aimed at strengthening Southern research capacity. Sida places special emphasis on research produced within and by countries in the South and therefore funds at least 10 Southern regional research networks (Olsson, 2001; Sida, 2001), while Danida and NORAD aim to enhance research capacity through coordination and North-South partnerships (Danida, 2000; 2001; Ilsoe, 2001; NORAD, 1999). 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, see www.cdr.dk).

2.2.2 *Utilisation of research results: 'knowledge creep' and agenda setting*

Bilateral agencies are also concerned with questions about how to promote evidence-based policy. This has resulted in numerous papers on the role of research in policy processes, most of which are not written by the donor agencies themselves but by research institutes. However, there is a substantial bilateral contribution to this topic produced by the Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council (RAWOO, 2001a). Their publication, entitled *Utilisation of Research for Development Cooperation: Linking Knowledge Production to Development Policy and Practice*, consists of a collection of papers that draw on the concept of 'knowledge creep', i.e. the notion that research does not necessarily have a direct impact on specific policies or decisions (as proposed in a linear model), but rather has an indirect influence on the policy environment – and hence on policy processes – through gradually introducing new perceptions and understanding. Research has an impact on the policy agenda through interactive, gradual processes and networks. A second publication by RAWOO (2001b) repeats the agenda-setting point, arguing that support to Southern capacity development should not just include research activities but also capacities related to agenda-setting ability and policy dialogue.

The notions of knowledge creep and agenda-setting ability again introduce the need to examine the wider environment within which knowledge is produced and used (as referred to above in relation to the DFID Research Policy Paper, Surr et al., 2002). There has been very little work carried out specifically on this issue by other bilateral and multilateral agencies. However, perhaps one of the most innovative donor publications produced relating to communication of research, emphasising the importance of the wider environment and more systemic issues, is the UNAIDS new framework for communication for HIV/AIDS prevention (UNAIDS, 1999). This is discussed in Box 3.

2.2.3 *In sum*

In sum, most of the bilateral agencies that have paid special attention to communication of research have chosen to do so by supporting Southern research capacity. Strengthened research capacity in the South has an effect on user engagement, uptake capacity and national innovation systems, thus contributing to more successful communication of research through improved uptake and application of research results. However, the strong focus on strengthening Southern research capacity has left something of a gap in the field, especially concerning the question ‘How can we best communicate and use research produced in the North (as most development research is) in Southern contexts?’.

The second major theme, utilisation of research results, is an interesting topic in its own right. However, on the whole, donor agencies have not yet examined the questions ‘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?’. In this respect DFID has a slight comparative advantage in that reflection on these questions has already begun, both in the recent Research Policy Paper (Surr et al., 2002) and in the preparations for the new central research strategy.

Box 1 Shifts in communication theory

Stimulus-response theory: Predictable response

The first formal information theory model was Shannon’s mathematical model of communication, which was developed in the 1940s and laid out a linear schema of production, transmission, channel, receiver and destination (Mattelart and Mattelart, 1998). Communication theory has since relied heavily on this one-way model and a few borrowed assumptions from the behaviourist stimulus-response theory (Varey, 2002). Stimulus-response theory considers the recipient of the message to be passive, with no ability to actively interpret or challenge the message content. It is assumed that the recipient will interpret and react to the message in the way the sender has predicted. The stimulus-response model is still evident in some of today’s communication literature (e.g. Kotler et al., 1999; Lambin, 1996; Lefebvre, 2001; Rogers, 1995), albeit in a modified form. In turn this has shaped some of the dominant one-way communication approaches in the development field, notably those related to HIV/AIDS reduction (see Box 3).

New views on the active recipient: Unpredictable response

Many recent communication studies critique the assumption of a passive recipient. They argue instead that recipients of communication use their independent judgement to evaluate the source of information and the message content (Philo, 1996). Moreover, recipients do not necessarily understand the message in the way it was intended, but instead interpret it based on their own social and personal context (Allor, 1995). This means that a communicated message is never set in stone; instead, it is constantly being reinterpreted in an interactive process between sender and recipient.

The importance of packaging

Recent communication theory and marketing theory has also examined how every pronounced message is accompanied by a large amount of ‘silent’ messages (Mattelart and Mattelart, 1998). The format of a message, the linguistic codes and timing, the implicit associations and layers of potential interpretations are all silent but important parts of the communication. The whole package has an effect – as advertising specialists have realised and used to their advantage (Williamson, 1996).

3 Recommendations from the Literature

This section presents the major themes discussed in the current literature related to communication of research for poverty reduction. Since the literature frequently distinguishes between communication of research findings to different audiences (mainly focusing on either research-policy linkages or research-practice linkages), this section is divided into three sub-sections: communication to policy-makers, to researchers, and to end users (which in this case refers to the poor, including organisations working with them).

3.1 Communication of research to policy-makers

Research into the nature of research-policy linkages is frequently associated with Weiss' work on the 'enlightenment function' of research (Weiss, 1977). This term refers to the process whereby research findings and new concepts 'percolate' and gradually filter through policy networks, thus influencing policy in an indirect way. Weiss relies on a distinction between research which aims to have a direct, instrumental change (sometimes achieved, though this is rare) and research which has an effect through indirect, conceptual change (frequently achieved, though difficult to track or measure precisely because of its indirect nature).

Over the past few years, research-policy linkages have become a new and growing field of research – cf new research programmes at IDRC (Neilson, 2001), IFPRI (Ryan, 1999; 2002), GDN (Court and Young, 2003; GDN, n.d.), LSRC (Nutley et al., 2003), ODI (Sutton, 1999; Maxwell, 2000; Crewe and Young, 2002), and RURU, part of the 'Evidence Network' (Nutley et al., 2002; Walter et al., 2003a; 2003b). In both research and policy circles there is growing concern with the existence (or not) of 'evidence-based policy' (Scott, 2003). The various reflections, assertions and exhortations on how to improve communication of research to policy-makers, as expressed in the literature to date, can broadly be summed up under four headings:

1. Strengthen researchers' communication skills;
2. Aim for close collaboration between researchers and policy-makers;
3. Construct an appropriate platform from which to communicate;
4. Strengthen the institutional capacity of policy departments to take up research.

3.1.1 *Strengthen researchers' communication skills*

This is the advice given by those donor-funded materials that do not examine communication at the level of programmes or systems but remain at project or micro-management level, providing checklists for individual researchers to work against (Porter and Prysor-Jones, 1997; Saywell and Cotton, 1999). It is also the advice most frequently given by the research institutes and think-tanks now working on the research-policy agenda. On the whole, the new research programmes have chosen to focus on the micro-level of individual cases or even individual researchers, providing advice to researchers in the form of possibly endless variations over a common theme: 'Get the target group right' (Mortimore and Tiffen, 2003); 'Get the timing right' (Linguist, 1988); 'Get the format right' (GDN, n.d.; Omamo, 2003; Ryan, 1999; Walter et al., 2003b); 'Get the people and connections right' (Gladwell, 2000); or 'Get all of the above right' (Crewe and Young, 2002; Ryan, 2002; Walter et al., 2003a).

Given that research into research-policy linkages is a relatively new subject area, this broad consensus has been formed on the basis of only a few years' work and may change. For the time being it is simply worth noting that Weiss' original distinction between instrumental and conceptual

change has mostly been lost, as ideas about how to strengthen researchers' capacity almost invariably assume that researchers wish to have an instrumental and direct policy impact – rather than a more gradual (and far less detectable) conceptual impact. The chaotic nature of the policy process (Sutton, 1999) and the resulting uncertainty and contingency of research impact (Stone et al., 2001) is acknowledged in virtually all the literature reviewed, but seems to be difficult to take into account for that section of the literature which offers advice on how to strengthen researchers' capacity.

3.1.2 Aim for close collaboration between researchers and policy-makers

There is also broad consensus in the literature that close and ongoing collaboration between researchers and policy-makers improves the communication of research. This is expressed in different ways, usually emphasising the importance of using networks that comprise or reach both researchers and policy-makers (Crewe and Young, 2002; Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1999; Smith, 1997), or drawing on case studies where this strategy has proved successful (Clift, 2001; Court and Young, 2003; Mortimore and Tiffen, 2003; Ryan, 1999).

In the reviewed literature, close collaboration between researchers and policy-makers is broadly viewed as instrumental in enhancing research impact, and is therefore applauded. There is little discussion in the literature about whether this strategy of close collaboration might be compromising in so far as it turns into a strategy of – as one DFID adviser has termed it – 'snuggling up to policy-makers' and thus sacrificing independent criticism (Paul Spray, 'The Role of Research', 14th May 2003, www.odi.org.uk/RAPID/Meetings/Meeting_3.html).

3.1.3 Construct an appropriate platform, based on broad engagement

The two strategies discussed above (strengthen researchers' capacity, and promote close collaboration between researchers and policy-makers) are probably the two most frequently voiced approaches to improving communication of research in development. If we broaden the scope a little, to include not only communication of research but also communication of information in a more general sense, the literature on advocacy and user engagement provides clear advice on how to communicate to policy-makers: Promote broad engagement and participation on an issue; disseminate and collect information from this participatory base; and use the broad public engagement as a platform from which to approach policy-makers. The scale may vary from global (Chapman and Fisher, 1999; Edwards and Gaventa, 2001) to local campaigns (Fraser and Estrada, 2002; Jenkins and Goetz, 1999; Patel, 2001). Jenkins and Goetz (1999) and Patel (2001) both report cases from India in which information about policies – concerning expenditure data and pavement dwellers respectively – were made public, thereby enabling citizens to challenge policy-makers and hold them more accountable in their decision-making. Both campaigns depend on a platform of broad engagement in order to be able to gain the attention of policy-makers. The same process is evident on a far smaller scale in the example of a community radio, where open access to on-air complaints from members of the community can serve to pressure local authorities (Fraser and Estrada, 2002).

Edwards (1994) raises the point that development NGOs should be particularly well placed to communicate with policy-makers on the basis of their platform as an information intermediary, drawing on grassroots participation and information from their field offices in order to present policy analysis and options to policy-makers. The role of information intermediaries is an interesting point but not widely discussed in the literature reviewed; this point is associated with the growing interest in networks (see Box 2).

3.1.4 Strengthen institutional policy capacity for uptake

The final broad theme is the least discussed in the literature reviewed – and is also the only theme to recommend changes in the way policy-makers operate. Gupta (1999) argues that research uptake into science policy is hindered by impermeable institutions, inaccessible policy circles, and a bureaucratic tendency to resort to standardised solutions across all contexts. Scott (2003), also in the field of science, quotes a review of science and technology activity across the UK government to highlight the institutional weaknesses that hinder research uptake: ‘we were not convinced that any department was really staffed, organised, or sufficiently aware to make the best possible use of science and technology’. In other words, research uptake is partly a function of institutional processes in policy departments that would enable policy-makers to access and respond to relevant research.¹

3.2 Communication of research to researchers

While there is a fairly substantial amount of literature on communication to policy-makers, there is little to be found on communication of research to (other) researchers. This may of course be due to the fact that researchers already know how to communicate with other researchers (journal articles, books, peer reviews, university seminars, conferences, academic associations, email lists, personal contacts, etc.) and therefore feel no need to write about how this happens. The more interesting questions, perhaps, concern how to strengthen communication between Northern-based and Southern-based researchers; how to promote the access and engagement of Southern-based researchers to Northern or international research circles; and how to increase the responsiveness of development researchers to demand-led research topics. A recent evaluation of id21, the development research gateway, reported that the interviewees expressed discontent with the fact that much development research from developed countries was of limited relevance and value to the lives of most people in developing countries (Coe et al., 2002).

3.2.1 Strengthen Southern research capacity

In line with many of the bilateral donor agencies, ISNAR (2000) points out that a first step is to strengthen national research capacity and research systems in the South (cf also the work of CAB International’s Information for Development on this, www.cabi.org). Comparing the ‘communication of research’ debate to the older ‘transfer of technology’ debate, the ISNAR report argues that there is little point in simply transferring Northern-produced research – or technology – to Southern researchers without creating conditions in which Southern-based actors have the capacity to assess and adapt the research in the most appropriate way.

3.2.2 Support research networks

On the issue of bridging the North–South gap, the reviewed literature tends to see different types of research networks as one (potential) solution – especially electronic networks (Song, 1999; Vyas, 2002) and regional research networks (Sida, 2001; Söderbaum, 2001). The use of networks is important in several respects in relation to communication, and they are discussed further in Box 2.

¹ The research field on ‘policy transfer’ provides an interesting angle on this issue, suggesting that in spite of the great difficulties involved in analysing policies from different European national contexts in shared terms, policy-makers may still design strikingly similar policies. This may indicate that the culture of bureaucracy is a more important factor in policy processes than the national culture in question (Tizot, 2001).

Box 2 Communication through networks

Types of networks

Networks are increasingly being seen as an especially appropriate form of communication and organisation within international development. Types of networks in use range from email discussion lists, electronic research networks and regional research networks (Vyas, 2002; Söderbaum, 2001), through policy networks and advocacy coalitions (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1999; Smith, 1997), to dispersed organisational teams or inter-organisational partnerships (Sole and Edmondson, 2002; Robinson et al., 1999). An NGO with all its partners at different levels (grassroots, local offices, headquarters, lobbying in global centres) constitutes a network in itself (Edwards, 1994). In the case of an NGO and its partners, the network is frequently fairly well defined in terms of membership and mutual expectations. At the other end of the spectrum, networks can be loosely defined and broadly inclusive, as in large communities of practice, email lists or open websites (e.g. The Drum Beat, hosted by the Communications Initiative at www.comminit.com/drum_beat.html; the e-discussions run by the Health Communication Materials Network at www.hcmn.org/discussions.htm; the thematic email lists hosted by Jiscmail at www.jiscmail.ac.uk; and the Demos Greenhouse blog at www.demos.co.uk/knowledgebase/default.aspx?id=224).

Advantages

Networks can facilitate knowledge sharing and debate, foster broad participation and ownership of issues, and strengthen partnerships and trust. Networks are also seen as appropriate ways to strengthen Southern research capacity (Sida, 2001) and to include marginalised groups in decision-making processes (Church et al., 2003). The advocacy literature reviewed emphasises the potential of networks to influence policy, both through their ability to draw in many people and to connect different people e.g. practitioners and policy-makers (Chapman and Fisher, 1999; Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1999; Smith, 1997).

Challenges

- *Lack of fit between network and existing systems:* There is a certain danger that sometimes networks may be imposed without consideration of existing patterns of communication (Lloyd-Laney, 2003b). The role of existing information intermediaries can be crucial but is often overlooked (Lloyd-Laney, 2003b, cf Chapman and Slaymaker, 2002). At the same time, local/village networks are frequently assumed to be effective means of communicating information – but evidence suggests that this is not always the case (Conley and Udry, 2001). In brief, some understanding of the existing information-use environment is crucial before deciding whether to set up or engage in networks.
- *Situated knowledge:* Geographically dispersed networks face the challenge of having to adapt knowledge to different local contexts. This cross-boundary exchange can be both valuable and a source of communication difficulty for the network members (Sole and Edmondson, 2002).
- *Network management:* Robinson et al. (1999) suggest that inter-organisational relationships can be categorised as either competition, coordination or cooperation. This categorisation makes networks more predictable and suggests that they can be managed for specific purposes. At the same time, it is precisely the unpredictable nature of interaction within networks that make them such valuable sites for discussion and innovation (Stacey, 1995). Network coordinators may not be able to manage the way this interaction is played out, but can perhaps provide as favourable conditions for exchange as possible – e.g. through tolerating informal processes (Stacey, 1995), or through setting up a web of inter-locking relationships between all members (Gilchrist, 2000; DFID, 2001b). The role of donor agencies may be to provide long-term funding, so as to enable sustainable capacity building and some degree of experimentation (Söderbaum, 2001).
- *Network evaluation:* Networks have not been evaluated regularly until quite recently – which means there is a lack of comprehensive data on their roles and effects. However, different assessment models are being developed to address this issue (Church et al., 2003; Provan and Milward, 2001).

3.2.3 *Continue with dissemination of development research*

In addition, gateways or dissemination sites for development research offers another way – albeit in a more passive manner than networks – to communicate with researchers. Id21 is clearly reaching academic researchers even though this group may not be their primary target group (Coe et al., 2002), indicating that the id21 format is well-suited to communicate with researchers (www.id21.org, cf also the dissemination formats of INSAP at www.inasp.org.uk and PANOS at www.panos.org).

3.3 **Communication of research to end users**

Most of the literature on communication to end users within development (defined here as the poor and organisations working with the poor) is concerned with communication within the setting of a development project, where it is necessary for organisation staff – or other intermediaries – to be effective information brokers, i.e. able to communicate project information, project values and project aims to the community in question. Some of the literature also emphasises the importance of facilitating communication within the community, and back from the community to organisation staff, in order to enhance participation and empowerment. In these cases research is necessarily defined in a broad way, frequently including conclusions drawn from local experiences, action research, or reflection on the local situation as part of project design and implementation.

3.3.1 *Incorporate communication activities into project design*

The most down-to-earth advice on communication to end users takes the form of checklists of appropriate communication channels that can be used in different situation (Burke, 1999; Walter et al., 2003b); reminders specifically about the need to take gender differences in ways of accessing information into account (Zaman and Underwood, 2003; Otsyina and Rosenberg, 1999); more general reminders that it is important that new information is adapted to the local context and communicated in a comprehensible way, by a trusted source (NCDDR, 1996); or discussion of the possibilities created by ICTs – even in rural areas – and how they can complement existing communication systems (Chapman and Slaymaker, 2002; see also a special issue of the *Journal of International Development*, edited by Heeks, 2002, available at www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/issuetoc?ID=89014429).

3.3.2 *Encourage user engagement*

The literature reviewed also emphasises user engagement and the importance of responsive communication. User engagement can promote a more effective research process and quicker uptake of research into practice – especially if user engagement leads to awareness of the existing information-use environment, builds on existing communication systems, and creates trust through two-way communication (Lloyd-Laney, 2003a; 2003b; and Aungst et al., 2003, on user engagement in the US health research field).

The principle of user engagement is sometimes – though rarely – also extended to refer to a communication process that is almost wholly controlled by the end users. The Rockefeller Foundation's Communication for Social Change (CFSC) initiative was established in order to promote participatory communication in development, through strengthening local community decision-making processes and communal action. CFSC defines communication as 'the act of

people coming together to decide who they are, what they want, and how they will obtain what they want' (Figueroa et al., 2002). The model of effective communication is no longer one of persuasion and transmission of development information, but instead one of local dialogue and participatory processes of 'figuring out the solution' (Dagron, 2001).

The literature reviewed seldom refers to the potential problems of user engagement or participatory communication. Kasongo (1998) presents a typical viewpoint when he briefly discusses a few anticipated limitations to community engagement (e.g. Can everybody really express their opinions freely within a community? Can community hostilities be overcome? Who will benefit and who will lose out?), but concludes that these concerns are either merely theoretical or readily solved. Recent critiques of participation are largely not taken into account. In a similar vein, critiques of the notion of harmonious communities are also largely overlooked. In the communication literature, local communication systems are frequently assumed to be smoothly functioning and beneficial to all involved. But Conley and Udry (2001) give pause for thought when they report that research in one region of Ghana found that information flows between farmers within the same village are far more restricted than normally assumed, and the notion that learning about new farming techniques happens through the village information network seems more myth than reality.

3.3.3 Create an enabling environment

Most of the literature on communication to end users focuses on the level of community or interpersonal activity, project design, and local implementation. However, a smaller section of the literature highlights the fact that local and project-level processes are often influenced by the wider environment, macro-level policies, the distribution of resources, and political will. Lipsky (1980), in his study of 'street level bureaucrats' (teachers, judges, social workers, etc.) in a Western context, found that they usually did not implement public policies in the ideal way intended by the policy-makers. However, this was not due to poor communication; the reason that the street level bureaucrats did not implement policies 'correctly' was not ignorance on their part, but continuous pressure resulting from limited resources, forced negotiation to meet high targets, and stressful relations with too many clients – factors which are largely determined by macro-level policies and resource distribution. Similarly, Chapman et al. (2003) argue that the full potential of local rural radios – as a communication channel to farmers – cannot be realised without national-level communication and media strategies, incorporation into budgetary planning processes such as PRSPs, public policies to streamline licensing and subsidies, and government or donor-funded analyses of for example the dispersal of minority languages. In short, both Lipsky (1980) and Chapman et al. (2003) emphasise the importance of an enabling environment in order to improve the chances that end users will be able to act on the information communicated to them.

Box 3 Shifts in communication for HIV/AIDS prevention

Communication for individual behaviour change (KAP and ABC approaches)

Communication activities designed to alter sexual behaviour patterns came to the fore during the 1970s as a response to the perceived population explosion. The approach most commonly used was the KAP model, in which it is assumed that changes in Knowledge will lead to changes in Attitude which will lead to changes in Practice (see e.g. Sandhu and Allen, 1974). The same model continued to be used as the HIV/AIDS pandemic spread – along with the widespread ABC approach (Abstain, Be faithful, use Condoms). Both the KAP and ABC approaches aim to influence individual behaviour through communication of information.

Critiques of the KAP and ABC approaches

However, over the years it has become apparent that these approaches have severe limitations. Provision of information has not succeeded in preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS, and critiques based on practical experience of communication activities include three critical points. Firstly, communication about matters related to sexual behaviour is sensitive. It can often be very difficult to find culturally appropriate and locally effective ways of communicating about this when, for example, most of your audience thinks ‘abstinence’ means ‘to be absent’ (HCP, 2003) or when the locally correct way of communicating about sex is through stage whispers (Lambert, 2001). Second, KAP and ABC approaches are frequently based on one-way communication and therefore fail to engage local groups or even to recognise differences between these groups (ActionAid, 2001). Thirdly, these approaches primarily aim to bring about individual change and have mostly overlooked the decisive influence of contextual factors on HIV/AIDS prevention (UNAIDS, 1999).

Communication through provision of products

Condom social marketing programmes (CSMPs) avoid the communication problem by focusing on wide distribution of condoms without any large investment in user profiles or appropriate communication channels. They have been shown to have a positive effect on HIV prevention (Bedimo et al., 2002) but the lack of information about the end users means that it is difficult to say whether they reach the poor (Price, 2001).

Communication in context

In the late 1990s, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) responded to the inadequacy of existing communication approaches through a global consultation exercise. The result was a new communication framework which recognised that individual behaviours are shaped by factors within a broader context – of which the most important were seen to be government policy, socio-economic status, culture, gender relations, and spirituality (UNAIDS, 1999). Other literature from the past few years also emphasises that communication for HIV/AIDS prevention must be seen in the context of social inequality, insecurity and marginality (Lambert, 2001; cf Lush and Walt, 1999) and the national policy environment (Laurence, 1998; Phillpott, 1999).

4 Gaps and Emerging Themes

There are a few issues related to the topic communication of research for poverty reduction that are underrepresented in the literature reviewed, but which nevertheless seem to be emerging as important themes. In this section they are presented under the following four headings: Approach communication as a systemic issue; Improve the conditions under which research is communicated; Facilitate different levels of user engagement in communication of research; and Invest in communication for double loop learning. The most evident gap in the field is perhaps the failure to see communication as a systemic issue; this is therefore discussed in the first sub-section and also explicitly informs the themes of the following three sub-sections.

4.1 Approach communication as a systemic issue

Most of the literature reviewed takes for granted that improved communication of research in the international development field will contribute to poverty reduction. This means that almost no time is spent debating the question ‘Will improved communication of development research actually lead to poverty reduction?’, while much time is spent providing recommendations in answer to a second question ‘How can you improve your communication?’. The shift to this second question should not necessarily lead to a narrower debate, but that is what seems to have happened in practice. Reviewing the recommendations currently on offer, as presented in Section 3, it becomes clear that:

- Many of the current recommendations – in particular the ones aimed at improving researchers’ ability to communicate (section 3.1.1) – rely on a questionable linear model. It is assumed that improved Knowledge will lead to improved Attitudes which will lead to improved Practice (the KAP model), even though the evidence against this is by now overwhelming.
- Many of the current recommendations rely on a second questionable assumption that one of the overriding problems in development is a lack of information. It is assumed that if communication of information and research could be improved, development would follow. This view pervades the literature reviewed in Section 3, but is perhaps most clearly expressed in the World Bank’s oft-quoted *World Development Report* on ‘Knowledge for Development’: ‘Knowledge is like light...Yet billions of people still live in the darkness of poverty – unnecessarily. Knowledge about how to treat such a simple ailment as diarrhoea has existed for centuries – but millions of children continue to die from it because their parents do not know how to save them’ (World Bank, 1999). As has since been pointed out, this statement can easily be taken to ignore the fact that the spread of diarrhoea is closely linked to sanitation, overcrowding, nutrition, and poverty – and cannot simply be solved through providing information (see for example Mehta, 2001). One gets the feeling that commentators are reminding the Bank – and themselves – of what the Bank already knows: ‘It’s the economy, stupid’.

These two critical points are not meant to discount the importance of research; for example the importance of research on the causes and effects of HIV/AIDS can hardly be overestimated. On the other hand, it seems that the importance of finding the right communication channels and strategies for those research results is easily and regularly overestimated, as the problems of HIV/AIDS prevention are not mainly tied to lack of communication, but to socio-economic conditions of insecurity and marginality (Lambert, 2001; Lush and Walt, 1999), and disfavoured macro-level policies (Laurence, 1998; UNAIDS, 1999).

Therefore the first challenge in relation to this topic of communication of research for poverty reduction seems to be to find ways of combining thinking about communication with thinking about

the complex political and economic processes that produce situations of poverty (including communication poverty). The following three sub-sections attempt to take this into account.

In sum, communication is not only an issue to be tackled at an inter-personal, local or project level; it is also a systemic issue. Most current recommendations offer several possible options for individuals and projects, but have very little to say about how to approach communication at a systemic level.

4.2 Improve the conditions under which research is communicated

The poor are marginalised both from political and economic processes and communication processes in a society; they face the dual problem of not being able to ‘send’ information about themselves to policy-makers and, on the other hand, not being able to access information that they could use to change their situation. In two case studies from India – concerning the right to information movement (Jenkins and Goetz, 1999) and the organisation of pavement dwellers (Patel, 2001) – the marginalisation of the poor from information systems was dealt with through influencing the political will of policy-makers. Other case studies examining why science research is not used as effectively as it could be in UK policy (Scott, 2003) and why public policies are frequently not put into practice the way they were intended (Lipsky, 1980), argue that the problem is not lack of communication per se, but lack of an enabling political/economic environment that would allow the practitioners to take up and use the information at hand.

In sum, 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. In particular, political and economic processes – such as lack of political will or pressure due to lack of resources – seem to be determining factors. The case studies illustrating this are taken both from a UK/Western context and from Southern contexts.

4.3 Facilitate different levels of user engagement

User engagement is the key to taking communication beyond mere dissemination. It is frequently referred to in the literature as a good strategy for increasing the responsiveness of development research projects, making research agendas more relevant and useful to end users, facilitating trust and ownership, and thereby increasing the chances for uptake of the research results into policy and practice. User engagement can operate at different levels:

- *Southern research demand*: take user realities and preferences into account in development research and communication. Recommendations at this level (presented in sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2) highlight the importance of mapping research demand, information deficit areas, information-use environment and existing communication patterns in the South – in order to make design and communication of research more responsive to these realities.
- *Southern research capacity*: strengthen user capacity to generate research and to access communication networks. Recommendations at this level (most frequently formulated and funded by bilateral donor agencies, see sections 2.1.3 and 2.2.1) are mainly based on two rationales. Firstly, research generated with and by Southern institutions and contexts is perceived as more likely to be useful than research generated outside and for the South – and is also seen as a way of addressing the challenge of global inequalities which lead to Northern-dominated research agendas. Secondly, strengthened capacity to produce research also leads to strengthened capacity to access, evaluate and adapt research produced by others. Thus improved research capacity in the South may contribute to improved access for Southern researchers to Northern and international research debates and agendas, and greater ability to take up (externally-produced) research and use it in Southern contexts.

- *Southern research communication*: provide platforms for users to communicate themselves. Some of the literature observes that communication processes are often correlated with decision-making processes, i.e. one-way communication is usually accompanied by unilateral decision-making, while two-way discussion is more amenable to inclusive decision-making processes. This has been noted both at community level (Figueroa et al., 2002) and at the level of international decision-making processes within development (Kasongo, 1998). In many respects communication is power (cf Bourdieu, 1991), and those with ability to communicate (i.e. ability to generate or access knowledge, ability to be heard and noticed when disseminating knowledge, ability to enter and participate in discussion fora, ability to be taken into account when voicing opinions, etc.) often also have the ability to set the agenda. Southern researchers, institutions, civil society organisations and other intermediaries have – when compared to their Northern counterparts – relatively less communication power, and therefore also relatively less agenda-setting power. Investment in their ability to participate and influence might take the form of providing platforms from which they can take part in communication processes (national or international), i.e. strengthening Southern research communication capacity.

The first two points above are fairly well covered in the current literature and recommendations on research communication. The third point, however, is not well elaborated.

In sum, activities are being designed and implemented to address Southern research demand and research capacity, but by comparison there is little being invested in user engagement at the level of Southern research communication. This situation fails to address the issue of user engagement in decision-making processes (i.e. ignores the systemic nature of communication again). Since decision-making processes are important determining factors in poverty reduction, this oversight may to some extent undermine the positive results that arise from the first two points.

4.4 Invest in communication for double loop learning

As mentioned previously (section 3.1.1), Weiss' (1977) original distinction between the direct and indirect impact of research on policy is largely not taken into account in current recommendations. An illustrative example of this is the case of HIV/AIDS policy change in Mwanza, Tanzania. The most important contribution of research in this case may have been to support a cumulative process of conceptual change from the 1980s onwards (Phillpott, 1999). However, current literature tends to overlook this cumulative process and instead emphasise the one research result – a statistic of 42% reduction in HIV incidence published in 1995 – that apparently caused an immediate, instrumental change. Direct research impact is more easily identified, measured and monitored, and is privileged in current recommendations – leading to advice about strengthening researchers' communication skills to enable them to reach policy-makers directly (section 3.1.1) and aiming for close collaboration – 'snuggling up' – between researchers and policy-makers so that research can feed directly into policy (section 3.1.2).

Consequently, many of these recommendations implicitly focus on communication of research as a means to 'single loop learning'. The distinction between single and double loop learning is described by Argyris (1992), who defines single loop learning in the following way:

'When a thermostat turns the heat on or off, it is acting in keeping with the programme of orders given to keep it to the room temperature, let us say, at 68 degrees. This is single loop learning because the underlying programme is not questioned...the job gets done and the action remains within stated policy guidelines.' (Argyris, 1992:115–6)

Communication of research for direct policy impact is in many ways geared towards such single loop learning. Double loop learning, on the other hand, is 'thinking outside the box'; it is a process

which questions underlying frameworks and gradually leads to conceptual change. It is similar to Weiss' process of 'percolation', in which research findings filter through research/policy networks and gradually introduce new concepts and ways of thinking about issues. These issues are under-represented in the current literature, but are beginning to be addressed in some of the literature and activities related to networks. Investment in networks and communication of research through them provides a forum for critical debate of development policy and practice, contributing to double loop learning. Networks that aim to be broadly inclusive also have the added advantage of enabling voices from different contexts to be heard, thus countering the self-reinforcing effects of close collaboration between researchers and policy-makers from the same context.

In sum, the strong current focus on communication of research as a means to direct and instrumental policy change carries the risk of over-investing in single loop learning, to the detriment of double loop learning in development policy. Communication of research for double loop learning would require more focus on the importance of independent research, gradual conceptual changes in the policy environment, and the possibilities for communication and learning provided by networks.

Annotated Bibliography

ActionAid (2001) ‘Stepping Stones’, *ActionAid briefing note*. London: ActionAid.

[From briefing note:] The all too common ‘ABC’ approach to HIV and AIDS consists of instructing people to Abstain, Be faithful and use Condoms. Usually this is accompanied by vigorous dissemination of information about how HIV is transmitted and how it can be prevented, on the false assumption that information leads automatically to behaviour change. Of course access to information and to sexual health commodities such as condoms is important. The mistake is to assume that they are sufficient on their own to bring about change.

Perhaps the most fundamental miscalculation of mainstream approaches has been their failure to address gender inequity. Most women in the world have no choice over when, whether or in what circumstances to have sex. What good is a condom or knowledge of risk to a woman who has no right to say no? Far from empowering her, possessing such information or commodities may only make her even more vulnerable to suspicion and abuse. Unless gender equity is explicitly addressed, we cannot hope to tackle HIV and AIDS effectively.

It was from ActionAid’s recognition of the drawbacks of the ‘ABC’ and ‘information = behaviour change’ recipes that the Stepping Stones approach was born. It is based on the following principles:

- The best solutions are those developed by people themselves.
- Men and women each need private time and space with their peers to explore their own needs and concerns about relationships and sexual health.
- Behaviour change is much more likely to be effective and sustained if the whole community is involved.

Rather than concentrating on individuals or segregated ‘risk groups’, Stepping Stones works in groups of peers of the same gender and similar age (younger women, younger men, older women and older men) drawn from the whole community. The groups work separately much of the time so they have a safe, supportive space for talking about intimate issues; then periodically meet together to share insights. Throughout, they use participatory methods such as songs, games and role plays which are enjoyable and empowering. The process builds on people’s own experiences, needs and priorities. It enables the exploration and negotiation which are essential for sustained behaviour change by individuals and communities.

Allor, M. (1995) ‘Relocating the Site of the Audience’ in O. Boyd-Barrett and C. Newbold (eds) *Approaches to Media: A Reader*. London: Arnold.

Several theoretical approaches have been critical of the ‘passive recipient audience’ implied by a linear approach to media communication. These critical approaches all analyse how the original meaning of the message is changed in the process of communicating it to an audience. As the audience engages with the message, they mould it and fill in gaps, so that in the end the message acquires specific but widely different meanings.

- Political economy shifts attention away from the purely personal level and onto a social level, viewing communication as something that circulates within (and serves to sustain) social structures. In engaging with the circulating communication, audiences simultaneously create meanings on two planes: meanings for themselves and meaning for capital.

- Post-structuralist/psychoanalytic theory focuses on the way that communication is a process of subject formation. When an audience is presented with a text, their process of reading is a process of identifying and investing in certain identities.
- Feminist criticism has developed reader-response theory, which starts from the observation that ‘the reader’ is not an ideal type; readers are different in terms of gender as well as a range of other variables. Therefore, a communicative text will evoke widely different and unpredictable responses from the various readers. Reader-response theory claims that the text has no stable meaning in itself, but instead is given different meanings in the interaction with the reader.
- Cultural studies examine the production of dominant representations in the media (the process of encoding), and the audience’s response to these representations (the process of decoding).

Rather than assuming that the audience passively accepts the dominant representations, cultural studies posit that the audience actively interprets them through different responses, ranging from adoption to questioning or resistance. The responses are determined at several levels by the audience’s cultural meanings, sub-cultures, social location, social practices, individual identities, and fantasies.

Argyris, Chris (1992) *Overcoming Organizational Defences: Facilitating Organizational Learning*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Argyris was one of the most cited writers working on organisational learning during the 1990s. In this book based on his experience as a consultant for big companies, he argues that the primary problem facing these companies is not the ability to remember past lessons, but rather the ability to acquire new knowledge. This ability is strengthened when organisations gain an understanding of two key features of their operation: single versus double loop learning, and tacit versus explicit knowledge.

Single versus double loop learning: Argyris claims that one of the largest hindrances to learning is that most organisations learn through single loop rather than double loop learning. To highlight the difference, he describes single loop learning as follows:

‘When a thermostat turns the heat on or off, it is acting in keeping with the program of orders given to keep it to the room temperature, let us say, at 68 degrees. This is single loop learning because the underlying programme is not questioned. The overwhelming amount of learning done in an organisation is single loop learning because it is designed to identify and correct errors, so that the job gets done and the action remains within stated policy guidelines.’ (pp 115–6)

He continues by suggesting that one of the most important aims of a learning organisation is to develop the capacity to engage in double loop learning, i.e. the capacity to think critically and creatively about programme and policy frameworks.

Tacit versus explicit knowledge: Argyris argues that a second major impediment to learning is the fact that most organisations store and use knowledge in tacit rather than explicit form. Contrary to other writers on knowledge management, such as Nonaka, Argyris views tacit knowledge purely as a constraint to learning and not as a source of learning. Therefore, his advice on how to become a learning organisation focuses heavily on making tacit knowledge explicit – so that it is available to everyone within the organisation.

Aungst, Jessica, Amy Haas, Alexander Ommaya and Lawrence Green (eds) (2003) *Exploring Challenges, Progress, and New Models for Engaging the Public in the Clinical Research Enterprise: Clinical Research Roundtable Workshop Summary*. The National Academies Press. (available at www.nap.edu/catalog/10757.html)

[Summary from paper:] The Clinical Research Enterprise depends upon practitioners, policy-makers and others for participation in trials, ethical review of research, and continued support of research funding. However, the role of the public has expanded beyond this traditional model as consumers have begun to demand a role in the formulation of the research agenda and in the design, review and pursuit of research. In addition, consumers are taking a greater role in accessing health information and pushing for better translation of research into practice.

Exploring the role of the public in the Clinical Research Enterprise was the focus of this workshop. At the opening it was noted that support for research is strong, but the public lacks much basic knowledge about the Clinical Research Enterprise. It was added that engaging the public in the Clinical Research Enterprise is a strategic imperative for several reasons – the public can aid the translation of research findings into practice, help to speed up the clinical research process, and help to make the research process more efficient. Translation from clinical findings into practice is often the weak link in the Enterprise and there is a need for improved infrastructure to support the National Clinical Research Enterprise. The three major priorities for engaging the public in the Clinical Research Enterprise listed by Dr Zerhouni are trust, ongoing bi-directional communication between the research community and the public, and education.

Members of the public have traditionally been seen as passive recipients of research results rather than as active partners. Participatory research extends the role of the public in clinical research beyond participation in trials. [...] The community-based participatory research system would be improved by developing:

- pilot developmental grants;
- incentives for community members and researchers to work together;
- grant review study sections that understand and value community-based participatory research;
- appropriate grant review criteria for community-based participatory research.

Bedimo, A.L., S.D. Pinkerton, D.A. Cohen, B. Gray and T.A. Farley (2002) ‘Condom Distribution: A Cost-Utility Analysis’ *International Journal of STD and AIDS* 13(6): 384–92.

[Abstract from article:] Objective: To explore the cost-effectiveness of a condom distribution programme. Methods: We conducted a cost-utility analysis of a social marketing campaign in which over 33 million condoms were made freely available throughout Louisiana. Surveys among 275,000 African Americans showed that condom use increased by 30%. Based on the estimated cost of the intervention and costs of HIV/AIDS-associated medical treatment, we estimated the quality-adjusted life years (QALYs) saved, and number of HIV infections averted by the programme. Results: The programme was estimated to prevent 170 HIV infections and save 1909 QALYs. Over \$33 million in medical care costs were estimated to be averted, resulting in cost savings. Sensitivity analyses showed that these results were quite stable over a range of estimates for the main parameters. Condom increases as small as 2.7% were still cost-saving. Conclusion: Condom distribution is a community-level HIV prevention intervention that has the potential to reach large segments of the general population, thereby averting significant numbers of HIV infections and associated medical costs. The intervention is easy to scale up to large populations or down to small populations. The financial and health benefits of condom social marketing support the recommendation to make it a routine component of HIV prevention services nationally.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1991) *On Language and Symbolic Power*. Cambridge: Polity in association with Basil Blackwell.

Bourdieu has had a significant impact on media studies because of his argument that relations of communication are always, inseparably, power relations. The agents or institutions involved in communication have different degrees of 'symbolic power', i.e. the power to make people see and believe certain visions of the world rather than others. Those with relatively high symbolic power are able to present visions that people will conform to, or are even able to transform visions. The symbols used (the cultural codes, the buzzwords, the presentation, etc.) serve the function of creating consensus and 'glueing' society together. However, the symbols will always serve the interests of some groups rather than others, thus anyone who is able to launch or control symbols will also have (political) power. The result is that any communication is closely linked to the relative symbolic power that the communicator has to 'construct visions of reality'.

Burke, Adam (1999) *Communications and Development: a practical guide*. London: Social Development Division, Department for International Development. (available at www.dfid.gov.uk)

[From introduction:] Communications activities have always been central to DFID programmes. But DFID's new poverty agenda has given them a much stronger emphasis, with a growth of interest from all advisory groups and most geographical divisions. Newer, more broad-ranging programmes give far greater scope for innovative communications activities with new partners. If priority is placed on eliminating poverty, then it is vital that channels of communication involve poor and excluded people. This involves people's rights to be involved in development programmes, and in society and governance more generally. The engagement of poorer people with government involves many complex communications issues, whether it takes place at a village level or in policy debate. With a high level of interest in communications, and a growing awareness of how central they are to many new DFID priorities, there is need for good practice material from Social Development Division. This guide fulfils those aims, and complements other communications initiatives under way in DFID.

Chapman, J. and T. Fisher (1999) *Effective Campaigning*. London: New Economics Foundation.

International non-governmental organisations are devoting more energy to policy influence work without knowing much about what makes a campaign effective. Based on research conducted by the New Economics Foundation, and focusing on case studies of child labour in India and the promotion of breast feeding in Ghana, this paper recommends:

- Effective campaigns require a long-term commitment and take place at many different levels: international, national/regional, and grassroots. To achieve the reach and mix of skills required, collaboration is essential while individuals (or champions) with drive and commitment are also key.
- Campaigns are not enough on their own; implementation and change at the grassroots should never be assumed and will require additional activity.
- A narrow focus can be effective in getting an issue formulated but problems caused by poverty are more complex; if the campaign is not widened out at a later stage it is unlikely to achieve effective change.
- Effectiveness is an art not a science; but organisations can learn from past and present experience using frameworks and other evaluative processes.

In evaluating different structures for collaboration, the authors identify three types: ‘pyramid’ (quick, helps get access to top level of policy, but can ignore grassroots); ‘wheel’ (slow but good for information exchange and development of centres of specialisation); and ‘web’ (like a wheel but with no focal NGO, could be too slow for campaigning).

Chapman, Robert, Roger Blench, Gordana Kranjac-Berisavljevic’ and ABT Zakariah (2003) ‘Rural radio in agricultural extension: The example of vernacular radio programmes on soil and water conservation in N. Ghana’, *AgREN Network Paper 127*. London: Agricultural Research and Extension Network, Overseas Development Institute. (available at www.odi.org.uk/publications)

[Abstract from paper:] Radio is a powerful communication tool. Experience with rural radio has shown the potential for agricultural extension to benefit from both the reach and the relevance that local broadcasting can achieve by using participatory communication approaches. The importance of sharing information locally and opening up wider information networks for farmers is explored with reference to the specific example of vernacular radio programmes based on research on soil and water conservation. This paper describes this specific experience in the context of rural radio as a tool for agricultural extension and rural development, with reference to the dramatically changing technology environment that is currently influencing information and communication processes worldwide. The implications for policy-makers of harnessing rural radio to improve agricultural extension are also discussed.

Research findings:

- Rural radio can be used to improve the sharing of agricultural information by remote rural farming communities.
- Participatory communication techniques can support agricultural extension efforts, especially using local languages and rural radio to communicate directly with farmers and listeners’ groups.
- A format that combines a drama performed by local actors with corresponding thematic discussions is popular amongst farmers listening to agricultural extension radio programmes.
- Targeted audience research can help to determine programme content, broadcast schedules and the preferences of listeners regarding the mix of information and education in the format.

Policy implications:

- There is a need for national communication and media strategies which incorporate pluralistic approaches to the media within the more traditional centralized broadcasting and information systems and promote the cross-sectoral importance of information and communication in budgetary planning processes such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs).
- The national policy environment in many developing countries could be improved through legislation to encourage independent community broadcasting, including streamlined licensing and subsidies for new information services such as FM stations, internet providers and rural telecommunication services.
- Governments and donors should invest in up-to-date socio-linguistic analyses of the numbers and geographical dispersal of minority languages with a view to improving information services such as government public service information, broadcasting and research networks.

Chapman, Robert and Tom Slaymaker (2002) 'ICTs and Rural Development: Review of the Literature, Current Interventions and Opportunities for Action' *ODI Working Paper 192*. London: Overseas Development Institute. (available at www.odi.org.uk/publications)

[From the executive summary:] This paper investigates the role that information and communication technologies (ICTs) have to play in developing countries, focusing particularly on those rural areas that are currently least affected by the latest advances in the 'digital revolution'. The need for flexible and decentralised models for using ICTs is discussed in the context of 'content and control'. The challenge of achieving rural development goals by supporting knowledge and information systems is analysed through an epistemological perspective illustrated by case studies from the literature and the authors' research on the operation of these systems at the community level. The concept of building partnerships at the community level based around information exchange is explored, using ICTs to improve systems for the exchange of information sources that already exist locally and also providing established information intermediaries with the facilities to enhance their capacity for information sharing.

Responsibility for incorporating technological innovation in ICTs into development strategies has traditionally fallen to those with the mandate for infrastructure within governments and development agencies. This is largely due to the large scale and high costs of building telecommunication, electricity and, to a certain extent, broadcasting networks. As the technology becomes more powerful and more complex, with satellite-based and fibre optic cable networks encircling the globe with increasing density, the position of ICTs within this infrastructure mandate is unlikely to diminish. ICTs, however, also consist of a wide range of equipment nowadays that can be operated individually or within small, local networks that do not require vast infrastructure investments. Long lasting batteries, solar and wind-up power sources are now being used to enable ICTs to operate in remote areas. This paper focuses principally on the role of ICTs as flexible and powerful tools for social development through small scale strategic interventions, linking to, and extending beyond, formal and centralised systems operating on a larger scale.

The paper concludes that there are numerous, well established barriers to improving information exchange. Knowledge capture, the high cost of information access and infrastructure constraints all affect the equitable distribution of information in rural areas. However, technological advances in ICTs have reduced the cost and increased the quantity and speed of information transfer dramatically. This is set to continue and the technologies are already being designed to accommodate a wide range of user choices. The need for a concerted effort to build knowledge partnerships and to engage the private sector and technology drivers in the pursuit of rural development goals is paramount if ICTs are to have a role in future strategies.

Church, Madeline, Mark Bitel, Kathleen Armstrong, Priyanthi Fernando, Helen Gould, Sally Joss, Manisha Marwaha-Diedrich, Ana Laura de la Torre and Claudy Vouhé (2003) 'Participation, Relationships and Dynamic Change: New Thinking on Evaluating the Work of International Networks', *DPU Working Paper 121*. London: Development Planning Unit, University College London. (available at www.ucl.ac.uk/dpu/WP121.pdf)

This paper reviews central issues concerning the use of networks in the field of international development. Formal networks today have become a preferred organisational form for cooperation on a range of issues, and there are many advantages to a networked structure – not least the network's capacity to challenge and change unequal power relations. The authors therefore begin by stating that:

‘If we are to find our way to counteracting the negative effects of economic liberalisation and globalisation, especially on the marginal and under-represented on the world stage, we need a greater understanding of how to build and sustain powerful networks based on the values of dignity in development for all.’

They continue by discussing problems and solutions for networks based on the four Ds used by Chambers in his participatory approach to development: Diversity, Dynamism, Democracy and Decentralisation.

The paper then draws on several case studies and illustrative examples to highlight topics such as network relationships, trust, structure, and participation. They argue that trust grows as network members work together. They also argue that networks will benefit from evaluation of these various relationships and processes, and suggest a number of angles that can be used when evaluating networks:

- *Contributions Assessment* can be used to see where the resources lie in the network and whether the network processes have facilitated circulation of these resources.
- *Channels of Participation mapping* can help the network to understand how and where the members are interacting with the network, and what their priorities are.
- *Monitoring Networking at the Edges* will highlight how much ‘networking’ is being stimulated by the secretariat function and helps to assess the level of independent exchange that is going on.

A two-page checklist for networks is provided, with suggested evaluation questions covering the issues raised above. The authors then show why networked linking and coordinating can bring much added value to advocacy work, and summarise the reasons as follows:

- The improved quality and sophistication of joint analysis that underpins the advocacy.
- The extended reach to key actors in key contexts through which that improved analysis can be channelled.
- The capacity to act simultaneously, with shared ideas, in many places at once.
- The space for competing views to be discussed and consensus positions achieved.
- The opportunity for those with few other avenues to powerful decision-makers to gain access through the networked relationships.

Clift, Charles (2001) ‘DFID’s Experience with Research and Capacity Building’ in KFPE (ed.) *Enhancing Research Capacity in Developing and Transition Countries*. Berne: Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE)

Clift notes that at the time he was writing, DFID did not have an individual programme dedicated solely to research capacity building in the South. However, DFID gave support to a number of related schemes, and Clift describes each of these in turn:

- *Research programmes*: DFID funds research programmes in a number of areas, mostly through UK research institutions, but also through multilaterals and for example, CGIAR.
- *Scholarship programmes*: DFID has traditionally provided several postgraduate scholarships and other forms of training.
- *Higher Education Links Scheme (FICHE)*: Funds about 450 links between UK and developing country departments, mainly through exchange of personnel.
- *Country and regional programmes*: Support of research and capacity building in-country from DFID country offices.

Clift then presents the findings of two evaluations of the impact of DFID-funded research programmes. First, an evaluation of the FICHE scheme was largely positive. The scheme has a relatively small budget and draws on personal relationships and contacts. This has contributed to its success in many ways. On the other hand, it is acknowledged that more could be achieved with a larger budget. The evaluation pointed out that the links mostly ran in parallel and that little effort was put into exploiting the potential synergy between them. Second, an evaluation of the impact of a DFID health research project in Ghana and Tanzania was also mainly positive. An initial study conducted as the Vitamin A Supplementation Trial in Ghana in the early 1990s had shown the health effectiveness of Vitamin A supplementation and had also clarified that Vitamin A reduced the severity (rather than the incidence) of disease. This study had significant policy impact in Ghana, and also an impact on the international scene. There were several reasons for its success, and one of the important factors was a close and ongoing relationship between the researchers and policy-makers. The researchers did not begin by telling policy-makers how to implement Vitamin A supplementation, but instead produced evidence for the effectiveness of supplementation, and only subsequently addressed the operational implications – in active dialogue with policy-makers. This dialogue increased the sense of ownership of all involved. In addition, a series of local, national, regional and international conferences had a substantial impact on policy actions in Ghana.

Coe, Jim, Mark Luetchford and Tess Kingham (2002) *id21: tracking routes towards impact*. UK: id21. (available at www.id21.org/id21-info/impact.html)

[Abstract from id21:] This study aims to assess id21's success in increasing the influence of UK-funded research within international development policy. It begins by examining the ways in which policy-makers access and employ research. The study then uses these findings to assess the validity and performance of the dissemination methods id21 currently uses. The study draws on four primary sources: over 90 face to face, semi-structured interviews with existing and target potential id21 users located in South Africa, India and Uganda in April 2002; a survey of id21 email news subscribers; a survey of subscribers to id21's quarterly print review *Insights*; and a survey of researchers, mainly based in the UK, whose research has been highlighted by id21.

Field and desk research for the study was undertaken by id21 in partnership with external consultants Coe, Luetchford and Kingham. Collected data was then analysed by the external consultants, with inputs from id21, and the external consultants wrote the full report. The report discusses various issues relevant to the circumstances in which id21 operates, such as the research to policy dynamic in the international development field, research capacity constraints in developing countries, the disproportional influence of funders' agendas, and the movement of development NGOs towards more policy research. The interviewees for the study complained that much development research from developed countries was of limited relevance and value to the lives of most people in developing countries. They also voiced concerns about the problem of increasing uptake of research and the more general problem of under-capacity to formulate policy and implement change in developing countries. Some routes of policy influence were identified, including influencing through insiders, academic work, networks and generation of debate, community organisations, the media, and the internet.

Academics formed 27.5% of respondents to the user surveys that the report draws on, and the authors point out that even though academia can be an important route to policy influence, it will be important for id21 to reach sectors more directly involved in policy formulation.

Conley, Timothy and Christopher Udry (2001) 'Social learning through networks: the adoption of new agricultural technologies in Ghana' *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* 83(3): 668–73.

This paper discusses and challenges the received wisdom on social learning in technological innovation in the agricultural sector in Africa. Traditionally, there has been a tendency to assume that individual farmers learn about the advantages of new technologies from each other, through a well-connected web of communication within their community. It is assumed that the village (or other community) acts as a collective unit of learning engaged in a collective process of experimentation. Each individual farmer observes the activities of the others, and notes the results of any new or different approaches. However, in this paper Conley and Udry report the findings of a study in Ghana that strongly contradicts this assumption of how social learning operates.

The study mapped the contacts, communication and learning patterns between approximately 450 farmers in four clusters of villages in Ghana's Eastern Region, over a period of 21 months between 1996 and 1998. The findings showed that individual farmers were only able to provide some information on farming inputs and harvests of approximately 7% of random matches between them and other farmers in the village. Furthermore, in most cases, the respondents were not able to provide details but only relative information (e.g. whether the other farmer had a larger or smaller harvest than himself). The evidence indicated that farmers know very little about inputs or outputs on the plots of most farmers in their village. In other words, information flows are far more restricted than normally assumed, with each farmer learning about new farming approaches or technologies from only a few other sources. The traditional assumption that information is freely available to all or most farmers in a village and that social learning occurs through extensive and well-connected networks is not representative of reality, at least not in this region of Ghana.

Court, Julius and John Young (2003) 'Bridging Research and Policy: Insights from 50 Case Studies' *ODI Working Paper 213*. London: Overseas Development Institute. (available at www.odi.org.uk/publications)

[Abstract adapted from paper:] As part of the first phase of the three-year Global Development Network (GDN) Bridging Research and Policy project, the Overseas Development Institute was responsible for the collection and analysis of 50 summary case studies on research-policy linkages in developing countries. This paper reports on the process, findings and implications of the case studies work. The case studies were designed to capture existing experiences and relate them to streams in the literature, and to identify specific hypotheses for further investigation in the second phase of the project. In terms of cross-cutting analysis, the cases have been examined to address the question: Why are some ideas that circulate in the research/policy arenas picked up and acted on, while others are ignored and disappear? The discussion is structured around four interlinked spheres:

- *Context*: This emerged as the most important sphere in affecting the degree to which research will impact on policy. Key issues concern prevailing narratives and discourse among policy-makers, the extent of demand for new ideas (by policy-makers and society more generally) and the degree of political contestation. Political resistance often hindered change, despite the existence of clear evidence, and bureaucratic factors often distorted public policies during implementation. The authors suggest that the degree of policy change is a function of political demand minus contestation. They outline three main remaining challenges: How can contexts be categorised and how best can stakeholders operate to influence policy in these different contexts? How do research-policy processes work in situations with democratic deficits? What can realistically be done to improve the context for the use of research in policy-making and practice?

- *Evidence*: The key issue affecting uptake was whether research provided a solution to a problem. Policy influence was also affected by research relevance (in terms of topic and, as important, operational usefulness) and credibility (in terms of research approach and method of communication). In particular, the cases highlighted the impact of participatory approaches and the value of pilot schemes that clearly demonstrate the value of new policy options. Policy uptake was greatest if the research programme had a clear communications and influencing strategy from the start, and if the results were packaged in familiar concepts.
- *Links*: The extent of links and feedback processes between researchers and policy-makers are clearly important. Issues of trust, legitimacy, openness and formalisation of networks emerged from the cases. The cases supported existing theory about the role of translators and communicators, and the value of informal networks, but there were no clear conclusions about the nature of the links – this arena in particular needs further investigation.
- *External influences*: The impact of external forces and donor funding certainly affects the way research impacts on policy in developing countries. Broad incentives, such as EU access or the PRSP process, can have a substantial impact. As policy processes become increasingly global this arena will increase in importance.

The next phase of the GDN Bridging Research and Policy Project will undertake more thorough systematic research on the issues identified in this paper.

Crewe, Emma and John Young (2002) ‘Bridging Research and Policy: Context, Evidence and Links’, *ODI Working Paper 173*. London: Overseas Development Institute. (available at www.odi.org.uk/publications)

Crewe and Young have developed an integrated framework for examining and understanding the relationship between research and policy. They argue that ideas percolate into development discourse and people learn about how the world is ordered through their practical experience of it. The paper fuses literature on political interests, formations of actors, and discourses, taking account of the role played by wider civil society and ‘street bureaucrats’, and borrowing ideas from psychology and marketing. They create a three-dimensional approach to assist the investigation into the impact of research on policy:

- A. The Context: Politics and Institutions
- B. Evidence: Credibility and Communication
- C. Links: Influence and Legitimacy

The authors recommend an historical, contextual and comparative methodology, the aim of which would be to create a narrative of policy continuity and change, and assess the impact of research on policy processes in particular areas. The similarities and differences between areas would shed light on: (a) how research has been shaped, used, ignored or reinterpreted by policy-makers; and (b) how researchers could more effectively contribute to evidence-based policy-making. The paper concludes with three hypotheses, stating that research is more likely to contribute to evidence-based policy-making that aims to reduce poverty, alleviate suffering and save lives if:

- it fits within the political and institutional limits and pressures of policy-makers, and resonates with their ideological assumptions, or sufficient pressure is exerted to challenge those limits;
- researchers and policy-makers share particular kinds of networks and develop chains of legitimacy for particular policy areas;
- outputs are based on local involvement and credible evidence, and are communicated via the most appropriate communicators, channels, style, format and timing.

Dagron, Alfonso Gumucio (2001) *Making Waves: Stories of Participatory Communication for Social Change*. New York: Rockefeller Foundation. (available at www.rockfound.org/Documents/421/makingwaves.pdf)

In this book the Rockefeller Foundation has brought together 50 stories of instances where participatory communication has led to social change, ranging from bush radios to street theatre and local telecentres. The collection forms part of the work of the Rockefeller Foundation's Communication for Social Change initiative. In the book's foreword, Denise Gray-Felder maps out the rationale for participatory communication in the international development field. She makes the link between communication and empowerment, arguing that these 50 case studies show how people living in poor communities across the world can potentially seize control of their own life stories and begin to change their marginal and unjust circumstances. She emphasises the power inherent in local community decision-making processes and in communal action.

Reading across the 50 case studies, the Rockefeller Foundation suggests that community-based radio is perhaps the communication method par excellence when trying to reach excluded or marginalised communities in targeted ways. Radio enables a wide audience to hear about the situation of the poor in their own words. It also has the advantage of being cheaper and more accessible than video. The case studies include examples of the continued success of traditional communication methods such as drama, dance, music, puppets, drums, storytelling and dialogue circles. In all of these, person-to-person communication is crucial. As Gray-Felder says:

‘We [in the Communication for Social Change programme] have come to appreciate the true power of face-to-face and voice-to-voice communication. Every meaningful lesson or belief I've garnered in life came from someone I value explaining the issue to me and involving me in the process of figuring out the solution.’

Danida (2000) ‘Enhancing Research Capacity in Developing Countries (ENRECA)’ – Volume 1: Main Report and Volume 2: Annexes. Copenhagen: Evaluation Secretariat, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Danida). (available at www.evaluation.dk)

The purpose of this independent evaluation report was to evaluate Danida's ENRECA programme (Bilateral Programme for Enhancement of Research Capacity in Developing Countries) and to make recommendations. Overall, the report suggests that the ENRECA programme is an imaginative and effective example of how a relatively small amount of money may be used to build public sector research capacity in developing countries. The Programme has been effective in terms of enhancing two of the four generally recognised forms of research capacity: tangible and human capital. More work could be done on the other two – organisational and social capital. There is cause for concern about the longer-term sustainability of ENRECA at Programme level, particularly in the case of capacity-based projects. This is mainly due to the fact that Danish universities are faced with growing financial constraints and are increasingly insisting that the work done by staff be cost effective. ENRECA's tangible contributions are small compared with both other programmes and consultancies. Although the flexibility and problem-orientation of ENRECA management is largely credited with promoting efficiency in the field, information and knowledge management appear to be major problems within ENRECA. The report finds that such is the value of ENRECA's accomplishments, the goodwill it has created and the strength of its institutional memory, that it is a resource that should be preserved and nurtured. But this can be done only through adaptation to meet new challenges and grasp new opportunities. The following issues were identified from the great deal of evidence that was examined: (i) enthusiasm versus direction; (ii) management flexibility and management inputs; (iii) project level versus Programme level; (iv) ‘capacity based’ versus ‘research-based’; and (v) ENRECA's place within Danida. There are three broad types of recommendation about how the Programme might be continued: (i) Continue the Programme as

before without significant new funding; (ii) Increase funding significantly (e.g. to double the existing level) and make it more participatory; (iii) Option B plus integrating ENRECA more fully into a Danida-wide research strategy that pulls together the work of ENRECA, the Danish Research Centres and Sector support to research.

Danida (2001) ‘Partnerships at the Leading Edge: A Danish Vision for Knowledge, Research and Development’, Report of the Commission on Development-Related Research. Copenhagen: Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (available at www.um.dk/danida/partnerskab2000/forskningsrapport/)

The Commission on Development-Related Research in Denmark was established to learn whether anything could be done to improve learning for policy-making in a rapidly changing world, by appraising the role of the Danish development research sector and the contribution through research, teaching and consultancy to international as well as Danish development goals, and also to formulate a new strategic framework for future Danida support to guide participants in the sector. The report begins with knowledge – why it matters to development, and why the production of new knowledge (in other words research) should be funded by the public purse. An assessment is offered of development research in Denmark. The Commission then summarises the six principles that have guided their work. These are:

1. Knowledge should continue to play an important part in Denmark’s development policy; research should continue to play an important part in knowledge policy;
2. Public funding of research and research institutions is justified and necessary, both in Denmark and in the South;
3. The basis of funding needs to be a partnership, reflecting the principles of Denmark’s development policy – ‘realistic agreements concerning shared visions, joint objectives and reciprocal obligations’;
4. In that context, Danida has a responsibility to the research sector as a whole, and needs to take a holistic view of the impact of its decisions about centre, programme and project funding;
5. By the same token, researchers who receive funding have a responsibility to Danida, especially in terms of the agency’s need for specific policy advice;
6. Both Danida and the research sector in Denmark have responsibilities to include developing country counterparts as partners in programming. Finally, recommendations are made for the research strategy to make a greater contribution to Danida’s key objective of poverty alleviation.

DFID (2000) *Doing the Knowledge: How DFID Compares with Best Practice in Knowledge Management*. London Department for International Development. (available at www.dfid.gov.uk)

This paper springs out of the recognition that ‘Knowledge is a key resource for DFID and increasingly one of our products’. It also points out that apart from the Information Management Committee, KM initiatives are often not coordinated across the organisation. This is a disadvantage, as one of the central aims of KM is to contribute to ‘joining up’: the author of the paper argues that DFID needs to be joined up internally, within Whitehall, and with partners. This is viewed as largely a matter of creating the right environment and culture for sharing and learning, rather than a technical IT issue. The paper gives several recommendations, based on a review of best Knowledge Management practices within a number of other organisations ranging from governmental to private and non-governmental organisations:

- Make use of managed learning networks, or Communities of Practice. For example, the World Bank has over 100 thematic groups, organised as email networks with both Bank staff and external experts. Each group has its own Intranet page. An existing example in DFID is the Livelihoods Connect site (<http://www.livelihoods.org/>).
- Encourage informal learning networks. These function in the same way as managed learning networks, but without any additional resources.
- Design electronic Yellow Pages. BP has put into place a corporate directory of staff where each individual is responsible for maintaining their page.
- Use learning reviews: brief meetings held before, during and after a particular event or activity.
- Build learning into key processes. The paper suggests that learning should be incorporated into management and implementation processes. Incentives for this are created by linking it to funding.
- Encourage working with people not in the same 'box'.
- Institutionalise mentoring systems.

DFID (2001a) *Poverty Elimination: The Role of Economic and Social Research*. London: Economic and Social Research Unit (ESCOR), Department for International Development. (available at www.dfid.gov.uk/Pubs/files/poverty_elimination_esr.pdf)

This report aims to show how DFID's support to development research contributes to poverty reduction. The foreword introduces the topic by stating that: 'Appropriate policies, tailored to national and international conditions and effectively delivered, depend on knowledge.' The foreword points out that research not only informs policy formulation, but also acts as a reality check 'after the fact' – documenting the effect of policies as they impact upon the daily lives of people in developing countries. The report is then divided into three parts. The first part discusses the strategic role of research in international development, including issues such as development studies in the UK and the changing context for development research. The second part, entitled 'Changing Thinking, Changing Practice', presents a range of themes to which DFID research currently contributes, such as sustainable livelihoods, child labour, urban governance, exclusion, and the link between conflict and economics. The final chapter in this part presents id21, the Information for Development in the 21st century initiative, funded by DFID and hosted by the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) at Sussex. The third part of the report documents how to apply for (then) ESCOR funding.

DFID (2001b) *eBusiness Strategy*. London: Department for International Development. (available at www.dfid.gov.uk)

This paper sets out the various eBusiness services introduced by DFID and explores how ICTs can be used to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Richard Manning briefly outlines the rationale in the paper's foreword:

'The use of information and communication technologies is essential to us achieving these goals [the MDGs], not least through enabling effective communication, policy formulation, lesson learning and knowledge sharing within the Department and with our partners.'

The report suggests that there are two broad types of applications that will be most beneficial in terms of enabling DFID to achieve its objectives: Knowledge Management applications and Electronic Communications applications. DFID already manages a range of e-programmes in these categories, including AIDA (Accessible Information on Development Activities); EDRM

(Electronic Document and Record Management); PRISM (system for recording, analysing and disseminating project performance information); InSight (DFID intranet); and Livelihoods Connect (using eBusiness channels to influence partners to make services more people focused). DFID's ability to use these applications effectively, in order to facilitate the flow of information within the department and with external partners, is of fundamental importance. The eBusiness strategy discusses the need for joined-up working and a coherent approach to electronic processes and communication. While DFID has developed communication with external partners in a one-to-one fashion, the new strategy emphasises the need to 'join up' DFID and its partners in a global web of communication relationships. The eBusiness strategy aims to contribute to this development.

Edwards, Michael (1994) 'NGOs in the age of information' *IDS Bulletin* 25(2): 117–24.

Edwards links the rise of NGOs within the development field to the emergence of the information age, and poses the question of whether NGOs have a comparative advantage in linking information, knowledge and action in an efficient and relevant way. He suggests that NGOs have a distinctive competence in this area due to three factors:

1. NGOs have direct access to fieldwork and local accounts;
2. NGOs usually have offices spanning the different levels of the global system, and therefore information can flow easily between the grassroots, NGO local offices, NGO headquarters, and NGO lobbying activity in global centres;
3. NGOs' value base implies a democratic approach to communication that emphasises openness, sharing and non-hierarchical communication channels.

NGOs rely on their distinctive competence in handling information for four main purposes. The first and second purposes concern their own management systems and strategic plans, and their processes of institutional learning. The third purpose is for advocacy. NGOs have realised that they have a far greater chance to influence government and donor policy if they are able to make systematic use of grassroots information in their advocacy work. The fourth purpose is one of accountability. NGOs face increasing pressure to evaluate the impact of their work and to stand accountable to various stakeholders, both upwards to donors and downwards to the communities in which they work. The danger with multiple accountabilities is that upwards accountability may carry more weight than downwards accountability, which in turn may result in a one-way information flow away from the field, rather than in both directions.

Edwards reviews possible barriers to information use in NGOs: internal organisational obstacles; problems with representativity and the images that are used; and the gap between raw information and knowledge. Possible solutions include organisational decentralisation, viewing information as an integral part of all organisational processes, emphasising the need for information to be relevant, and taking advantage of the opportunities provided by IT.

Edwards, Michael and John Gaventa (eds) (2001) *Global Citizen Action*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

Edwards introduces this edited volume by highlighting the fact that with the move away from the 'Washington consensus' there are new ideas about what partnership requires: strong social infrastructure (including social capital); pluralistic governance and decision-making; partnerships between public, private and civic organisations; and public support for international institutions. As global governance becomes less state-based, the role of civil society is certain to grow. However, many NGOs are criticised for being unaccountable, illegitimate and dominated by elites. NGOs with no membership depend on research, experience and good links with partners to justify their

growing role as advocates. There is greater consensus on some campaigns (e.g. debt, landmines) than others (trade, environmental, labour rights) due to conflicting interests. Better links are needed between local and global levels, but Edwards advises it is also important to build coalitions at national levels rather than leapfrogging to officials in Brussels, for example. Information technology could allow more democratic and horizontal coalitions and networks. On the other hand, since globalisation means that certainty about solutions has become even more elusive, better research and dialogue is needed.

The various contributions in this edited publication assess efforts to influence the IMF or World Bank, run global campaigns to change development or corporate policy, and draw out the lessons learned. In their chapter, Brown and Fox identify the key components of successful campaigns: (i) make the campaign fit the target (different types of coalition and leadership are needed depending upon whose interests are at stake); (ii) open up cracks in the system (e.g. identify sympathisers within the key organisation); (iii) impact comes in different forms (so success and failure should be measured by many different indicators); (iv) create footholds that give a leg up to those who follow (e.g. it is easier to influence policy than ensure it is implemented but at least a policy standard creates leverage); (v) leveraging accountability requires specifying accountability to whom (it is easier to dismiss NGOs that cannot point to genuine and specific grassroots constituencies); (vi) power and communication gaps in civil society need bridges ('chains' of relatively short links can work more effectively); (vii) the Internet is not enough to build trust across cultures (face-to-face negotiation is required to create trust); and (viii) small links can make strong chains (a few key individuals can bridge chasms).

Patel, Bolnick and Mitlin write about housing rights to illustrate how a focus on local concerns and processes, with international support, can be a potent recipe for influencing policy at all levels. Harper asks 'Do the Facts Matter?' and demonstrates why they do. In a bid to raise profile and funds, NGOs are tempted to exaggerate and simplify conclusions drawn from research and thereby risk their credibility and undermine the efforts of others engaged in delivering more complex messages. For example, by demanding a total ban on child labour, some campaigners detracted attention away from organisations, such as Save the Children Fund, who were recommending more complex strategies. In some instances a ban has led to young girls seeking more abusive forms of work such as street trading and prostitution. Chapman argues that different structures of collaboration are useful for different purposes: a 'pyramid' can be dynamic and quick at getting access to the top; a 'wheel' is good for developing specialisation and exchanging information.

Gaventa concludes that the lessons for global citizen action are that: (i) a diversity of approaches should be embraced; (ii) action is needed at local, national and international levels with links between them; (iii) networks and partnerships should be grounded in local realities; (iv) learning should include participatory research and sophisticated policy analysis; and (v) internal forms of governance should be participatory, transparent and accountable.

FAO (1999) *Communication for Development Report 1996–1997*. Rome: Communication for Development Group, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. (available at www.fao.org/sd/CDdirect/CDre0048.htm)

This report is the FAO's Communication for Development Group's status report on field activities. This Group is an integral part of the Extension, Education and Communication Service, focusing mainly on providing support to field activities, using techniques and means of communication to:

- Create and strengthen national technical capacities in the communication for development area.
- Promote development and transfer of know-how and skills.
- Provide communication support to all major and substantial programmes of the FAO.

The use of communication methods, technologies and tools is aimed at improving the participation of local populations and mobilising them to undertake development activities. This considerably improves the exchange of information and know-how between farmers, extension workers, trainers and researchers, the spread of information and the transfer of communication techniques and technologies. Finally, promoting the use of communication methods, technologies and tools is aimed on the one hand at supporting national food security and rural development programmes and, on the other, at strengthening governmental and non-governmental organisations operating in the field of communication for development. 60% of the Group's activities are carried out through field projects; 40% are normative. The Group's activities include:

- advising member States on the development of national communication for development policies and strategies;
- identifying and evaluating communication needs for the support of agricultural and rural development programmes;
- the assessment of needs, formulation, technical support and monitoring of communication for development field programmes;
- communication training in the methodologies and use of various media (mass media such as rural radio, as well as group media such as video and interpersonal communication, and traditional and popular media);
- the identification of communication means and technologies most suited to conditions in developing countries;
- the technical specification of audiovisual equipment required to set up communication systems;
- research in the field of innovative approaches in communication to be used in the rural environment and in developing countries;
- the documentation and sharing of experiences through publications, multimedia training kits and audiovisual material;
- research on evaluation and application at local level of the new communication technologies.

The Group has officers in charge of Latin America, Asia and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, the Near East and English-speaking Africa, and French and Portuguese-speaking Africa. The group has a particular focus on two sectors: new communication technologies and their applications in rural development; and audiovisuals with a unit responsible for the production of training tools, publications and audiovisual material. The report surveys group activities in 1996 and 1997, a total of 63 development programmes or projects, focusing on innovative programmes and projects in Southern Africa and West Africa, and on methodologies for the definition of national communication for development strategies. It also looks at the opportunities and constraints facing African rural radio. Finally it documents the experiences of rural information systems in Latin America.

Figueroa, Maria Elena, D Lawrence Kincaid, Manju Rani and Gary Lewis (2002) 'Communication for Social Change: An Integrated Model for Measuring the Process and Its Outcomes' *Communication for Social Change Working Paper Series 1*. New York: Rockefeller Foundation. (available at www.cominit.com/stcfscindicators/sld-5997.html)

This first paper in the Communication for Social Change (CFSC) working paper series focuses on how communication processes might be used at a community level in order to effect social change. In this respect communication is defined as the act of people coming together to decide who they are, what they want, and how they will obtain what they want. The rationale behind CFSC is that social change will be more sustainable if the affected community owns not just the physical inputs and outputs of a development initiative, but also owns the process and content of the

communication involved. This in turn means that if any external agents wish to contribute to the process of social change, they should consider shifting their approach from one of persuasion and transmission of information, to dialogue and discussion with members of the community. Several outcome indicators of social change are suggested, including: broad-based leadership that inspires without dominating; leaders that tackle conflict by using it as a stimulus for change; the extent of access to participatory processes; the degree of information equity; the capacity to solve problems as a group; the sense of responsibility that any one community member feels for issues of social change; the extent to which learning from social change processes is integrated into community interaction; and the degree of mutual trust between community members. The authors also outline sets of questions that might be used by anyone wishing to measure these outcome indicators in a particular community.

Fraser, Colin and Jonathan Villet (1994) *Communication – a key to development*. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. (available at www.fao.org/docrep/t1815e/t1815e00.htm)

This paper promotes the concept of communication as the key to development. The authors note that participation is becoming the central issue of our time and argue that communication is central to effective participation. Furthermore, development programmes can only realise their full potential if knowledge and technology are shared effectively, and if populations are motivated and committed to achieve success. It is recognised that unless people themselves are the driving force of their own development, no amount of investment or provision of technology and inputs will bring about any lasting improvements in their living standards. Communication enables beneficiaries to become the principal actors in development programmes, it empowers people at all levels to recognise important issues, find common grounds for action, and participate in the implementation of their decisions.

Increasingly, the use of communication no longer depends so much on the availability of technology, but rather on the will and decisions of policy-makers to exploit its potential. The potential of development communication lies in two main areas:

- Communication *approaches* allow better planning and programme formulation through consultation to take into account the needs, attitudes and existing knowledge of stakeholder groups. They also improve coordination, teamwork and wider institutional support in development programme management and facilitate peoples' participation and community mobilisation.
- Communication *media and techniques* can be powerful tools to advise people about new ideas and methods, to encourage adoption of those ideas and methods, and to improve training overall.

The full impact of communication on development is just starting to be seen in this communication age. Achieving its full potential to support development requires executive decisions by national planners and policy-makers. A development strategy that uses communication approaches can reveal people's underlying attitudes and traditional wisdom, help people to adapt their views and to acquire new knowledge and skills, and spread new social messages to large audiences. The planned use of communication techniques, activities and media gives people powerful tools both to experience change and even to guide it. An intensified exchange of ideas among all sectors of society can lead to the greater involvement of people in a common cause. This is a fundamental requirement for appropriate and sustainable development. Communication can support development in ways that are both known (intended) and new; to exploit its full potential is an enormous challenge.

This paper makes recommendations as to how to make communication part of a national development policy. It also focuses in particular on communication for better agricultural knowledge and information systems which should correctly identify, sort and match the needs and existing technical know-how of three main groups: farmers, extensionists and agricultural researchers. The basic aim of such a system would be to bring the three groups into an equal partnership to communicate and share knowledge. It recommends the innovative combination of communication skills, materials and methodologies in a ‘demand-driven’ mechanism, whereby farmers have enough status to demand and receive the best quality agricultural research and extension services they require. The emphasis is as much on promoting dialogue among farmers, and helping them identify and articulate their needs, as on teaching agricultural techniques. In most cases this would require the reorientation and training of extension staff to provide them with adequate interpersonal communication skills and materials. In rural areas, the challenge is to increase the quantity and accessibility of information, to ensure its exchange in appropriate ways, and to elicit more information from rural people themselves in order to guide development planning.

Fraser, Colin and Sonia Restrepo Estrada (2002) ‘Community radio for change and development’ *Development (Journal of the Society for International Development)* 45(4): 69–73.

[Abstract from article:] The authors illustrate the role of a radio station, owned and run by a community, in providing the forum for the participatory, public dialogue which is essential for social change. The radio station is a platform for identifying and analysing problems and their solutions, thereby determining development inputs that truly meet local needs. Open access to on-air complaints from the audience can pressure local authorities to adopt practices of good governance and transparency. Cheap and easy to install and operate, community radio can also be the interface between poor communities and the Internet.

GDN (n.d.) *Toolkit: Disseminating Research Online*. Washington, DC: Global Development Network. (available at www.gdnet.org/online_services/toolkits/disseminating_research_online/)

This toolkit provides broad tips and practical suggestions for communicating academic research using the Internet. It offers several sections covering the following topics: successful online communication; disseminating research on the web; practical hints about putting research online; the GDN approach to research communication; and support for online dissemination of research for organisations without websites. Each section reflects on common concerns and questions, and provides practical and easily accessible advice. For example, the toolkit suggests ways of adapting an academic paper to a concise and scannable web-based publication, and offers a downloadable PowerPoint presentation which outlines in detail the rationale for presenting academic research in a web-friendly manner and guidance about how to do so.

Gilchrist, Alison (2000) ‘The well-connected community: networking to the “edge of chaos”’ *Community Development Journal* 35(3): 264–75.

[Abstract from article:] Complexity theory provides new insights into the behaviour and ‘emergent properties’ of social systems. The experience of ‘community’ is both an outcome and the context of informal networking. A ‘well-connected community’ is achieved when people feel part of a web of diverse and inter-locking relationships. These networks sustain and shape an integrated and dynamic social and organisational environment representing life at the ‘edge of chaos’. It supports

the familiar patterns of interaction and collective organisation that characterise the voluntary and community sectors. Community development involves creating and managing opportunities for connection and communication across sectoral, identity and geographical boundaries. This is termed ‘meta-networking’ and is a core function of the professional role. The purpose of community development is to support and shape social networking.

Gladwell, Malcolm (2000) *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*. London: Little, Brown and Co.

This journalist’s analysis of what makes social epidemics happen draws on history, marketing research and psychological studies. His main point is that small features can ‘tip’ a small trend into a huge craze. A few individuals can make a big difference if they have the necessary qualities. The following characters are usually key:

- *connectors* – networkers, they know who to pass information to and are respected so will have influence on key players;
- *mavens* – information specialists, they acquire information and then educate others (a personality type that is considered indispensable to marketing);
- *salesmen* – powerful, charismatic and, most importantly, persuasive individuals: they are trusted, believed and listened to where others would be ignored.

Tiny adjustments to information, whether conveyed in an advertisement or television programme, can make all the difference to what the author calls the ‘stickiness factor’. He points to psychological research that shows that most people can remember up to seven-digit numbers but no more, that presenters make a bigger impression if they outline no more than three points, and that organising more than 150 people to work effectively is an uphill struggle. Different presentations stick for different audiences and only piloting it will reveal how they will react; pre-school children loved the mixture of fantasy animals and real people in Sesame Street despite psychologists’ predictions that they would find it confusing. Finally, he describes the ‘power of context’: small environmental changes can have a big impact on people’s behaviour, e.g. crime dropped dramatically in New York following a campaign to get rid of graffiti in the subway.

Gupta, Anil (1999) ‘Science, sustainability and social purpose: Barriers to effective articulation, dialogue and utilization of formal and informal science in public policy’ *International Journal of Sustainable Development* 2(3): 368–71.

Gupta begins by stating that: ‘Communication among scientists, policy-makers, public policy analysts and the common people in society is often fraught with ambiguity, anxiety and sometimes plain confusion.’ The paper is devoted to describing some of the barriers to effective communication between these groups:

- *Linking ‘little science’ and public policy*: Formal scientists are situated between various communities that employ local or indigenous scientific knowledge, and policy-makers who employ formal scientific evidence. Scientists might potentially have a role to play in linking communities’ informal science and policy-makers’ formal science. However, scientists frequently do not recognise or reciprocate informal scientific knowledge, and are not always effective at engaging with public policy (except in cases such as defence, nuclear power, or ‘big’ science).
- *Tension between standardised knowledge and diversified need*: People in high-risk environments (e.g. drought or flood-prone areas) have an urgent need for relevant and useful scientific knowledge. However, the bureaucratic tendency to resort to standardised solutions frequently puts up barriers to effective deployment of locally useful knowledge.

- *Communicating simply*: In many respects, civil society, policy-makers and scientists use different languages which complicates communication.
- *Impermeable institutions*: Civil society participation is often impaired due to structural bureaucratic obscurity, a culture of secretiveness, or inaccessible platforms of dialogue.
- *Dealing with risk and uncertainty*: Policy-makers have a tendency to use scientific knowledge as a means to extend their control over areas in which they are otherwise uncertain. On the other hand, an area can quickly be labelled 'risky' or 'uncertain' if the policy-makers wish to refrain from taking responsibility. These behaviours pose particular problems for scientists when communicating with policy-makers.

Hamelink, Cees (2002) 'Social development, information and knowledge: whatever happened to communication?' *Development (Journal of the Society for International Development)* 45(4): 5–9.

[Abstract from article:] Hamelink reviews the current interest in information societies in the discussions around the World Summit on the Information Society. He argues that the current emphasis on information and knowledge largely bypasses the fundamental question as to whether information and knowledge are primary resources for social development. In doing so he queries the popular myths that fuel the enthusiasm of information and knowledge societies. He warns that we have to be careful not to adopt the dialogical form of communication as the ultimate panacea for development issues.

HCP (2003) 'Namibia Research Shows Most Youth Don't Understand the Terms "Abstinence" or "Faithfulness" for HIV Prevention', *HCP Press Release, Windhoek 27 May 2003. Baltimore: Health Communication Partnership. (available at www.hcpartnership.org)*

[From press release:] Terms used to describe some HIV prevention strategies – such as 'abstinence' or 'faithfulness' – are not understood by a large majority of young adults in Namibia, a country where current HIV/AIDS prevalence is approximately 22%. The study of 100 Greater Windhoek youth, ages 15 to 25, revealed that common HIV/AIDS prevention terms are frequently misunderstood. Most young people believe that 'abstinence' means 'to be absent' and 'faithfulness' means faith in a religious sense, not being faithful to one sexual partner. The word 'monogamy' is understood by only one-quarter, with 75% saying they had never heard the word.

In partnership with the University of Namibia through support by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), researchers from Research Facilitation Services in Windhoek and Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health/Center for Communication Programs (CCP) conducted the qualitative study to determine the effect of culture and environment on youth behaviour. The study provides information for the development of an innovative, community-driven, radio magazine programme to address lifestyle issues for youth called 'The Suzie and Shafa Show', to be broadcast this fall. 'These findings are important as we develop an HIV/AIDS prevention strategy for Namibian youth,' said C. Kirk Lazell, USAID Health Officer in Namibia. 'We know we have to craft a programme and messages that are sensitive to the issue of language, testing messages in local languages, to ensure young people have a clear understanding of HIV transmission and prevention.'

Because of mass media programmes, young adults know about using condoms to prevent HIV/AIDS, but some are afraid or unwilling to discuss condoms and are perhaps not using them properly or consistently. For example, one male respondent reported abstinence as his preference and was unwilling to talk about condoms because it is against his Christian faith to have sex before marriage. The study further showed that most young adults were profoundly influenced by the mass media and that the church is a major social and support organisation for them.

The Center for Communication Program's work in Namibia is part of the Health Communication Partnership (HCP) (www.hcpartnership.org), a global communication initiative designed to promote evidence-based and innovative approaches, build capacity, and bring programmes to scale. HCP is led by CCP in partnership with the Academy for Educational Development, Save the Children, the International HIV/AIDS Alliance, Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, and the University of North Carolina's Carolina Population Center at Chapel Hill.

Hills, Matthew (2000) 'Conceptualising the Fourth World: Four Approaches to Poverty and Communication', *Media Development* 1: 3–8. (available at www.mediachannel.org/atissue/development)

In this paper Hills sets out four broad approaches that are used in order to understand the relationship between poverty and communication:

1. *The actual economy approach*: This approach takes a realist view of poverty, seeing it as a discreet social or economic phenomenon that can be represented through statistics for example. In this approach, communication becomes a secondary issue, and there is not necessarily any link between communication and poverty;
2. *The cultural economy approach*: This approach focuses on the mediation of poverty, i.e. the range and type of meanings that are attached to poverty within mass media representations. The poor are often divided into the 'deserving poor' and the 'undeserving poor', and they are shown as a mass of victims who need help from external agents. The cultural economy approach points out that the links between the processes of poverty production and other social/economic processes are frequently not communicated;
3. *The political economy approach*: This approach focuses on the relationship between economic power and communication power. Communities or countries with few economic resources, or paying off debt, may have little power to set up or use communication systems independently of larger economic powers. Political economy also examines the inequalities in information flows between the North and the South. In this approach, 'inauthentic' media commodification is often contrasted to 'authentic' participatory communication;
4. *The informational economy approach*: This approach explores the differences between the info-rich and the info-poor. Drawing on Castell's notion of the Fourth World (pockets of extreme social exclusion, found both in the North and South), this approach highlights the fact that there are poor communities everywhere – in inner city ghettos or in shanty towns – that are in practice excluded from the benefits of the information society.

Within these four different approaches, there are some common themes regarding the link between communication and poverty. It is recognised that poverty leads to exclusion not only from economic systems but also from information and communication systems. It is also generally recognised that the realities of the poor are symbolically absent from communication networks, while at the same time the poor do not have any real possibilities to communicate – and these two aspects of poverty are mutually reinforcing. Hills raises a few concluding questions, including the issue of whether communication is conceptualised as a matter of consumption or of participation.

Ilsoe, Bente (2001) 'Is small beautiful? Danida's 10 years of experience with ENRECA (Enhancing Research Capacity)' in KFPE (ed.) *Enhancing Research Capacity in Developing and Transition Countries*. Berne: Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE).

A new strategy for Danish development aid was issued in 2000. The new strategy stated, among other things, that there was a need to rethink the role of research in Danish development assistance, and that research should become an integral part of Danish development partnerships. A number of background papers were produced, which fed into a final report on the topic of the research-development relationship (*Partnerships at the Leading Edge*, Danida 2001). One of the major recommendations was that Danida should focus on building and strengthening research capacity in the South. The existing ENRECA programme (Enhancing Research Capacity) aimed to do just that, and Ilsoe's paper presents a summary of an evaluation of ENRECA. The evaluation suggests that the programme has so far been able to mobilise the enthusiasm and free provision of services from researchers in both the North and South, but that in a situation of growing financial pressures, the ability to attract funding is becoming ever more important. Closer evaluation of individual research partnerships within the overall programme showed that smaller research projects were characterised by equal North-South relationships and ownership. Moreover, the research projects are demand-driven, rather than specifically requested by Danida. However, attempts to transfer full ownership to Southern partner institutions have been shown to be dependent on considerable coordinating and planning capacities as well as time and human resources. The author concludes that small is indeed beautiful: ENRECA 'has had no greater ambition than that of creating small units of excellence, and has had considerable success with that.'

ISNAR (2000) 'Creating ownership of agricultural research through capacity building', ISNAR Annual Report 1999 Theme essay. The Netherlands: International Service for National Agricultural Research. (available at www.isnar.cgiar.org/publications/1999-AR/theme.htm)

This annual report theme essay looks at agricultural research capacity building through the lens of ISNAR's work to strengthen national agricultural research systems (NARS) in developing countries. It focuses on two distinct levels of capacity building – the level of individual research or research manager, and the organisational level. Three guiding values underlie ISNAR's work to help developing countries build their agricultural capacity: participation, learning by doing, and respect for diversity.

Internal organisational features of a strong national agricultural research capacity are efficient organisation, good governance, clear priorities linked to resource use, high staff motivation, and fruitful interaction with farmers and other external stakeholders. At the individual level this requires specific skills in policy, organisation and management. Building these skills through training is one of the pillars of ISNAR's capacity-building work, and this essay puts considerable emphasis on this element of ISNAR's work. ISNAR has also spearheaded a long-term, intensive programme of agricultural research management training in sub-Saharan Africa. At the organisational level, ISNAR promotes the 'learning organisation' (an organisational style or culture that stimulates thinking, problem solving, and creativity among staff). The essay provides an example of such work in the case study of the Latin American 'PM&E project' (planning, monitoring and evaluation) which has run for much of the last decade, and involves more than 25 agricultural research institutions and regional organisations. The essay concludes that aid is wasteful when it attempts to 'transfer' technologies to beneficiaries in developing country without major efforts to build capacity in the country. To be sustainable, development assistance must focus on individual and

organisational capacities, rather than on facilities and equipment. Finally, aid should create autonomy rather than dependence. Capacity building is creating autonomy.

Jenkins, Rob and Anne Marie Goetz (1999) 'Accounts and Accountability: Theoretical Implications of the Right-to-Information Movement in India' *Third World Quarterly* 20(3): 603–22.

[Abstract from article:] The work of a small and unusual activist group in the north Indian state of Rajasthan has raised a series of practical and theoretical issues for promoting accountability more generally. The *Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan* (MKSS) – literally 'Workers' and Farmers' Power Organisation' – has waged a campaign to secure the right of ordinary people to gain access to information held by government officials. In the process of experimenting with methods of compiling, sharing and verifying expenditure data at very local levels – thus far, in the absence of a statutory entitlement to such information – the MKSS has developed a radical interpretation of the notion that citizens have a right both to know how they are governed and to participate actively in the process of auditing their representatives. This article examines the process by which this campaign emerged and the means by which it pursues its goals. It then analyses the implications of the MKSS experience, and the larger movement it has spawned, for contemporary debates in three areas: human rights, participatory development and, of course, anti-corruption.

Kasongo, Emmanuel (1998) 'From development by effects to development by contexts via communication' *Development in practice* 8(1): 30–9.

Based on research in three rural communities in Zambia and one in a South African township in 1996–7, Kasongo outlines two major approaches to development and communication.

Firstly, he reviews top-down externally-driven development practice, a conventional and still popular model. The author argues that externally-driven development is usually associated with a standard development communication approach, in which communication is seen as a means to hasten the flow of information to poor communities. In this model, increased and more effective flows of development information are assumed to speed up the process of development and poverty reduction. Both information and resources are channelled downwards to the grassroots in order to produce effects. Kasongo points out that a massive increase in media exposure over the past few decades has still not generated the development effects predicted by this model.

The second major paradigm reviewed is a beneficiary-driven model of development, which, the author argues, is associated with participatory communication. This model emphasises the interchange of sender and receiver roles, and horizontal communication at all levels. The underlying assumption is the idea that communication works when it takes place within a (harmonious) community. The author briefly reviews a few anticipated limitations to this perception of community (e.g. Can everybody really express their opinions freely within a community? Who will control the process? Will everybody really participate in communal pro bono activities? Can hostility within a community be overcome? Who will benefit and who will lose out?), but concludes that these concerns are either merely theoretical or readily solved. In conclusion, Kasongo recommends the model of participatory communication by which a community can work towards its own development.

KFPE (2001) *Enhancing Research Capacity in Developing and Transition Countries*. Berne: Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE).

This book is an overview of activities related to research for development in several donor agencies, including Danida, DFID, the European Commission, NORAD, RAWOO, SDC, Sida, UNESCO and WHO. It was prompted by the acknowledged need for more equitable participation in the generation and application of new knowledge within the development field, and the associated need to promote North-South and South-South research partnerships. At the moment there are large differences between various Northern and Southern agencies in terms of their ability to process and use knowledge, and one way of addressing this imbalance is to support relevant institutional capacity building in developing and transition countries.

The book is divided into five sections. The first section contains introductory chapters on the current status and challenges of research capacity in developing and transition countries, and the second and third sections present experiences of development-related research activities from around the globe. Sections four and five comprise chapters and detailed overviews from donor agencies describing their activities to strengthen research capacity.

Kotler, Philip, Gary Armstrong, John Saunders and Veronica Wong (1999) *Principles of Marketing*, 2nd edition. Prentice Hall Europe.

This book provides a comprehensive introduction to marketing, using a practical and managerial approach. Marketing is described as a process containing much more than selling or advertising, with new challenges constantly emerging. Five main philosophies that guide marketing management are outlined: Production concept (goal to bring down prices, making products more affordable); Product concept (higher quality products); Selling concept (promotion matters); Marketing concept (determining needs and wants of target markets, comparative advantage); and Societal marketing (determine needs and wants, and customer satisfaction).

On societal marketing: Determine the needs and wants of the target market, and then deliver satisfaction in a competitive way, improving the consumer and the society's well being. This is a new market philosophy, and questions the standard marketing approach in the face of environmental, inequity and poverty problems. It tries to look at both consumer wants and long-run welfare. This approach calls on firms to balance consumer wants, firm profits, and society welfare. Firms should have ethical and environmental policies, and back these up with action, and sometimes there is a call for ethical auditing exercises. Furthermore there is a call for the need for debate and counterarguments in the media, as well as a need for regulation.

Societal marketing is also described as one of five principles of enlightened marketing, together with: Consumer-oriented marketing (the whole operation from the customer's point of view); Innovative marketing (real and innovative improvement to product and marketing); Value marketing (improving long term value of products, rather than short term sale focus); Sense-of-mission marketing (the company should define its mission in broad social terms).

The book outlines the following steps in developing effective communication: (i) Identify the target audience (this determines the next choices of strategy); (ii) Determine the communication objectives (be aware of the different stages the buyer passes through – awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction and then purchase); (iii) Design the message. Generally three types of appeals are used: rational (showing that the product will fulfil the buyer's self-interest and give expected benefit), emotional (stirring up negative or positive emotions), or moral (appealing to the buyer's sense of right and wrong); (iv) Select the message format and the message source.

Use eye-catching and novel images and tools, and bear in mind that who promotes the message can have a significant impact.

The underlying aim is to get people to respond, and they will do so if they are motivated and if they see a benefit. Therefore it is important to identify the benefits the consumer will have from the product. It is important to put this message across in a memorable way, tapping the motivations that drive human consumption: functional, pleasure, self-identity, image, admiration, and altruism. The message can also build on an in-depth knowledge of the consumer's own experience with the product.

Lambert, Helen (2001) 'Not talking about sex in India' in Joy Hendry and C.W. Watson (eds) *An Anthropology of Indirect Communication*. London: Routledge.

This chapter reflects on issues of communication in HIV/AIDS prevention projects in India. The author draws on experience from rapid assessment studies of sexual relations and sexual health in two Indian cities, designed to gather information for use in the design of HIV prevention projects, commissioned by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). The author's reflections spring from the observed tension during these studies between, on the one hand, the intention to develop culturally appropriate and locally effective strategies for the control of HIV, and on the other hand, the lack of culturally appropriate and locally effective discourses to discuss sexual health and behaviour. Commentators are generally agreed that speaking about sex in India is taboo. This may be the reason for a significant lack of knowledge about the extent to which local Indian populations are vulnerable to the spread of HIV, since so little is known about sexual behaviour patterns or the prevalence of sexually transmitted infections. HIV/AIDS prevention initiatives are therefore set up largely on the basis of pre-existing assumptions and externally generated models, rather than on knowledge of the local situation.

These observations were reinforced in the two DFID studies in which Lambert was involved. The researchers experienced that many of the female respondents initially approached were not willing to participate at all in the study. Moreover, any communication about sexual behaviour relied heavily on allusion and indirect reference. This was not only due to social norms but also a lack of appropriate vocabulary; the words that could potentially be used would be experienced by respondents as either overly offensive or archaic. As a result, many of the researchers and male respondents for the studies resorted to using English words to describe sexual behaviour.

Lambert points out that the apparent lack of communication, especially with female respondents, does not imply that the women did not understand the issues that were discussed, but rather that they conventionally employed different means of communication when reflecting on these issues. Normally, information might be conveyed through such indirect means of communication as eye contact, posture, clothing, suggestive comments, stage whispers, more intimate settings, etc. The development project did not easily fit into these communication strategies. However, a final point to be raised is whether the apparent lack of communication and information about HIV/AIDS is the real problem, or whether there are other, more significant challenges that need to be tackled in order to control HIV/AIDS in India. Lambert suggests that:

'It is conceivable that for implementing agencies, lack of information is not so much of a problem as the difficulties of confronting the social inequality, poverty and marginality that tend to characterise communities at particular risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, and the social stigma that being associated with such communities is perceived to bring.'

Lambin, J. (1996) *Strategic Marketing Management*. UK: McGraw-Hill.

This book begins with the assumption that marketing is both a business philosophy and an action-oriented process. Marketing is explained as being rooted in the market economy and functioning of the firm (improve market opportunities, achieve target market share), with the main role seen to be the organisation of exchange and communication (supply/demand). Furthermore the book emphasises the need to shift focus from marketing to market-driven management, in a context of increased competition. With the process of globalisation, more competition, and better educated consumers, mass-marketing techniques are coming of age, and customised marketing is seen as necessary. This includes sensitivity to environmental and ethical demands and socio-cultural specificities. Marketing should, importantly, be viewed as a process integrating different functions and not a separate entity within the organisation.

Purchasing behaviour is seen as rational within the principle of limited rationality, i.e. within the bounds of individual's cognitive and learning capacities. For the buyer the product is seen as the solution to a problem (process of problem solving). Products are seen to have a core functional value, and a set of secondary values or utilities. The advertising information is important in clarifying risk/value as relative to other products. There are various forms of buyer response to marketing: cognitive (retained information and knowledge), affective (attitude and evaluation), and behavioural (action). According to Lambin, the four main communication tools are: personal selling, advertising, sales promotion and public relations. In sum, the communication process, in a circular motion from sender to receiver, is outlined as follows: Sender > Encoding > Media message > Decoding > Noise (Distortion) > Feedback > Response > Receiver.

Laurence, Charlotte (1998) 'The Impact of the Global AIDS Strategy on National Policy Networks in Zambia', Department for International Development Research Project (R7090). London: Department for International Development.

[Abstract adapted from id21:] What impact have international AIDS interventions had on individual countries' health policies? Have international objectives been met? Research at the University of Bath assessed the impact of the World Health Organisation's Global Programme on AIDS (GPA) on Zambia's response to HIV/AIDS. The research found that though it initiated a programme that was ostensibly in line with the liberal and non-discriminatory objectives of the GPA, the UN programme goals were only partially achieved.

The GPA influenced Zambia's HIV and AIDS policies in a number of ways, including establishing a donor-funded National AIDS Control Programme, structured on liberal, public health principles, and increasing the involvement of the international community in policy development, thereby altering indigenous responses to HIV and AIDS. Nevertheless, Zambia has only had limited success in achieving the goals of the GPA. The following drawbacks were encountered:

- Zambia's AIDS programme has had the greatest impact on organisations that are directly involved in providing health-care. It has been less successful in gaining the support of traditional systems of government and of organisations not involved in healthcare.
- AIDS workers' perception that senior members of government are hostile to liberal AIDS interventions sometimes discouraged them from high profile activity.
- Families, households and communities are still largely responsible for looking after people living with AIDS.
- Discrimination, although decreasing, is still widespread.

The report suggests that greater success might be achieved if:

- Donors (a) avoided creating small, specialist policy networks dependent on external funds and (b) developed closer links with local organisations, which would also be more cost-effective.
- Civil society and community organisations are more actively involved in the development of policies designed to control HIV transmission as well as caring for people with AIDS-related illnesses.
- Clear, anti-discriminatory legislation is drawn up to enable NGOs to represent the interests of vulnerable groups.

Lefebvre, R.C. (2001) 'Theories and Models in Social Marketing' in Paul N. Bloom and Greg Gundlach (eds) *Handbook of Marketing and Society*. London and New Delhi: Sage Publications.

This article outlines the origins of the theory of social marketing, and describes in detail the current key theoretical approaches used in the field of social marketing. The theories presented have a health bias, as this is the area where social marketing has been taken the furthest. Behavioural change is a complex process, with dozens of theories, often too focused on individual processes. Social marketing is not an alternative to individual behaviour change strategies; rather it is a process to increase the prevalence of specific behaviour among target audiences. Other theories that also need to be looked at by social marketers include: motivational theories to inform message development; social network theories to inform message dissemination; organisational development to inform coalition and partnership development and management; and political theories to inform policy alternatives.

The Health Belief Model: This model was originally designed to better understand why people did not participate in health projects, and its tenets have found their way into social marketing projects. As social marketers make choices about the theoretical models they use in their programmes, this model of understanding different predictors of various types of behaviours is useful. This has particularly been the case in relation to addressing issues for at-risk populations who might not perceive themselves as such, through the use of fear or anxiety-arousing messages.

Theory of Reasoned Action: This theory is organised around the construct of behavioural and normative beliefs, attitudes, intentions and behaviour. The most important predictor of subsequent behaviour is one's intention to act, influenced by one's attitude towards engaging in that behaviour. In social marketing this theory is applied, but often implicit and incomplete. Subjective norms and referent, for example, are often important to social marketing programmes, even though the theoretical model might not be specifically used, and there is often little focus on how to change the attitudes towards the behaviour.

Social cognitive theory: This theory explains behaviour in terms of triadic reciprocity in which behaviour, cognitive and other interpersonal factors, and environmental events all operate interacting determinants of each other. Changes in any of these three factors are hypothesised to render change in the others. A key concept in this theory is observational learning. In contrast to earlier theories this one views the environment as reinforcing and punishing behaviour, but also as a milieu where one can watch actions of others and learn about the consequences of their behaviour. The theory is seen as one of the most comprehensive attempts to explain human behaviour, and points to the need to focus on attention, retention, production and motivational processes for effective learning and performing of new behaviours.

The Transtheoretical Model of Health Behaviour Change: This is more popularly known as the 'stages of change' model, and has become one of the more frequently used models in social marketing, applied by some as the theoretical model for marketing social change. The model

emerged from an analysis of leading theories of psychotherapy and behaviour change in which 10 distinct processes of change were identified. These suggest certain interventions that will be most appropriate for moving people through stages of change. These include consciousness raising, self-re-evaluation, social liberation, and helping relationships. The most popular tools from this model however are the stages themselves: precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance, termination. What the model attempts to drive home to social marketers is that few people are ready for action-oriented programmes, and time must be invested to allow for people to move through the earlier stages.

Diffusion of Innovations Theory: One of the points emerging from this theory is the fact that there are different types of adopters of innovations in every target audience that are represented in certain proportions and have unique motivations for adopting new behaviour. This is complemented further by the focus on determinants of speed and extent of diffusion of innovations, and on the relative effectiveness of different methods of dissemination of innovation. So far these ideas have not been used to a large extent in social marketing, however, it has a value given that it is one of few population-focused models available to social marketers. This involves a view of behavioural change not just taking place at an individual level, but that there are indeed processes available to manage widespread behaviour change.

Lindquist, E.A. (1988) ‘What Do Decision-Models Tell Us About Information Use?’ *Knowledge in Society* 1(2): 86–111.

[Summary by author:] Lindquist has argued that organisations or networks are often in different decision modes – routine, incremental, or fundamental. Each involves a different level of scrutiny and debate over the integrity of its policy underpinnings:

1. Routine decision regimes focus on matching and adapting existing programmes and repertoires to emerging conditions, but involves little debate on its logic and design, which is built into the programmes and repertoires;
2. Incremental decision-making deals with selective issues as they emerge, but does not deal comprehensively with all constituent issues associated with the policy domain;
3. Fundamental decisions are relatively infrequent opportunities to re-think approaches to policy domains, whether as result of crisis, new governments, or policy-spillovers.

Where fundamental decisions are concerned, it is important to note that they are anticipated and followed by incremental or routine regimes. There is a connection to this line of thinking with the agenda-setting model. Decisions emanating from the ‘choice opportunities’ that arise as policy windows open, however briefly, may involve either limited or significant change, or perhaps none at all. If one believes that the vast majority of decision-making in a policy area over time is routine or incremental, then there is a built-in bias against the use of research by policy-makers. There will be greater interest in useful data and analysis that deals with incremental issues as they arise, and the findings from ongoing research must achieve influence through enlightenment and percolation. Conversely, the greatest demand for, and receptivity to, research comes in anticipation of fundamental policy decisions, or following sharp regime shifts.

Lipsky, Michael (1980) *Street-level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Lipsky examines what happens at the point where policy is translated into practice, in various human service bureaucracies such as schools, courts and welfare agencies. He argues that in the end policy implementation comes down to the people who actually implement it (e.g. teachers, lawyers,

social workers). They are the ‘street-level bureaucrats’, and they exercise a large amount of influence over how public policy is actually carried out. Lipsky suggests that they too should be seen as part of the policy-making community.

He discusses several pressures that determine the way in which street-level bureaucrats implement policies. These include the problem of limited resources, the continuous negotiation that is necessary in order to make it seem like one is meeting targets, and the relations with (nonvoluntary) clients. Some of the patterns of practice that street-level bureaucrats adopt in order to cope with these pressures are different ways of rationing the services, and ways of ‘processing’ clients in a manageable manner.

Lipsky concludes that potentially there are means of changing street-level bureaucracies to become more accountable to ‘clients’ and less stressful for the ‘bureaucrats’. One of the ways of doing this, he suggests, is to move research from the ivory tower and onto the street, for example through conducting research while running a social work centre at the same time.

Lloyd-Laney, Megan (2003a) *Making Information User-Driven*. Wallingford, UK: Communication and Information Management Resource Centre. (available at www.cimrc.info)

[Summary from paper:] Tailoring information to suit your audience increases the likelihood that your information will be accessed and taken up. To provide user-driven information it is important to understand who your target audience is, what information they want/need, how they access information and whether you are trying to inform or influence your audience. Questionnaires can be employed to determine your audience’s information needs and the media they use. With this knowledge you can provide the information your target audience wants, in media they can use, and place your information where your audience will look for it. If you are clear about who has produced the information, who it is intended for and its purpose, the user can make informed decisions about the value of your information. Involving end users in research is also more likely to produce outputs that are quickly disseminated and taken up. Awareness of the strategic role of information within your organisation can be enhanced by encouraging all organisation members to become involved in identifying information needs, dissemination and community building. Practices such as using a database of people who have requested information to regularly inform them about newly available materials, and ensuring that your organisation has a focal point responsible for responding to information demands will help you to reach your target audience.

Lloyd-Laney, Megan (2003b) *Making Knowledge Networks Work for the Poor: Final Report*. Rugby, UK: Intermediate Technology Development Group.

[From executive summary:] *Making Knowledge Networks Work for the Poor* is an ITDG initiative that seeks to improve the integration and coordination internationally of information and knowledge resources on appropriate technology, and the purpose of the preliminary study was to consider the role of a network in bringing about this aim.

The project emerged out of a recognition by both development practitioners and donors that poor men and women face a series of problems in locating and using other people’s knowledge and information for their own benefit. In particular, information about new technical options is required both to enable adoption of appropriate technologies, and to facilitate technology adaptation and development. The project undertook a number of activities, including investigation of key centres of knowledge resources on these issues, discussions, organisational case studies, and a workshop to

identify requirements for appropriate technology information and knowledge to contribute to the information systems of poor people and to brainstorm the concept of a co-ordinating network. The research confirmed that:

- there is poor co-ordination amongst information providers;
- poor people have difficulty accessing the right kind of information;
- many of the information systems that do exist to provide information to the poor are not demand-driven, they overlook local knowledge, they do not understand or ignore the role of intermediaries, and they do not monitor usage;
- the ICTs revolution provides opportunities but can undermine traditional, local communications, by taking attention away from them and supplanting them.

The main findings of the project were:

- The proliferation of networks is itself a problem. Development practitioners complain of ‘information overload’, and there is confusion about the role of each network with respect to another.
- Networks are themselves ‘not networked’, so that information users cannot get an overview of what information is available, and where.
- Networks do not incorporate and strengthen the systems that people already use to access information (e.g. social networks), and consequently do not understand why they do not reach their target audience.
- It is also important to recognise and value local knowledge and information channels, through participatory approaches.
- Organisations do not always communicate effectively with their constituencies, and are often guilty of confusing information dissemination with communication.
- Development practitioners and those engaged in the provision of information services aimed at reducing poverty, emphasise that ‘face to face’ communication is the most effective mode of transferring information. The challenge, therefore, is how any information system or network can engage with this mode of communication.
- The role of the information intermediary is key in addressing this challenge, but they are little understood and quite often overlooked.
- Participation in knowledge networks can be influenced by institutional competition for resources, especially when knowledge and information is seen as an organisational asset.

The creation of a new network would not necessarily resolve these issues, unless it attempted to consolidate and provide additional facilities not already on offer to users. However, there was doubt amongst project participants and informants about the need for another network. Rather, it was suggested the focus should be on making existing networks work better. The need for better co-ordination between information generators and providers was recognised, as was the need for sharing of good practice in information services and systems. This suggests that there is a role to be played as a ‘broker of brokers’, and to be a catalyst for better communication and co-ordination within networks and between network members.

Lloyd-Laney, Megan, John Young and Priyanthi Fernando (2003) 'Knowledge Demand Assessment for the Transport and Rural Infrastructure Services Partnership (TRISP): Interim Report', Unpublished report to the Department for International Development, London, February 2003.

The World Bank has identified improved decision-making and pro-poor resource allocation in transport and rural utilities as one of its goals, and through its TRISP programme – run jointly with DFID – aims to strengthen the demand for, and improve access to relevant knowledge. DFID has proposed a knowledge demand assessment to review what is already known about knowledge demand and the role of information in livelihoods and policy processes, the demand for information and knowledge by different stakeholders, and to map the knowledge and learning environments in the World Bank, DFID, and their transport information products with intended audiences, circulation and evidence of impact. The interim report provides results to date from the ongoing Knowledge Demand Assessment Project.

The literature review found that there is virtually no literature specifically about the demand for information on transport issues in rural areas in developing countries. However there is much tacit knowledge along with a substantial volume of knowledge about transport needs, and detailed case-study information is available in the literature or on websites. The dissemination of information is one of the aims of many of the institutions working in this sector and the importance of knowledge sharing is emphasised in their institutional strategies.

DFID and the World Bank are both producers and disseminators of substantial volumes of information about transport and rural infrastructure, though through very different strategies. While the World Bank produces and retains considerable knowledge within its own organisation, this information is not always effectively networked. On the other hand, DFID has contracted out much of its knowledge generating activities to internal and external partners. Also in contrast to the Bank, DFID has tended to produce hardcopy studies without parallel web publication.

This report highlights some preliminary issues – mainly problematic ones – that are emerging from reflection on the use of existing information systems and services. These include:

- out of date mailing lists;
- little translation of documents into other languages;
- lack of awareness among staff of the full range of information that is available for dissemination;
- lack of incentives to encourage staff to prioritise information processes;
- under-use of existing information systems such as databases;
- lack of coordination with other information providers in the transport and rural infrastructure sector;
- few attempts at impact assessment of information activities;
- a low level of active audience identification.

The report discusses the type of information that people need (distinguishing between expressed demand and latent demand) and highlights two features in particular: information that reflects local realities, and information that is practically useful. As a preliminary conclusion, the report offers general recommendations concerning the need to increase the demand for information; increase availability of useful information; package information to be appropriate to different users; increase the impact of information; market information more strategically to priority users; and improving organisational learning and sharing systems.

Lundvall, Bengt-Ake and Mark Tomlinson (2000) ‘On the convergence and divergence of national systems of innovation’, draft of contribution to special issue of Research Policy on Innovation Systems. (available at www.business.auc.dk/ike/upcoming/Lundvall-NSI.pdf)

The research area devoted to national systems of innovation (NSI) examines several interrelated questions. In the introduction to this paper, the authors specifically highlight three questions: Do national economies differ in terms of productivity performance, and/or in terms of where and how innovation takes place? How far are such differences rooted in systemic characteristics? And finally, to what degree do national differences tend to be eroded by globalisation? The paper discusses these questions in the light of convergence and divergence of NSIs between countries. In some cases convergence between countries is seen as a primary objective (e.g. in cases of unequal income per capita), while in other cases divergence is the goal (e.g. in cases of international trade specialisation). The political issues here are especially complex, and the authors map out historical and current issues in political economy and international economics, focusing particularly on the intriguing questions related to topics of catching up, falling behind and forging ahead.

The notion of NSIs is built on the observation that there is an interdependence between specialisation in production and trade on the one hand, and specialisation in knowledge production on the other. Each of these areas influences the other, and this two-way causality tends to preserve old patterns of specialisation both in production and knowledge – which partly explains why divergence between NSIs in different countries remains significant, despite some changes brought about by multinational firms. However, there are sets of variables that would seem to influence change in NSIs and national institutional competence building. The authors group these variables into three sets:

- *Transformation pressure*: Exposure to international competition; domestic competition; macroeconomic norms of stability; governance regimes (focus and time horizon); intellectual property rights.
- *Capability to innovate and to build competence*: Science and technology institutions (autonomy and integration); education of engineers and skilled labour; labour market dynamics; industrial relations; networking among firms and with knowledge producers.
- *Cultural factors and distributional principles*: The role of tacit versus codified knowledge in processes of innovation; trust and social capital (in processes of interactive learning); dominant principles for the distribution of costs and benefits of change; ideologies of individualism, etatism and collective action; individual and collective entrepreneurship.

Lush, Louisiana and Gill Walt (1999) ‘Beating the millennium bugs: Balancing policy and research for better health’, Editorial in *Insights* 32. (available at www.id21.org/insights/)

[Abstract adapted from id21:] This century has seen huge gains in health. However shadows are being cast on our achievements by the resurgence of diseases like tuberculosis believed to be long conquered, the resistance to drugs of diseases once thought of as curable such as malaria, and the arrival of new plagues such as HIV. Research has made us aware how complex the relationships between health and disease can be. The potential of such research to guide and inform policy is great. But views differ sharply on how far its influence actually extends. Where do mismatches between research and policy, researchers and policy-makers occur? Can we do anything to improve the balance?

Better health does not depend simply on medicines, doctors and health services. While they are undeniably important, there are many other influences on health, not least:

- political, economic and social insecurity – witness the rise in mortality and morbidity in Eastern Europe during and after the collapse of Communism;
- social inequalities – aside from scarce exceptions, such as skin cancers, the rich live longer and suffer less illness than do the poor, within and between countries.

The relationship between research and health policy is – we venture to suggest – far from rational. It is based on an interplay of personalities, context and political expediency. Researchers and policy-makers belong to overlapping communities of interest, which sometimes work closely but at other times pursue quite separate paths. They have different concepts of time. For policy-makers, timing is urgent, and short term and public opinion is important. Researchers often take a longer-term view and refer to a peer group who value political impartiality. Research findings will therefore only reach policy agendas when various factors come together, namely:

- when the solutions offered are considered feasible;
- when there is support for such solutions;
- when policy-makers feel it is legitimate to take action.

What can be done to correct imbalances in the research-policy relationship? Can acknowledging a gap between research and practice be a starting-point for developing strategies to persuade policy-makers to share research results and find ways to apply them more widely? Policy-makers need to feel that they ‘own’ new ideas, which means they should be involved in research at an early stage of inception and design. Findings by Brugha et al. show how engaging stakeholders in decision-making through technical advisory groups, combined with accreditation and steps to set treatment guidelines can clarify the roles of actors and help promote policy development.

In sum, research and policy-making proceed along different trajectories. This separation is desirable, since policy-makers are motivated by political necessity while researchers should preferably be relatively independent. Sometimes their trajectories coincide, in which cases new evidence can lead to rapid policy reform. Efforts to engineer better links between the trajectories are rare but can be highly effective. Researchers and policy-makers need to work harder to understand one another’s priorities and communicate to compare notes wherever and whenever they can. Greater care should also be taken when research from one setting is used to develop policies to be applied in another.

Mattelart, Michele and Armand Mattelart (1998) *Theories of Communication: A Short Introduction*. London: Sage.

The first formal information theory model was Claude Shannon’s mathematical model of communication, developed in the 1940s, which laid out a linear schema of production, transmission, channel, receiver, and destination. This model views technology as an instrument that is merely inserted into (human) calculations, plans and predictions. The reaction to the mathematical model came when social science researchers started emphasising the circular nature of communication. Even the smallest situation of interaction is determined by so many variables that a linear schema can only obscure more than it clarifies, and instead they suggest analysing interaction through looking at different levels (such as the communication between the actual elements of the message; the communication embodied in the human/social relations involved; the communication implied by previous messages; the communication of the message in relation to wider society). This approach argues that it is also necessary to take into account the large amount of ‘silent’ messages that surround every pronounced message, such as the implicit understandings of gestures, space, linguistic codes, time, ways of relating, and ways of disagreeing or reaching agreements. From this perspective, both the ‘sender’ and the ‘receiver’ are equally important actors.

Maxwell, Simon (2000) 'Is Anyone Listening?', Paper prepared for the Global Development Network Annual Meeting in Tokyo, December 2000. (available at <http://nt1.ids.ac.uk/gdn/tools/respol.htm>)

This paper starts from the observation that there is a lot of research activity, with an uncertain impact on policy. It briefly reviews various inputs into the debate on research/policy linkages, and highlights the need to understand the policy process and to attempt to see issues from the policy-makers' perspective. This includes the need to develop a more thorough understanding of policy that includes policy implementation; 'policy is what policy does'. It also touches on ways of making use of 'policy narratives' and 'epistemic communities', as well as entrance points into the literature on campaigning. The paper concludes that if researchers are to have an impact on policy, they need to build up an understanding of how policy is made and implemented.

Mehta, Lyla (2001) 'The World Bank and its Emerging Knowledge Empire' *Human Organization* 60 (2): 189–96.

[Partly from the abstract:] This paper critically examines the emerging knowledge agenda at the World Bank. From the publication of the *World Development Report 1998/99* on 'Knowledge for Development' to present discussions around the Global Development Gateway, the World Bank is attempting to carve out a niche for itself as the 'Knowledge Bank'. In so doing it appears to have shifted from merely focussing on the transfer of capital. Instead, it seeks to be a leading player in development expertise and knowledge transfers in international development. The paper examines the World Bank's conception of knowledge, the rise of knowledge enterprises at the Bank and the various tensions in its knowledge discourses. It argues that the Bank's knowledge agenda often tends to be centralised, absolutist, and draws on economic and technocratic models. These trends contribute to the emergence of a narrow knowledge agenda which both neglects socio-cultural issues and those concerning a wider political economy. Thus, the plural nature of knowledge is denied and the Bank's own problematic role in knowledge generation is not reflected upon.

In the *World Development Report*, 'imperfect information' is viewed as a hindrance to development. However, this quickly becomes too simplistic when the multi-faceted nature of knowledge is not taken into account. For example, the Report argues that millions of children die of diarrhoea because their parents do not have information on how to treat them. This view ignores the fact that the spread of diarrhoea is closely linked to sanitation, overcrowding, nutrition, and poverty – and cannot simply be solved through providing information.

Mortimore, Michael and Mary Tiffen (2003) 'Promoting research-policy dialogues: Lessons from four studies of dryland development in Sub-Saharan Africa' *Drylands Research Working Paper* 41. Crewkerne Somerset: Drylands Research. (available at www.drylandsresearch.org.uk/dr_research_policy.html)

Drylands Research and its research partners recently completed a study of economic, social and environmental change, between 1960 and 2000, in semi-arid districts of four Sub-Saharan countries: Kenya, Senegal, Niger, and Nigeria. The Department for International Development funded an exercise to gain endorsement of the results from the relevant constituencies, so that, if endorsed, they can enter informed debate. Endorsement and dissemination work was carried out in 2001–2 with the objective of initiating an engagement between research and policy processes in each country.

The primary method used in the endorsement and dissemination work was a series of broadly participatory workshops at different levels, supported by documentation targeted to different users (scientists, policy-makers, local people, development agents). The pattern varied from country to country, and in response to local constraints. The research findings question some received opinion on dryland management, and this has implications for the research-policy dialogue. This Report summarises what has been learnt from these exercises:

- Research findings should be targeted at specific international, national, sectoral or sub-national levels, while recognising that interactions occur between levels; and may engage in either a bureaucratic or political mode.
- Each country has a uniquely configured policy process for which research-policy dialogue must be tailor-made.
- National ownership of the research findings is a condition of effective engagement and should begin at the design stage, and influence project management.
- At the national level, flexible interaction with policy-makers is helpful throughout the research, as they must decide whether the findings deserve a policy response. It may not be possible to engage their attention at the end, if contacts have not been built up.
- At the international level, linking research with in-country programmes and with major donor-driven policy initiatives (e.g. the PRSPs) and with international research organisations is desirable wherever it is likely to be relevant. It may require efforts by the commissioning agency as well as by the researchers. A book can have long term impact.
- Situating research findings in the context of current policy concerns at national level is important for impact, but relevance cannot be engineered.
- The endorsement of research findings at the local level is a condition for effective participation and empowerment in policy processes, not only for the people researched, but also for the national researchers who need the conviction to carry forward the dialogue. Other critical factors are: the use of a familiar language, strong representation of local people in discussions, avoidance of professional stereotypes and provision of adequate resources. It needs to be remembered that it is likely to create legitimate expectations for a follow-up.
- Local pressure groups (e.g. traders' associations) should be involved in the dialogue.
- While engineered institutional change may be unnecessary, there is a need to institutionalise the process to ensure its continuity.

NCDDR (1996) *Review of the literature on dissemination and knowledge utilisation*. USA: National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research. (available at www.ncddr.org/du/products/review).

This review offers some frameworks for understanding the use of knowledge. Their categories are: (i) conceptual knowledge (which changes attitudes), instrumental knowledge (changes practices), strategic knowledge (achieves goals, such as increase in power); (ii) spread of knowledge (one-way diffusion of information), choice of knowledge (process of expanding access to sources), exchange (interactions), implementation (increasing use of knowledge or changing attitudes and practice). Ideas about how knowledge diffuses have not greatly changed over the years, for example, that there is a cultural and needs gap between researchers and users, but information technologies have transformed practice. The notion of learning taking place on a blank slate still prevails in many schools, whereas constructivist theories point out the obvious fact that learners filter knowledge through pre-conceived ideas and people make sense of ideas based on their prior experience. People change their beliefs only when serious discrepancies emerge in their thinking and practice. The source of information is more important than the content, for example people accept information more readily from those they trust, e.g. dairy farmers trust each other more than experts.

Comprehensibility has more impact than quality. Also summarised are key ideas from social marketing, e.g. audience segmentation (dividing your audience into different groups and designing different information, training, rewards etc.). Identity and cultural differences will also play their part in deciding how information will be received.

Neilson, Stephanie (2001) *Knowledge Utilization and Public Policy Processes: A Literature Review*. Canada: Evaluation Unit, International Development Research Centre. (available at www.idrc.ca/evaluation/litreview_e.html)

[Introduction adapted from paper:] For many social science researchers, influencing policy-makers and/or decision-makers is an intended result or expectation of their research. Development researchers are no exception, least of all because they want to know if their research has had an impact on people's everyday lives in terms of poverty, food insecurity, malnutrition or environmental sustainability. As a result, IDRC's Evaluation Unit is undertaking a study that will examine these main questions: (i) what constitutes policy influence in IDRC's experience; (ii) to what degree and in what way has IDRC-supported research influenced public policy; and (iii) what factors and conditions have facilitated or inhibited the public policy influence potential of IDRC-supported research projects. This study will serve two main purposes: (i) to provide learning at the programme level which can enhance the design of projects and programmes to increase policy influence where that is a key objective; and (ii) to create an opportunity for corporate level learning which will provide input into strategic planning processes as well as feedback on performance.

As part of the study, this paper presents the main bodies of work that address the issue of research influence on policy. The first section of the literature review presents an overview of the knowledge utilization literature, including its views on the use of knowledge and research in decision-making. The two most enduring findings from this literature are discussed: (i) Caplan's theory regarding the behavioural differences or 'cultural gap' between researchers and policy-makers; and (ii) Weiss' 'enlightenment function' of research. As well, various ideas and meanings of 'research' and 'use' are also considered. The second section provides a synopsis of the various policy process frameworks, which include: linear; incrementalism; interactive; policy networks; agenda-setting; policy narratives; and policy transfer.

The final section of the paper addresses a number of issues. Few studies examine issues related to research quality and/or completeness in terms of considering the analysis in relation to policy development. Additionally, the notion of perceived influence brought forth by Diane Stone looks at the use of inappropriate evaluation indicators, political patronage and the selective use of research for legitimization rather than policy development. Krastev's concept of 'faking influence' also recently emerged, which addresses issues related to the idea that perhaps it is not the strength of the research institution or the research itself, but the weakness of the other players that allows for 'policy influence'. This posits the question, has this research, or research institution, truly influenced policy, or is the research being utilized merely because policy-makers need solutions and these are the only available solutions? The issue of quality, along with the issues of perceived influence and faking influence, lead us to question whether policy influence should always be construed as a positive development outcome. Finally, this paper explores issues associated with two new areas, 'new policy fields' and 'new policy environments'. New policy fields covers those fields related to such things as information and communication technologies, genetics and tobacco control. New policy environments encompass policy fields which may not be considered new (i.e., economics, environment, health and education), but are being developed in newly independent states (e.g. Ukraine, countries in Central Asia). The question here is how the policy processes in these areas work to either facilitate or inhibit the use of research in new policy fields or new policy environments.

Newman, Darran and Arjan de Haan (2001) ‘Southern Socio-Economic Research Capacity’, Report of a DFID-sponsored workshop hosted by the School of Development Studies, University of Natal, South Africa, 12–13 June.

The workshop was organised to discuss the capacity for socio-economic research in the South, and the role that donors play and should play in supporting this. It brought together an international group of about 30 experts, researchers and representatives of funding agencies. The workshop and background papers were organised around three sets of question: (i) Why should socio-economic research be publicly funded? (ii) Where should funding go? What should be the balance between funding at home and in partner countries? (iii) What models of funding exist and have had most success?

Having explored questions of why, where and how to support research capacity, the following conclusions emerged:

- There is a general agreement that research that matters for policy-making and public debate is central. Recent frameworks like PRSP have highlighted the need for such analysis. A step forward would be an inventory of the research capacity needs that PRSP processes have highlighted.
- A donor’s contribution must display comparative advantage and distinct value added. This should be matched against an appropriate intervention for supporting research capacity building.
- Careful analysis, especially strong political analysis of the country-context, and receptivity by both the North and the South to new knowledge are important to processes of supporting research.
- Positive results are more likely to be achieved by support which is long-term, flexible, free of rigid hierarchical structures between the North and South, and based on a philosophy of reasonable autonomy for the developing country.
- There are gaps between research capacity in the North and the South. However gaps are different in each context, and analysing country-specific research capacity is central before engaging in new forms of support. Future steps would include such specific analyses.
- Research capacity building should embrace the wider milieu within which research institutions operate, the wider environment which produces knowledge, rather than a specific form of research.
- A central question for DFID is whether it is prepared to be a risk taker, to devolve more research responsibility to the South, and engage in long-term support. In the context of existing forms of support, DFID was challenged to indicate what its comparative advantage would be.

NORAD (1999) *Strategy for strengthening research and higher education in the context of Norway’s relations with developing countries*. Oslo: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (NORAD). (available at <http://odin.dep.no/ud/engelsk/publ/veiledninger/032001-220002/index-ind001-b-n-a.html>)

This paper defined Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation’s (NORAD) main priorities for the various support schemes for strengthening research and higher education in the South and for development research in Norway. A further important objective of the paper was to facilitate better co-ordination between the various players involved in this field, primarily the Research Council of Norway, the Norwegian Council of Universities, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A number of measures are outlined with a view to ensuring a coherent approach in Norwegian policy formulation. The overall aim is to promote greater synergy between the various support schemes whose purpose is to strengthen competence building in the South and increase Norwegian knowledge about developing countries.

The intention behind the coordination measures outlined in the present strategy is to further clarify the roles and responsibilities of the various players and to establish an appropriate division of labour between them.

Nutley, Sandra, Isabel Walter and Huw Davies (2002) 'From Knowing to Doing: A framework for understanding the evidence-into-practice agenda' *RURU Discussion Paper 1*. St Andrews, UK: Research Unit for Research Utilisation, University of St Andrews. (available at www.st-andrews.ac.uk/~ruru/publications.htm)

This overview paper aims to map out the terrain of research utilisation and evidence-based practice (RU/EBP) through examining six inter-related areas:

1. *Types of knowledge*. RU/EBP does not just require know-how, but also know-who and know-why. This type of knowledge is often based on more tacit understanding – such as ‘craft expertise’ – rather than explicitly systematic investigation;
2. *Types of research utilisation*. It is emphasised that research may be used in different ways, ranging from instrumental use that results in practical/behavioural change, to conceptual use that results in changes in understanding and attitude. Conceptual change is perhaps the most important impact that research can have long-term;
3. *Models of the process of utilisation*. The shift from a linear model of research/policy linkages (‘research into practice’) to a multi-dimensional model (‘research in practice’) is echoed in the shift from ‘researcher as disseminator’ to ‘practitioner as learner’;
4. *Conceptual frameworks*. Different conceptual frameworks are often used implicitly to frame the RU/EBP problem in a specific way. The paper briefly outlines six possible conceptual frameworks: diffusion of innovations, institutional theory, managing change in organisations, knowledge management, individual learning, and organisational learning;
5. *Main ways of intervening to increase evidence uptake*. Broad-based approaches to securing long-term change face three key challenges: cultural challenges when dealing with multiple cultures; logistical challenges arising from difficulties with information systems and access to resources; and contextual challenges linked to differences in learning among different groups;
6. *Different ways of conceptualising what RU/EBP means in practice*. Four different ‘types’ or dimensions are suggested: (i) the evidence-based problem solver, who has an individual and day-by-day, case-by-case focus; (ii) the reflective practitioner, who uses observational data to learn from the past and adjust for the future; (iii) system redesign, which emphasises the importance of reshaping total systems, often in a centrally driven way; (iv) system adjustment, which refers to system level ‘single-loop’ learning.

Nutley, Sandra, Janie Percy-Smith and William Solesbury (2003) 'Models of research impact: A cross-sector review of literature and practice' *Building effective research 4*. London: Learning and Skills Research Centre at the Learning and Skills Development Agency. (available at www.lsda.org.uk/files/PDF/1418.pdf)

This paper presents the overall results of the project ‘Models of research impact: A cross-sector review’, the first in a series of projects on research effectiveness undertaken by the Learning and Skills Research Centre (LSRC) at the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA). The overarching goal of the LSRC is to inform policy and improve practice through research. The project objectives were to review the literature on research impact; to assess practices in comparable organisations; to characterise models, strategies and actions that would be useful in the learning and skills sector; and to develop guidance for the designers and managers of LSRC research. It examined evidence from literature and practice across the education, social care, criminal justice

and healthcare sectors, with a main focus on the UK. Project findings from the literature review are presented in Walter, Nutley and Davies (2003a), and general findings have been developed into a taxonomy of interventions used to increase the impact of research (Walter, Nutley and Davies 2003b). The overall project paper by Nutley, Percy-Smith and Solesbury includes these findings and in addition presents results of five organisational case studies: Barnardos, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Local and Regional Government Research Unit (LRGRU), Local Government Association (LGA), and MORI Social Research Institute. The paper identifies four useful generic practices: training and development for practitioners in the use of research; building partnerships between researchers and practitioners; developing a range of communication media; and creating an information and inquiry system for research.

Olsson, Berit (2001) ‘Sida research cooperation’ in KFPE (ed.) *Enhancing Research Capacity in Developing and Transition Countries*. Berne: Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE).

This paper sets out the rationale and objectives of Sida’s development research strategy and funding, as implemented through SAREC (Sida’s Research Division). The author begins by asserting that ‘development of knowledge for developing countries could never be more than a minor contribution towards their sustainable development, which requires development of knowledge within and by the countries, and their active participation in international research’. This is illustrated by the example of international health research, where it has been estimated that only around 5% of the US\$50bn that are spent each year on health research address the most acute health problems affecting the poor. Based on this recognition, SAREC’s main objective is to strengthen the research capacity of developing countries, as well as to promote development-oriented research more generally. The author discusses various aspects of Sida support to research capacity building in the South. Sida also provides support to some development research in Sweden, but maintain that the primary responsibility for supporting development research in Sweden lies with the universities and research councils. Sida, however, works with them to increase the opportunities for development-related research.

Omamo, Steven Were (2003) ‘Policy Research on African Agriculture: Trends, Gaps, and Challenges’ *International Service for National Agricultural Research Report 21/2003*. (available at www.isnar.cgiar.org)

This report contends that ‘most policy research on African agriculture is irrelevant to agricultural and overall economic policy in Africa.’ It states that agricultural economists and other members of the policy research community have failed to recognise ‘real problems facing agricultural policy-makers, namely, how to assess the operational feasibility of alternative policy options, and how to promote the feasibility of the most highly valued alternatives.’ The report argues that the policy research community – and the agricultural economics profession in particular – must shoulder a significant part of the blame for this state of affairs. A wide-ranging review of recent research reveals that agricultural economists have failed to put Africa’s agricultural problems on the policy agenda in more than an abstract fashion. We have failed to come to grips adequately with the real problems facing agricultural policy-makers, namely, how to assess the operational feasibility of alternative policy options, and how to promote the feasibility of the most highly valued alternatives. A different approach to agricultural policy research is therefore suggested, built more on ‘how’ questions and less on ‘what’ and ‘why’ questions. Implications of such an approach for research design and conduct are drawn. Piloting action research in case studies of initiatives involving promising institutional innovations offers scope for identifying convincing ‘how’ answers. To

implement such approaches, agricultural economists and other policy researchers require new skills and partnerships. [See ISNAR website for full summary]

Otsyina, Joyce and Diana Rosenberg (1999) ‘Rural development and women: what are the best approaches to communicating information?’ *Gender and development* 7(2): 45–55.

The authors present the topic of rural development and women by stating that the main problem in this area is the lack of effective communication strategies and methods. In this paper they reflect on why this is so and what might be done to improve the situation. They present the findings of a study carried out in Tanzania in 1992, charting the communication strategies employed by an extension agency in the HASHI (*Hifadhi Ardhi Shinyanga*) project, a soil conservation and afforestation programme under the Ministry of Lands, Natural Resources and Tourism, supported by foreign aid. The HASHI project employed several different means of communication: village meetings, film shows, radio, school projects, seminars, neighbour contacts, and posters.

The evaluation study of HASHI interviewed 200 farmers, with equal numbers of women and men, to find out which of these communication methods were effective and whether there were gender differences. The results of the survey showed that village meetings were the most popular channel of communication with both sexes, but that men had participated and benefited more than women from the information that was shared at the meetings. The reason for this was that the meetings were held in the morning, and so – although attendance was compulsory for all – women were less likely to attend due to household chores at that time of day. Film shows and radio broadcasts were also popular among both sexes, but more so among men. One major disadvantage with film shows was that they often took place at night, when women were either reluctant to go out or had to stay home with the children. Thus the official communication strategies and methods of the HASHI project were more accessible to men than women, and men also seemed to profit more from the information communication activities run by HASHI than women. Women, on the other hand, relied far more on secondary sources of information, such as neighbours and school children, who passed on information that they had received from the project. Informal communication networks were more directly important to the women than the formal communication activities. The authors conclude that there is a need to design communication channels that take into account existing socio-economic differences between men and women.

Pang, Tikki (2001) ‘Strengthening health research capacity in developing countries: The perspective of the World Health Organisation’ in KFPE (ed) *Enhancing Research Capacity in Developing and Transition Countries*. Berne: Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE).

Pang introduces the topic of health research capacity by showing the profound inequalities that exist in this sector: it is estimated that less than 10% of global funding for health research is spent on 90% of the world’s health problems. Against this background the World Health Organisation aims to stimulate health research through strengthening research capacity in the developing world itself. This is arguably one of the most effective and sustainable approaches towards narrowing the existing gap. However, it is still important to bear in mind that there are considerable constraints to producing research in the developing world. The conditions under which research is undertaken are frequently unhelpful, comprising a lack of political commitment, weak linkages between researchers and policy-makers, lack of resources, limited career infrastructure and incentives, low salaries and brain drain. Donor-driven research agendas may also sometimes contribute to lack of local ownership and agenda-setting power, and widespread cases of ‘recipient fatigue’ or ‘recipient frustration’. The author argues that there is ‘a clear and urgent need for some bold and imaginative

thinking about novel and alternative international mechanisms to increase the productivity of health research for development'. Recommendations in the paper include national and regional networking, redirection of funds towards national research agendas, greater participation of developing country researchers, and more equitable procedures for international research sharing and communication.

Patel, Sheela (2001) 'How can poor people benefit from research results?' in RAWOO (2001a) 'Utilization of Research for Development Cooperation: Linking Knowledge Production to Development Policy and Practice' RAWOO Publication 21. The Hague: Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council. (available at www.rawoo.nl/pdf/rawoo21.pdf)

In this paper, Sheela Patel gives an account of her experiences with SPARC (the Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centre). She set up SPARC in 1984, together with others working on issues of urban poverty, with the objective of developing more effective ways to work with, rather than for, poor communities, and to find sustainable strategies for poor communities to address their problems and aspirations themselves. SPARC began by working with communities of pavement dwellers in Mumbai, specifically targeting women in these communities. They soon realised that the pavement dwellers were ignored by the local municipalities and also by other communities in the city. There was a lot of misinformation about who the pavement dwellers were and why they were there. So SPARC set out to conduct a large survey of 6000 pavement dwelling households, mapping out where they came from, when and why they had come to the city, what work they did and how much they earned. The results showed that most of the pavement dwellers came from the poorest districts of India, that they had come to the city over 20 years ago, and that over half of them worked, but earned less than the minimum wage.

The report had significant impacts. Firstly, the pavement dwelling communities began to see themselves as a group with some common problems and needs, and realised that they could voice their demands as a group. Secondly, the collaboration between people from the pavement dwelling communities and NGO professionals from SPARC meant that the information generated could be channelled into places where it would not normally have reached. SPARC then entered into alliance with two other community networks and began examining the issue of housing, while continuing with their survey-based information generation activities. Their developing knowledge meant that whenever the state issued inaccurate and inadequate information about the urban poor, SPARC and its partners were able to issue more accurate information and relevant recommendations.

Phillpott, Anne (1999) 'Twists in the Mwanza tale: Did one HIV research study shift global policy?' *Insights* 32. (available at www.id21.org/insights/)

[Abstract adapted from id21:] A recent study has surveyed and analysed the ways UK-based researchers and policy-makers see linkages between research and policy, in relation to a particularly well-known case study arising from research in 1995 into HIV prevention in Mwanza, Tanzania. The Mwanza study seems to have had a dramatic impact on policy reformulation in many countries. Did it really exert such leverage? If so, how and why? Can existing theoretical models of the research-policy interface account for it?

Participants' interview responses revealed keen awareness of the policy shift and knowledge that the widely-cited research in question (produced by Grosskurth et al. in 1995) was perceived as having had a direct impact on policy change. Yet on the whole, their answers suggested that research has a cumulative rather than a direct effect on policy.

Theoretical models of how research influences policy can be separated into two broad camps. A 'rationalist' view is that new research can directly prompt policy change. The 'political' camp on the other hand assumes that various external factors play a part both in defining the question that a research project tackles and in influencing the impact of the answers on policy. At first glance the Mwanza story seems to fit clearly into a rationalist framework. Publication of its results has been trumpeted as a defining moment in the history of HIV and a justification for much current sexual health programming. But the results of this research, combined with the use of a timeline approach and chronological analysis, indicate that a policy shift had already started many years before the Mwanza study appeared in print. Trial results were published in 1995. Yet many events throughout the 1980s and even beforehand were crucial to a 'cumulative and non-linear' policy shift according to interviewed respondents. This process was characterised by one participant as 'a sponge soaking up water'. Another commented that 'Mwanza fell into a ready-made bed'. Universally, responses were twofold: firstly, that conditions prevailing when the results were published strongly favoured policy reformulation; and secondly, that the need to justify existing policy change and to marshal 'hard data to support an existing contention' predisposed many to back the Mwanza research from the start.

Many respondents highlighted 'fact creation' or use of 'magic bullet' statements as motivating forces for policy shift. Complex epidemiological data were reduced to a single fact as it came to be translated and relayed within different research and practitioner communities. The Mwanza research became widely known for a particular statistical result, a reduction of HIV incidence by 42%. This fact was 'worshipped' as an immutable truth that could be applied wholesale to other contexts, no matter how different. This fact's easy 'digestibility' and intuitive appeal was seen as a vital spur to acceptance of the research findings. It did not, however, actually bring about the policy shift, as a simple cause-and-effect model would imply. Rather, the policy shift came about as the result of a combination of cumulative and political factors that predated the evidence. There is no guarantee that research of similar significance would have the same impact on policy in a new context.

Philo, Greg (1996) 'Seeing and Believing' in Paul Marris and Sue Thornham (eds) *Media studies: A Reader*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

What leads people to accept or to reject the portrayal of an event in the news? Philo analyses a case study of the television news coverage of the Miners' Strike in the mid-1980s and the extent to which the news was believed to be 'true' by the audience. The news coverage selectively focused on violent incidents, portraying an image of the picket lines as primarily violent places. In Philo's general audience sample, 54% believed that picketing was indeed mostly violent. Some important reasons given by the audience for believing the television story were the perceived credibility of the source (historically and culturally mediated trust in the BBC), as well as the impact of the visual images – seeing is believing. However, the remaining 46% of the audience sample did not accept the story as it was portrayed by the news. One of the most important grounds for rejection was direct or indirect experience of the issue, e.g. through having driven past picket lines or through knowing miners. Another ground for rejection was comparison between the television coverage and other sources of information, such as newspapers. In addition, some people were sceptical due to their perception of the political agenda of the television news.

The portrayal of the miners' strike as violent stuck in the minds of over half the sample audience, strongly influenced by the visual images. Footage and photographs carry a lot of weight as credible evidence in information societies, and are seen as more 'neutral' or 'true' than written reports. However, this was not enough to make the news coverage stick as a credible story in all of the sample audience. In sum, how people understand and interpret news depends on the extent to which

the news is compatible with their existing cultural/political beliefs, their direct and indirect experience, and their ability to compare the television account with various other accounts.

Porter, Robert W. and Suzanne Prysor-Jones (1997) *Making a Difference to Policies and Programs: A Guide for Researchers*. Washington, DC: USAID.

This guide for researchers presents a practical and collaborative approach to the three-way communication between researchers, policy-makers and communities. It suggests specific actions that researchers may take to communicate more effectively at different stages of the research process (defining the questions, developing the proposal, conducting the study, communicating the results). Suggestions include: involve potential users in defining the questions; establish relationships of trust; clarify which decisions the research aims to influence; choose appropriate research methods; involve users in data collection and analysis; communicate the results in appropriate ways to the different groups involved; and formulate clear recommendations.

Price, N. (2001) 'The performance of social marketing in reaching the poor and vulnerable in Aids control programmes' *Health Policy and Planning* 16(3): 231–9.

[Abstract from article:] The article reviews evidence on the impact and effectiveness of condom social marketing programmes (CSMPs) in reaching the poor and vulnerable with information, services and products in the context of HIV/AIDS/STD prevention and control. Ideally, the success of CSMPs would be judged by whether they contribute to sustained improvements in sexual health outcomes at the population level. Given methodological and attribution difficulties, intermediary criteria are employed to assess effectiveness and impact, focusing on changes in behaviour (including condom use) among poor and vulnerable groups, and access by the poor and vulnerable to condoms, services and information. It remains difficult to reach definitive conclusions about the extent to which CSMPs meet the sexual health needs of the poor and vulnerable, largely due to reliance on sales data for CSMPs monitoring and evaluation.

CSMPs (like many health programme strategies) have traditionally collected little information on client profiles, health seeking behaviour, condom use effectiveness, and supply-side issues. Recent data indicate that CSMPs are unlikely to be pro-poor in their early stages, in terms of the distribution of benefits, but as CSMPs mature, then the inequities in access diminish, followed by reduced inequities in condom use. The paper assesses the extent to which social marketing is effective in improving access for the poor and vulnerable using a number of variables. In terms of economic access, it is evident that low-income groups are particularly sensitive to CSMPs price increases, and that a cost-recovery focus excludes the poorest. Convenience is significantly improved for those who can afford to pay, and CSMPs appear to be addressing social and regulatory constraints to access. Conventional CSMP monitoring systems make it difficult to assess the effectiveness of behavioural change strategies, although data on this dimension of social marketing approach are beginning to emerge.

Provan, Keith and H. Brinton Milward (2001) 'Do Networks Really Work? A Framework for Evaluating Public-Sector Organizational Networks' *Public Administration Review* 61(4): 414–23.

Provan and Milward start with the question: Do networks for community-based, publicly funded health services deliver what they promise? How do we evaluate network effectiveness? In principle, community-based networks would seem to be logical mechanisms for providing public services that

cannot or should not be centralised. Community-based networks in the health sector typically bring together a collection of programmes and services that span a range of cooperating but autonomous (frequently private or non-governmental) organisations. However, there is still a lack of comparative network data, and the authors state that in practice it is premature to conclude that networks are effective mechanisms for addressing complex policy problems. They then propose a framework for network evaluation that focuses on three different levels of analysis: community, network and organizational participant level.

- *Evaluation at the community level:* At this level, networks must be evaluated against the service contribution they make to the communities they are supposed to benefit, using criteria such as improved access, utilisation, responsiveness, integration, and cost effectiveness. Since the network's end users are frequently not a politically powerful interest group, Provan and Milward suggest that evaluation at community level should include consultation with representative consumer advocacy groups or local officials.
- *Evaluation at the network level:* To operate effectively, the collaborating organisations must recognise the need to act as part of a network. The simplest way of evaluating whether this is happening is to map the ebb and flow of organisations to and from the network, as compared to the maturity of the network. Newly established networks should be attracting new members who can offer new services, while mature networks should have a relatively stable core group of agents with a broad range of loose or informal ties. Frequently, a network will require a principal agent, or network administrative organisation, in order to manage the evolution of the network.
- *Evaluation at the organisational participant level:* This level considers the benefits that accrue to the organisational members of the network. Do the individual agencies feel that they stand to gain from participating in the network? The answer to this will mostly depend on four primary criteria: client outcomes and integration of services; legitimacy and status; resource acquisition and fundraising; and cost.

RAWOO (2001a) 'Utilisation of Research for Development Cooperation: Linking Knowledge Production to Development Policy and Practice' RAWOO Publication 21. The Hague: Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council (RAWOO). (available at www.rawoo.nl/pdf/rawoo21.pdf)

This collection of lectures examines the utilisation of research results from different angles. They draw on Carol Weiss' concept of 'knowledge creep' and highlight that research is not present as a ready packaged set of options for policy-makers; rather, research is there as part of the constant information stream (Waardenburg). They wish to move away from the linear model of knowledge production and instead draw up a model that charts interaction between promises, anticipation and feedback, realisation, and overlapping 'knowledge reservoirs'. The combined effect of this interaction results in the co-production of knowledge. One of the main challenges emerging from this model is to facilitate various actors' access to knowledge reservoirs (Rip).

Other models following on from this include the participatory and the interactive models of innovation processes. Both these models highlight the need for a shift from research centres to local users in order to bring about user-led innovation processes, which value trust relationships, mutual learning, and knowledge integration (Bunders). A case study from a community of slum-dwellers in India is presented. The case study shows that it is both possible and useful to use the community itself as the site of knowledge production, which entails locating the design and execution of research processes within the community. The result in this case was a process where research and political advocacy by the community and its outside partners fed into each other (Patel).

The epilogue emphasises that the shift away from a linear model reflects the new mode of production of knowledge in our society. Research now has to be utilised through networks and dialogue. This point is brought home through reference to a study of research utilisation among a group of policy-makers. This study found that the one decisive factor influencing research utilisation was that the initiative had come from the policy-makers themselves and not from external researchers (Waardenburg).

RAWOO (2001b) 'North-South Research Partnerships: Issues and Challenges', Report on the Trivandrum Expert Meeting, October 1999, RAWOO Publication 22. The Hague: Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council (RAWOO). (available at www.rawoo.nl/pdf/pub22.pdf)

The main goal of the Trivandrum Expert meeting was to have a collective reflection on North-South co-operation, the underlying factors and ambiguities, through a process of sharing individual experiences. The meeting began with narratives of experiences. The first presentation examined the Strategic Research Programme in Bolivia (PIEB), stressing the importance of autonomy and flexibility of approach in the process of capacity building, and exploring issues of accountability. The second looked at the case of environmental research in Kenya against the backdrop of a lack of sponsorship, poor availability of scientific journals and electronic information, the brain-drain and a lack of political support (i.e. funding). The third presentation explored the question of quality in development relevant research. The fourth presentation looked at the subject from the perspective of international research programmes, focusing particularly on the dependence and inequalities between Northern donors and Southern researchers. The case of health research in Ghana was the subject of the fifth presentation. From these presentations and the subsequent discussions, the following conclusions were drawn:

- Trust among the partners has to be built up in a long-lasting partnership that gives plenty of time for discussion, overcoming cultural differences, personality clashes, etc.
- It is the institutional capacity of the North that gives it the strength, not just the money. They have the corporate power to put the conditionalities on the table.
- The North needs to release control and accept considerable autonomy of the Southern partner.
- International treaties (such as Rio, Cairo, Beijing and Istanbul) and commitments made in them should be scrutinised to identify items which are valuable for the research agenda.
- Capacity is not just the ability to publish. Elements such as institutional capacity, training, agenda-setting ability, problem recognition and formulation, policy dialogue and advocacy are all relevant components of capacity development.

The expert meeting set out seven basic principles for developing fruitful partnerships and concluded that there are fundamental social and conceptual issues to be tackled in the area of research co-operation between partners in the South and partners in the North.

Robinson, Dorcas, Tom Hewitt and John Harriss (eds) (1999) *Managing Development: Understanding Inter-organizational Relationships*. London: Sage.

This chapter begins by describing the way in which the development arena has moved from practices referred to as serial monogamy to more complex and polygamous behaviours. With more cooperation between aid agencies, a shift can be seen from aid-based to rules-based development. Attention is turned more towards defining sector-wide programmes and macro level change. In inter-organizational terms, this might be described as a move from interaction generated by operational needs, to attempts to build more enduring relationships. There are major challenges in

place trying to make sense of the underlying politics of the notion of cooperation, with focus on the real conflicts of interest and agenda which persist in all areas, and how these are managed.

The process of negotiation over development lies at the heart of the idea of ‘public action’, as a broad idea covering the purposeful manipulation of the public environment by a range of actors. This perspective involves looking at what strategies for cooperation there are (collaboration, advocacy, opposition), and choosing between them, as well as the development of skills for working with the different strategies. The starting point is that there are three ‘ideal’ modes of inter-organisational relationships: competition (market, firms); coordination (state, government at all levels); and cooperation (civil society, NGOs, trade unions). The authors recognise that often there are significant overlaps between what might be considered state, market and voluntary organisations, and that they often work together in various arrangements.

- *Competition*: The institutional framework for organizing competition is provided by the market, thus the World Bank is pointed out as one of the principal proponents of competition as the basis for development. The use of the term is broad, including competition for scarce resources, ideas, constituencies, values and definitions of needs.
- *Coordination*: The most common notion of coordination is rule-regulated and hierarchically organised, generally associated with the state as a legitimate controller and coercer. In its positive sense, coordination by the state is based on the notion of a liberal state deriving its legitimacy through systems of elected representation. However, coordination, generally associated with hierarchies, is a relationship of power, which can be used or abused. Coordination has been a key form for organising development practice, but the context is changing, and the central actor, the government, has changed from all encompassing provider to that of a regulator.
- *Cooperation*: Cooperation tends to be associated with voluntary organisations, as non-hierarchical and with all parties involved on an equal basis with each other. Cooperation assumes power based on knowledge, expertise, and/or contribution, rather than power derived from hierarchy. On its positive side it is seen as a process of consensus building and sharing in public action. However, as already indicated, talk of cooperation frequently disguises power relations in the name of equality.

Rogers, Everett (1995) *Diffusion of Innovations*. New York: Free Press.

[From the book’s preface:] Rogers, perhaps the most widely known diffusion theorist, presents a comprehensive overview of issues and problems related to diffusion in his fourth book. These include the generation of innovations, socioeconomic factors, the innovation-decision process, communication channels, diffusion networks, the rate of adoption, compatibility, trialability, opinion leadership, the change agent, and innovation in organisations.

The book makes use of the important concepts of uncertainty and information. Uncertainty is the degree to which a number of alternatives are perceived, with respect to the occurrence of an event, and the relative probabilities of these alternatives. Uncertainty motivates an individual to seek information. Information is a difference in matter-energy that affects uncertainty in a situation where a choice exists among a set of alternatives. One kind of uncertainty is generated by an innovation, defined as an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or another unit of adoption. An innovation presents an individual or an organisation with a new alternative or alternatives, with new means of solving problems. But the probabilities of the new alternatives being superior to previous practice are not exactly known by the individual problem solvers. Thus, they are motivated to seek further information about the innovation to cope with the uncertainty that it creates.

Information about an innovation is often sought from near-peers, especially information about their subjective evaluations of the innovation. This information exchange about a new idea occurs through a convergence process involving interpersonal networks. The diffusion of innovations is essentially a social process in which subjectively perceived information about a new idea is communicated. The meaning of an innovation is thus gradually worked out through a process of social construction.

Ryan, James G. (1999) ‘Assessing the impact of rice policy changes in Viet Nam and the contribution of policy research’ *Impact Assessment Discussion Paper 8*. Washington, DC: International Food Policy Research Institute. (available at www.ifpri.org/impact/iadp08.pdf)

[Abstract from paper:] The marketing and policy research on rice of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) is described, and the conclusions and recommendations that emerged are discussed in the context of the decision-making processes in Viet Nam. From extensive interviews the author describes the perceptions of partners and stakeholders of the influence of the outcomes of the IFPRI project. They show that the research was regarded as being of high quality, independent, rigorous, and timely. A strong foundation of primary and secondary data gathering and analysis from Viet Nam gave the modelling work on policy options a high degree of credibility among key policy-makers. Linking the spatial equilibrium model with income distribution analysis based on national household surveys allowed IFPRI to satisfy policy-makers that relaxing rice export quotas and internal trade restrictions on rice would not adversely impact on regional disparities and food security and would have beneficial effects on farm prices and poverty. These were major concerns of policy-makers prior to the project. The research on these and other policy options gave a degree of confidence to policy-makers that relaxing the controls would be in Viet Nam’s national interest. They made these decisions earlier than would have been the case without the IFPRI research. A framework for the evaluation of policy research and advice is described.

Ryan, James G. (2002) ‘Synthesis Report on Assessing the Impact of Policy-Oriented Social Science Research’, *Impact Assessment Discussion Paper 15*. Washington, DC: International Food Policy Research Institute. (available at www.ifpri.org/impact/iadp15.pdf)

This report from a conference on the impact of research notes that the key factors determining the impact of research are: quality and perception as an honest broker; timeliness and responsiveness; long-term in-depth collaboration; receptive policy environment; primary and secondary empirical data and simple analysis; trade-offs between immediate and sustainable impacts; choice of partners; consensus for change among stakeholders; and cross-country experience. One participant at the conference made the point that research is often used to confirm rather than challenge received wisdom, while another claimed that the element of surprise increases the value of research. Another explained that when engaged in negotiation with policy-makers, it can be imperative to answer questions with research findings within hours or even minutes. Strengthening the research and policy capacity of developing country institutions was seen as a priority. A small consortium on Policy-Oriented Social Science Research, led by IFPRI, was decided upon.

Sabatier, Paul A. and Hank C. Jenkins-Smith (1999) ‘The Advocacy Coalition Framework: An Assessment’ in Paul A. Sabatier (ed) *Theories of the Policy Process*. Boulder: Westview Press.

This chapter examines the link between research and policy in terms of an ‘advocacy coalition’ framework, which aims to take into account the importance of various coalitions between certain

policy-makers, influential actors and pressure groups. The coalitions form on the basis of shared beliefs and values, as actors/institutions who share a similar perspective forge relationships with each other. Advocacy coalitions therefore consist of various different actors, including different government agencies, associations, civil society organisations, think-tanks, academics, media institutions, and prominent individuals.

There are competing advocacy coalitions within each policy domain, and in general one of these coalitions will be dominant and wield greater power over the policy process than other coalitions. Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith argue that research findings will inevitably be shaped by the competition between the different coalitions. They also note that academics and think-tanks have a far greater chance of being heard when there are like-minded influential politicians in the dominant advocacy coalition. They see a productive and potentially influential role for research, particularly in assisting coalitions to produce better arguments and to monitor the claims of their opponents. While actors in advocacy coalitions do not usually relinquish their core values and beliefs, they are open to changes of 'secondary importance' such as specific policy formulations, and it is here that research has a role to play.

Sandhu, Harjit and Donald Allen (1974) 'Family Planning in Rural India: Personal and Community Factors' *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 36(4): 805–13.

[Abstract from article:] With over 80% of India's 600 million people living in rural India today (in the mid-1970s), efforts to tackle the problem of population explosion are to be concentrated in rural villages. India's government is trying to disseminate knowledge and give advice on birth control methods through block development offices and primary health centres. These two organizations also arrange the free distribution of contraceptives as well as frequent sterilization campaigns for vasectomy and tubectomy. This study intended to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice of birth control through the use of Standard 'Knowledge, Attitude and Practice' (KAP) questionnaires among the Punjabi farmers. In 93 villages of three districts in Punjab, 495 farmers were interviewed and administered a questionnaire. All of these farmers were married and had at least two children at the time of this study. The study also investigated the personal characteristics of the farmers and the community factors favourable to birth control measures. Although about 90% of the farmers hold attitudes favourable to birth control, only 48% of them practiced it to some degree (34% used condoms, 10% vasectomy, 3% made their wives use IUDs and in 1% of the cases the wives were sterilized through tubectomy). According to these statistics, birth control in India was mainly left to men's devices and the women played a relatively insignificant role (only in 4% of the families had the wife used either the IUD or had surgical sterilization). Punjabi society has some structural features conducive to birth control and family planning – a relatively low ratio of females and a limited practice of polyandry in certain farming communities. These features are insufficient to reduce the growth rate. Personal characteristics conducive to birth control are the education of the farmer individually and to some extent the state of education of the entire family. Among the community factors, the prime movers behind family planning are information communication and peer emulation.

Saywell, D. and A. Cotton (1999) *Spreading the Word: Practical guidelines for research dissemination strategies*. Loughborough, UK: Water, Engineering and Development Centre, Loughborough University. (available at www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/cv/wedc/publications/snstw/snstw.pdf)

This DFID-funded book offers a literature review of sources that have provided insights on research dissemination both in and outside the UK. They conclude that researchers should consider the

potential impact of their outputs much more carefully before producing reports. They identify organisational, practical and psychological barriers to the effective dissemination of information and four explanations of how information influences policy: the ‘rational’ model (making information available sufficient); the limestone model (information trickles like water through porous rock); the gadfly model (information gets through because dissemination is prioritised as much as research itself); and insider model (researchers exploit links with policy-makers).

While they found that non-UK researchers planned a strategy for disseminating information, the UK researchers produced lengthy outputs for a homogenised audience with little strategy for influencing. There should be more consultation between information producers and users of research on the types of outputs and strategies required for dissemination. They argue for (and give examples of) the need for dissemination plans, designing different kinds of outputs for different audiences and considering dissemination from the beginning of a project rather than the end. Their very varied case studies illustrate which dissemination strategies work in which contexts, ranging from very practical advice about translating research outputs into local languages, to more abstract principles about how dissemination can be useful if seen as a process of mutual learning. They also offer specific suggestions to contractors and DFID, as well as useful checklists of questions for researchers about planning effective dissemination, plus advantages and disadvantages of different dissemination ‘pathways’ (e.g. manuals, networks and briefs etc.).

The themes and issues highlighted by Saywell and Cotton were developed further in the second phase of the study, as presented in WEDC (2000).

Scott, Alister (2003) ‘Research and Policy Development’ *POSTnote*. London: Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology. (draft report, longer version available at www.parliament.uk/post/e10.pdf)

This briefing for the UK Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology explores the connections between research and policy, and the work being undertaken in the UK – especially in Whitehall – to improve the connections. The report notes that in spite of the recent focus on evidence-based policy, the use of research in policy-making still varies widely across Whitehall. The largest ever survey of policy-making across government (*Better Policy-Making*, Cabinet Office CMPS, 2001, www.cmeps.gov.uk), found that there was still a long way to go before the goal of evidence-based policy would become more of a reality. However, despite the mixed results in practice, the issue of research-policy links is high on the agenda in various policy formulations, including the 1999 *Modernising Government White Paper*, which states that:

‘Government should regard policy-making as a continuous, learning process, not as a series of one-off initiatives. We will improve our use of evidence and research so that we understand better the problems we are trying to address.’

These aims are closely linked to concerns surrounding internal organisational systems in government departments and agencies. As the *Review of S&T Activity Across Government* (Council for Science and Technology, 1999, www.cst.gov.uk) puts it:

‘we were not convinced that any department was really staffed, organised, or sufficiently aware to make the best possible use of science and technology... We are concerned that the resulting weaknesses in their ability to understand, and to respond to rapid change in the external world create an increasing risk that wrong decisions will be taken, with potential for substantial damage and costs to Government and society.’

There are various different responses to this perceived problem. One is improved organisational systems and processes. Another is investment in 'horizon scanning research' which aims to question current policy approaches, in order to foresee possible problems in the near future and map out alternative ways of dealing with the unexpected. The report also emphasises the role of the ESRC Evidence Network and other links between policy networks and academic institutions.

Sida (2001) 'Research Co-operation: Social Sciences and the Humanities' *SIDA Subject Facts Sheet*. Stockholm: Swedish International Development Agency. (available at www.sida.se/Sida/articles/7700-7799/7705/soc.pdf)

In recognition of the increasing connectedness of issues and people around the globe, and the growing web of intellectual interaction between social scientists in many different countries, Sida decided to channel much of its development research funding into Southern regional research networks, as well as institution building and national research capacity development in the South. In February 2001, Sida was supporting the following regional research networks:

- CLACSO (The Latin American Council for Social Sciences), a rapidly expanding network of 115 research institutes (both NGOs and university institutions).
- FLACSO's (the Latin American Social Science Faculty) regional PhD programme for young researchers, as well as a wide range of social research on relevant regional issues.
- CODESRIA (the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa), covers the French, English and Arabic speaking parts of the continent. Its activities comprise multi-national and national research networks, fellowships, and workshops, as well as a publications programme.
- OSSREA (the Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa), represents 18 countries. It stimulates research in social sciences, facilitates research cooperation, supports research education, and publishes *The Eastern Africa Social Science Review*, as well as books and research reports.
- AAPS (African Association for Political Science) is a pan-African organisation mainly for political scientists. It publishes an *African Journal of Political Science* and develops textbooks in political science for African universities.
- UAPS (the Union for African Population Studies), supports thematic research in demography. The threat of HIV/AIDS has become a particular case in point.
- AERC (the African Economic Research Consortium), where Sida contribution involves support to 20 universities that together accept 100 students annually for a Masters programme, and is currently in the process of launching a PhD programme. The research is focusing on themes such as regional integration, macroeconomic politics, poverty, and the labour market.
- African archaeologists. In 2000, a comprehensive programme of African archaeology was concluded. 19 field programmes in eight eastern and southern African countries have been carried out, each headed by an African scholar. A wide range of articles and teaching materials have been produced, and 22 African PhDs have been completed.
- EEPSEA (the Economy and Environment Program for Southeast Asia). The network has exercised considerable influence on decision-makers within the region through its policy relevant research.
- SANDEE (South Asian Network for Development and Environmental Economics), with the objective of strengthening the ability of researchers in South Asia to undertake research on the economics of environmental and natural resource problems.
- SEA-CSN (Southeast Asian Conflict Studies Network), a new regional research network with which Sida will initiate collaboration in 2001. The objective is to promote research in the broad field of conflict studies in the Southeast Asian region.

Smith, M.J. (1997) 'Policy networks' in Michael Hill (ed) *The Policy Process: A Reader*. London: Prentice Hall.

Smith suggests various ways to distinguish between different policy networks. The first distinction is based on the theory that policy networks can be arranged along a continuum from a policy community to an issue network. At the policy community end one would find networks that were well defined, with formal membership and frequent interaction among the members. At the issue network end of the continuum, one would find a large and loosely defined network of various people, with fluctuating levels of activity and interaction.

Another way of distinguishing between policy networks is to look at them by policy sector. Smith's chapter focuses on the interaction between networks and government. The network's aim is to influence government policy, while the government wishes to use networks to achieve specific policy goals. The nature of this interaction will vary by sector, as different sectors operate with different levels of resources and prestige. The author also suggests that if networks wish to maintain a good relationship with the government they have to abide by certain 'rules of the game': they have to act constitutionally; accept the government's final decision; show that they can be trusted; and only make reasonable demands. High profile campaigns, for example, fall outside the rules of the game and will change the nature of the relationship to government.

The chapter also outlines differences between core members of a policy network and peripheral members. Some members will be active in the network for a longer period of time, will have more resources, and more contacts. However, this does not necessarily mean that they will take power away from other members. Instead, the author argues that in a policy network, power is positive-sum, i.e. the resources of one group also benefit the others.

Söderbaum, F. (2001) 'Networking and capacity building: the role of regional research networks in Africa' *European Journal of Development Research* 13(2): 144–63.

Söderbaum begins by briefly describing the connectedness of the world today. All active researchers necessarily maintain various types of contact outside their particular department, university, or research centre. Research cooperation, networking and communication are crucial to the research process – and often transcend national frontiers. However, there is still little analysis or understanding of which types of research networks are most effective. This is particularly the case with regional research networks (RRNs). This article therefore seeks to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of this neglected area of study, focusing in particular on their influence on capacity building in Africa.

First, some conceptual issues are addressed. A network is a set of 'objects' (e.g. researchers) that are tied together in a connective structure by links (communication links, lines of decision-making, etc.). The network concept is useful because it draws attention to the nature of the links between the objects, rather than the objects themselves. Thus the focus is concentrated on issues such as social relationships, information and contacts, and patterns of communication. Networks can be informal or formal; however, it appears that informal networks frequently become formal through a gradual process.

The article then discusses four ideal types of RRNs in Africa: (i) regional research associations; (ii) regional research organisations; (iii) regional research centres; and (iv) regional research programmes and projects. The author points out that the most typical feature of the RRNs examined were that they were 'multifunctional', i.e. were able to pursue a number of different aims and

activities simultaneously. Most of the RRNs had a high degree of political autonomy, but were, on the other hand, heavily dependent on foreign aid.

Thereafter links between various types of RRNs and capacity building are discussed, followed by a discussion of some negative consequences for networking and capacity building of the way donors operate (short-term time horizon, several smaller grants rather than large-quantity spending, lack of experimentation, focus on expensive hardware rather than human resources, and a certain lack of sensitivity to the particular cultural and political environment). A main argument developed is that RRNs should be integrated within a holistic, systems-oriented approach to research capacity building.

Sole, D. and A. Edmondson (2002) ‘Situated knowledge and learning in dispersed teams’ *British Journal of Management* 13: 17–34.

[Abstract from article:] The paper reports on analyses of 44 learning episodes that involved identifying and engaging situated knowledge, and draws from these data to identify implications for research and practice. This qualitative field study explores how geographically dispersed teams learn and accomplish challenging work by drawing on knowledge situated in the multiple physical locales they span. We propose the construct of situated knowledge as important for understanding the learning process in dispersed teams. Data collected on seven development projects, each spanning multiple sites, reveal that situated knowledge is at the same time a valuable resource and a source of communication difficulty for dispersed teams. We find that, because their members understand and participate in locale-specific practices, dispersed teams can easily access and use unique locale-specific knowledge resources to resolve problems that arise in those same locales. However, when dispersed teams need knowledge situated at a site other than where the problem occurred, they must first recognize and adjust for locale-specific practices within which that knowledge is embedded before it can be used.

Song, Steve (1999) *Guidelines on the use of electronic networking to facilitate regional or global research networks*. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre. (available at www.idrc.ca/books/focus/890/15aSong.html)

[Partly from abstract:] Recent developments in information and communications technologies – including the rapid spread of telecommunications infrastructure and the growth of the Internet – have dramatically lowered the barriers to research collaboration in the developing world. Electronic networking offers the potential for researchers anywhere to communicate with peers in their field and to gain access to valuable research information via the Internet. However, while the problem of access is a substantial hurdle which has been overcome, there are many other barriers to successful electronic collaboration. This paper highlights some key issues to be aware of in fostering electronic collaboration.

Benefits of electronic networks are clear. Firstly, they allow researchers to share information dynamically and far more quickly than previously. There are distinct advantages in terms of interaction. Song also points out that electronic networking should be seen as a tool to enhance the gain from face-to-face meetings, rather than a replacement for these. However, there are substantial prerequisites to a functioning electronic research network. Access to internet is not always guaranteed in Southern institutions even where it is physically possible. Political interests may provide obstacles, especially if the activity is perceived as undermining other authority structures. Equally important is a reliable commitment to the functioning of the network. Without fundamental buy-in from the participants, electronic networks are doomed to fail. In order to strengthen

commitment, Song suggests that a network should have a facilitator who stimulates discussion, regularly summarises the debate, draws in inactive participants, and provides assistance to participants not previously familiar with electronic discussion forums.

Stacey, Ralph (1995) ‘The Role of Chaos and Self-Organization in the Development of Creative Organizations’, in Alain Albert (ed) *Chaos and Society*. Amsterdam: IOS Press.

Drawing on chaos theory (transported from the physical sciences to social science issues), Stacey discusses the possibilities of moving away from ‘equilibria’ models of organisation to models that focus on nonlinear dynamics. In this paper he sets out the argument that organisations are nonlinear feedback networks. He argues that the ‘nonlinearity’ of networks is precisely what makes networks such valuable sites for innovation – e.g. the spontaneous relations formed between people, the irregular sharing of information, the informal learning processes that occur through interaction, etc. In formal institutions, the networks that form often function as ‘shadow organisations’ that creatively interpret and modify official strategies. More importantly, the informal networks continuously generate new and alternative strategies. Those unofficial strategies that survive and are picked up by various actors through the informal channels and networks, will normally after a time become institutionalised, thus making them official. This reinforces the control of the formal management and provides some stability. However, new unofficial ideas and responses will already be forming. Stacey argues that this constant interaction between stable organisational elements and unstable informal networks is vital if an organisation wishes to succeed.

Stone, Diane, Simon Maxwell and Michael Keating (2001) ‘Bridging Research and Policy’, An international workshop funded by DFID, Warwick University, 16–17 July. (available at www.gdnet.org/pdf/Bridging.pdf)

[From introduction:] This paper is about the relationship between research and policy – specifically about how research impacts on policy, and about how policy draws on research. It might be thought that the relationship is straightforward, with good research designed to be relevant to policy, and its results delivered in an accessible form to policy-makers – and with good policy-making securely and rationally based on relevant research findings. In fact, this is far from the case. Sometimes research is not designed to be relevant to policy. Sometimes it is so designed, but fails to have an impact because of problems associated with timeliness, presentation, or manner of communication. Sometimes (probably quite often) policy-makers do not see research findings as central to their decision-making. The relationship between research and policy is often tenuous and quite often fraught.

To observe as much is not new. There are literatures on the question in many social science disciplines – in political science, sociology, anthropology, and management, to name a few. Our purpose here is to review some of these literatures and to draw out the implications for both researchers and policy-makers. The starting point is a discussion of what is meant by ‘policy’ and the ‘policy process’. The rational, linear model of policy-making – which summarises a logical sequence from problem definition, through analysis of alternatives, to decision, implementation, and review – is the traditional approach. We will see shortly what is wrong with this. Accordingly, the paper begins (Section 2) with a brief review of thinking on policy, presenting alternative models, and setting out a framework for thinking about the interaction between research and policy. It then deals successively with the challenge facing researchers (Section 3) and policy-makers (Section 4). Can the range of advice already offered to researchers be extended? And can policy-makers be helped by new ideas such as evidence-based policy-making and performance-based

evaluations? The Conclusion (Section 5) draws these threads together, suggesting that the impact of research is uncertain and contingent on social and political context.

Surr, Martin, Andrew Barnett, Alex Duncan, Melanie Speight, David Bradley, Alan Rew and John Toye (2002) *Research for Poverty Reduction: DFID Research Policy Paper*. London: Department for International Development, UK. (available at www.dfid.org.uk)

[From the executive summary:] This paper proposes policies and principles to guide DFID's research work over the longer term. The critical issue for the future is how to improve researchers' effectiveness in producing outputs that directly and indirectly change both policy and practice, are truly relevant to poor people's needs, and are effectively taken up. The report argues that to be effective, 'research' must be located more securely in the context of wider 'knowledge' or 'Innovation systems'. This implies that:

- The effectiveness and impact of research will be a function of a large number of other elements of the system being in place.
- Success is driven by continuous interactions between 'supply drivers' and 'demand drivers'.
- 'User engagement' is likely to be a key success factor and ultimately lead to improved dissemination, uptake and research outputs.
- Networks and trust-relationships between the various players are central to knowledge systems, primarily because they lower transaction costs and form the key communication channels between suppliers and users.

A framework for future support to research is outlined. As part of this process consideration is given to the roles that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and users of research contribute to the framework. The report notes:

- The very weak capacities in some countries to articulate needs for research and to utilise what is already known.
- The necessity to disaggregate research needs and to invest more effort in understanding the diversity of needs (particularly to include the needs of many types of user) and the extent to which research can meet them.
- That DFID may assume too easily that its staff know the needs of poor people.
- The necessity to consider the quality and appropriateness of research output in relation to the needs of its intended users, rather than necessarily by peer reviewed journal articles in English.
- The MDGs provide a certain degree of focus, but set a domain of research problems far larger than DFID can address alone.
- The MDGs provide a single orthodoxy for the developmental process, but the risks of this strategy can be reduced by independent research that challenges the current paradigm, tests its effectiveness, and searches out new and emerging issues.

A number of key issues are identified which would have to be addressed in any future research strategy for DFID. These include the following issues:

- Research-related capacities in developing countries need to be strengthened in order to access, produce and utilise research. The evidence suggests that the capacity of developing countries to generate, acquire, assimilate and utilise knowledge will form a crucial part of their strategies to reduce poverty.
- DFID has made insufficient headway so far in meeting the demand for locally relevant poverty reduction information.
- 'User engagement' must be increased to determine research needs, and also to facilitate uptake.

- ‘Uptake mechanisms’ need to be developed within developing countries, within the international development community and within DFID.
- Networks need to be supported as key elements in promoting the take up of research results.

Sutton, Rebecca (1999) ‘The Policy Process: An Overview’ *ODI Working Paper 118*. London: Overseas Development Institute. (available at www.odi.org.uk/publications)

This paper offers an introduction to analysis of the policy process. It identifies and describes theoretical approaches in political science, sociology, anthropology, international relations and management. It then reviews five cross-cutting themes: (i) the dichotomy between policy-making and implementation; (ii) the management of change; (iii) the role of interest groups in the policy process; (iv) ownership of the policy process; and (v) the narrowing of policy alternatives. The paper concludes with a 21-point check-list of ‘what makes policy happen’. A glossary of key terms is also provided. The key argument of the paper is that a ‘linear model’ of policy-making, characterised by objective analysis of options and separation of policy from implementation, is inadequate. Instead, policy and policy implementation are best understood as a ‘chaos of purposes and accidents’. A combination of concepts and tools from different disciplines can be deployed to put some order into the chaos, including policy narratives, policy communities, discourse analysis, regime theory, change management, and the role of street-level bureaucrats in implementation.

Tizot, Jean-Yves (2001) ‘The issues of translation, transferability and transfer of social policies: French and British “urban social policy”: Finding common ground for comparison?’ *International Journal of Social Research Methodology: Theory and Practice* 4 (4): 301–18.

[Abstract from article:] While international comparative studies of social policies is a well-established and fairly long-standing branch of social science (at least since the post-war development of the various configurations of the so called ‘Welfare State’ in Europe), there has clearly been a renewed surge of interest for this question in the past 10 to 15 years, a fact perhaps not unrelated to the institutional trend of ‘European integration’. The resulting literature has thus become a successful and thriving sub-species within policy studies, in which disciplinary research is often subordinated to, and geared towards, the search for transferable ‘good practice’. Yet be it for scientific or political and administrative purposes, this research field – ‘policy transfer’ – seems to be riven both by doubt about the sheer relevance of and the real scope for international comparison on the one hand, and on the other hand by a now long-drawn-out debate about the feasibility of effective policy-transfers.

The principal obstacles for international comparison, given the near-absence of a common international ‘metalanguage’ to describe and analyse policies in shared terms, would appear to be specific problems posed by the translation and description of ‘foreign’ social policies. Moreover, social policies themselves are often said to be too idiosyncratic and typical of each country to be adequately described, let alone really understood and transferred by foreign observers, analysts and policy-makers. Social policies are thus generally seen as differing radically from one national ‘context’ to another, and these ‘contexts’ themselves are often described, very deterministically it seems, as totally coherent and cohesive ‘systems’.

Against this dominant ‘systemic’ vision of national social policies so embedded in their ‘cultural’ context that are barely translatable, hardly comparable, and utterly untransferrable, this paper argues that by choosing to analyse national sets of social policies into ‘functional areas’ and further into (more or less) discrete functions, it is quite possible to develop an approach whereby it becomes manifest that structural resemblances between societies give occasion to homothetic functions or

sets of functions. This general point is illustrated by the particular example of ‘urban social policies’ in France (‘politique de la ville’) and Great Britain (‘inner-city policy’). This is a policy area in which the institutional contexts are generally recognized to vary considerably between the two countries, but in which similar devices have been put in place to counter the adverse affects of the ‘urban crisis’ affecting France and Britain alike since the mid-sixties. Indeed, a recent comparative study of some of the latest urban social policy programmes in both countries was able to conclude that not only was there a real convergence on policy objectives, but moreover that ‘the actual measures available to take action differ little on either side of the Channel, and similarities are more striking than the differences’ (Booth, Green and Paris, 1997).

TRL (2000) ‘Strategy for Dissemination of DFID Funded Transport Research’, Unpublished project report, UK Department for International Development and Transport Research Laboratory (TRL), International Division.

This report reviews the ways in which dissemination of DFID funded transport research is currently being accomplished by TRL and the efficacy of present procedures and practices. This review takes place against a rapidly changing background: the growth in electronic means of storing and distributing information; the rise in networking and partnerships; the move towards different organisational models, which involve the participation of private enterprise and non-governmental organisations; the need for sustainable solutions; the cross-sectoral nature of so much of the information generated, etc.

This changing framework must influence the way in which the future dissemination of DFID funded transport research findings evolves; hence the key purpose of this review is to develop a strategy which can address these and other issues which impact on dissemination, and to propose a series of actions and investments to support DFID fulfilling such a strategy. Whilst the review draws heavily on TRL managed contributions, it highlights the value of contributions from other providers.

The review is founded on the premise that the objectives of DFID’s dissemination strategy in the transport sector should be to achieve greater impact in delivering affordable, safe and sustainable transport to target groups in developing countries. Therefore the objective is to positively influence implementation by informing policy-makers, promoting cost effective solutions to service providers and managers, and raising awareness of users and communities of actions that they can contribute. The strengths and weaknesses of the currently known range of dissemination activities have been identified and they form the basis for the recommendations made in this report.

The review is structured in four main parts: (i) An overview of the information which is the subject of dissemination. This looks briefly at the sources of information, the implications of a broader contributor base and the need for up-dating information; (ii) An examination of the publication format, which is essentially a review of the ‘series’ which are currently used by TRL for publishing hard copy; (iii) An assessment of the ‘vehicles’ for dissemination. This looks at the current practice of delivering hard copies to enquirers and the modern means for getting information to them; and (iv) An assessment of the resource base required to put in place the recommendations which flow from this review.

UNAIDS (1999) *Communications framework for HIV/AIDS: A new direction*. Joint United National Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and Pennsylvania State University. (available at www.unaids.org/publications/documents/supporting/communications/unacomm.pdf)

[From executive summary:] The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) responded to the increasing epidemic of HIV/AIDS by initiating a participatory research process conducted through five consultative workshops to examine the global use of communications of HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and support. The primary aim was to examine the adequacy of existing communications theories and models for HIV/AIDS in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean against a backdrop of contemporary communications uses in Western societies. In the five consultative workshops (two global and three regional), 103 leading researchers and practitioners from different parts of the world were invited or consulted by UNAIDS in collaboration with The Pennsylvania State University.

The major finding was that five domains of context are virtually universal factors in communications for HIV/AIDS preventive health behaviour: government policy, socioeconomic status, culture, gender relations, and spirituality. These interrelated domains formed the basis of a new framework that could be used as a flexible guide in the development of HIV/AIDS communications interventions. Individual health behaviour is recognized as a component of this set of domains, rather than the primary focus of health behaviour change.

Most HIV/AIDS communications programmes have been aimed at achieving individual-based changes in sexual and social behaviour. While aspects of this approach are desirable and should be maintained, evidence from research and practice in many countries shows that existing approaches generally have major limitations; thus, a broader focus is needed. Moreover, there is considerable inter-regional variation in the context of HIV/AIDS. Many of the theories, models, and frameworks currently in use in the regions do not adequately address the unique needs of HIV/AIDS communications. For example, the cost effectiveness of interpersonal communication components of HIV/AIDS behavioural interventions in the regions has been underestimated. The challenge of the new direction outlined in the report is to ensure a redirection of intervention programmes to recognize that individual behaviours are shaped and influenced by factors and domains within a broader contextual focus.

Varey, Richard J. (2002) *Marketing Communication: Principles and Practice*. London and New York: Routledge.

This book takes an interesting look at traditional marketing communication theory and seeks to challenge the models used. It points to the relative stagnation in the understanding of communication issues in marketing theory, and the need to draw lessons from communication and cultural theory in order to arrive at a more useful and interesting approach to communications. The author is particularly critical of the linear transmission (transactional) approach to communication (as seen for instance in Kotler's work). Furthermore, he emphasises that communication must be seen as a social process consisting of individual and collective communicative activities, with tangible and intangible exchanges in social relationships by creating, maintaining or altering attitudes and/or behaviours. Whereas the traditional models emphasise individual behaviour, Varey points to the fact that identity, meaning and knowledge do not arise in the individual's mind in isolation from their environment.

Traditional marketing communication theory focuses on the individual, with a simple stimulus-response model. It considers primarily the effects of single messages or campaigns on identified individuals. Audiences are seen as passive, with no active interpretation or power to challenge the

message content. Contemporised marketing communication theory focuses on cognitive and critical perspectives on the cultural effects of advertising on social reality, beliefs, values, knowledge claims, socialisation and hegemony. The theory assesses the cumulative effect of marketing communication as central to meaning production in our post-industrial consumer society. This implies a view of communities as interpretative using an interactive model. Meaning is not transferred or shared, but jointly produced in social 'interaction'.

In an assessment of the politics of communication models, the author argues that most of us are still operating in outmoded instrumental-technical modes of communication in pursuit of control. Communication is seen as a conduit for the transmission of information, but information conceptions only work in situations in which consensus of meaning, ideas, identities, and construction of knowledge can be taken for granted; far from the real world of today. The author argues, furthermore, that language is contextual, and that we are responsible for creating our own context for understanding. He also provides some indication as to the key factors ensuring the success of communicating a message: communicator credibility; communicator attractiveness; and communicator power.

Vyas, Anju (2002) 'Connecting voices and expanding horizons' *Development (Journal of the Society for International Development)* 45(4): 55–60.

[Abstract from article:] Anju Vyas describes the genesis, developments, doubts, dilemmas and challenges of moderating an electronic discussion list on gender issues in South Asia. She elaborates on the contents, subscribers' profile, methodology and technical issues relating to the discussion list. She strongly feels that e-discussion lists have immense potential for resource sharing, networking and advocacy activities which need to be fully explored and utilized by the women's groups and researchers in the South Asian region. She further shares her optimism about how this simple e-mail technology can connect researchers globally, forge collaborations and share information through the e-mail networks, and connect the people.

Walter, Isabel, Sandra Nutley and Huw Davies (2003a) *Research Impact: A Cross-Sector Review. Literature Review.* St Andrews, UK: Research Unit for Research Utilisation, University of St Andrews, part of the ESRC Network for Evidence Based Policy and Practice. (available at www.st-andrews.ac.uk/~ruru/publications.htm)

This literature review was originally carried out as part of a wider project entitled 'Models of Research Impact: A cross sector review', funded by the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA). See Nutley, Percy-Smith and Solesbury (2003) for the overall project summary, and Walter, Nutley and Davies (2003b) for a presentation of the findings in the form of a taxonomy of interventions to increase the impact of research. The literature review had three objectives: to gain an overview of the conceptual frameworks and models used to guide research impact interventions; to document the varying success of different practices in this area; and to examine how research impact can best be assessed. The review focused mainly on the health, education, social care, and criminal justice sectors in the UK. Out of an initial total of 5,800 references, 341 papers were selected to be included in the review. These 341 were divided into four categories: conceptual papers on history, theory and models (155); methodological papers on definition and measurement (2); background papers concerning specific cases, though without evaluation (59); and empirical papers reporting on specific cases, with attention to and some evaluation of the effectiveness of the research impact (125). The empirical papers were seen as particularly valuable for the review. They reported on various changes that had followed from research impact, including changes in access to

research, changes in the extent to which research is considered and referred to, changes in knowledge and understanding, changes in attitudes and beliefs, and finally changes in behaviour.

The literature review presents the eight main mechanisms that are currently used to enhance research impact: dissemination; educational interventions; social influence; collaboration; incentives; reinforcement of behaviour; facilitation; and multifaceted interventions (see Walter, Nutley and Davies, 2003b for details). The literature review explores each of these mechanisms by indicating evidence of its effectiveness, the underlying theoretical framework, and an example of how it has been used.

In conclusion, the review identifies a number of practices that seem to increase the chances of success:

- active dissemination can help raise awareness of research and may support more direct use where discussion of findings is enabled;
- individualised educational strategies and those which allow interaction with colleagues and experts;
- supportive opinion leaders, both expert and peer; developing closer links between researchers and practitioners, for example through partnerships;
- support for practitioners to ‘try out’ research findings and to conduct their own research;
- reminders, although these have only been examined in healthcare settings;
- adequately resourced facilitative strategies;
- multifaceted interventions, particularly where attention is paid to the contexts and mechanisms of implementation.

The evidence is less clear concerning incentives, although research impact increases when implementation activities are a criterion for research funding. Further key features of successful practices include the following:

- Research must be translated, i.e. adapted to or reconstructed within different practice and policy contexts.
- Enthusiasm is vital when trying to ‘sell’ new ideas and practices – personal contact is most effective.
- Contextual analysis of specific barriers to and enablers of change is necessary.
- Impact is enhanced when the research is perceived as credible, i.e. where there is strong evidence, endorsement from opinion leaders, and high level commitment.

Walter, Isabel, Sandra Nutley and Huw Davies (2003b) *Developing a Taxonomy of Interventions Used to Increase the Impact of Research*. St Andrews, UK: Research Unit for Research Utilisation, University of St Andrews, part of the ESRC Network for Evidence Based Policy and Practice (available at www.st-andrews.ac.uk/~ruru/publications.htm)

This paper was written based on a wider project entitled ‘Models of Research Impact: A cross sector review’, funded by the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA). See Nutley, Percy-Smith and Solesbury (2003) for the overall project summary, and Walter, Nutley and Davies (2003a) for the project literature review. Drawing on the analysis of the literature review and evidence of successful practices in various organisations, the taxonomy first presents eight mechanisms that are currently used to enhance research impact (mainly across the health, education, social care, and criminal justice sectors in the UK).

Mechanisms to enhance research impact:

1. *Dissemination* – provision and re-presentation of research findings, both written and oral, including guidelines;
2. *Educational interventions* – increasing knowledge and understanding of research;
3. *Social influence* – using the influence of others to inform and persuade, for example opinion leaders;
4. *Collaborations* between researchers and users – including the institutional co-location of researchers with practitioners and policy-makers, and interventions which enable practitioners to ‘test out’ research findings in local contexts;
5. *Incentives* – financial incentives to change behaviour and research funding practices to encourage impact activities;
6. *Reinforcement* of behaviour, such as through audit, feedback and reminders;
7. *Facilitation* – interventions which provide practical, technical and financial assistance to support research-based change;
8. *Multifaceted interventions* – deploying two or more of the above practices.

The eight mechanisms constitute one side of the taxonomy matrix. The second side is related to intervention type, i.e. the form and content of an intervention.

Examples of how to use the matrix:

Example 1: A seminar series based on individual presentations and subsequent questions from the audience.

- Mechanism: Dissemination.
- Intervention type: Oral presentation, supported by written materials.

Example 2: The implementation of guidelines using reminder systems.

- Mechanism: Reinforcement.
- Intervention type: Research-based guidance, supported by written materials, and (personal/general) reminders.

The authors suggest that this taxonomy may have not only conceptual value, but also practical use in helping plan and select appropriate strategies for enhancing research impact.

WEDC (2000) *Dissemination pathways and indicators of impacts on development: a review of the literature*. Loughborough: Water, Engineering and Development Centre, Loughborough University. (available at www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/cv/wedc/projects/stw/lr6.pdf)

[From the abstract:] This paper was written for the second phase of a DFID-funded study on research dissemination. It develops further some of the themes and issues which emerged from the first phase of the study, constituted by the report of Saywell and Cotton (1999). This second paper offers a review of the literature on the different dissemination pathways and dissemination impact indicators from both development-related and other disciplines. It suggests that for dissemination to be interactive, efforts should be made to facilitate a cyclical model of communication that reaches as many stakeholders as possible. The paper outlines the debate surrounding the use and promotion of ICTs in low and middle-income countries and explores the potential of more traditional methods of dissemination. Decisions about which pathways to use should be informed by what can be known about users’ information use environments, based on a checklist of questions about the users, the source, the content and the medium. It provides examples of several factors that have been used to

indicate dissemination impact, including the SMART list (Specific to intended changes, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timebound) and the SPICED list (Subjective input from participants, Participatory, Interpreted, Cross-checked, Empowering, Diverse). Methods used in monitoring impact will vary depending on the indicators being used, but can range from ‘bean counting’ and website hits, to follow-up telephone calls, interviews and focus groups. In conclusion, it is suggested that the results of such monitoring activities should themselves be disseminated and used to modify and improve current dissemination projects, to complete the cycle of communication flow.

Weiss, Carol (1977) ‘Research for Policy’s Sake: The Enlightenment Function of Social Research’ *Policy Analysis* 3(4): 531–45.

For a long time the perception of how research related to policy was strongly influenced by linear and rational models, which focused on overcoming the distance between ‘knowledge-producers’ (researchers) and ‘knowledge-consumers’ (policy-makers). The assumption was that research is directly useful to policies, and therefore the solution lies in engineering the flow of knowledge from researchers so that it reaches policy-makers intact. Weiss disputes the traditional model, and instead argues that social science research influences policy in other and less direct ways. Importantly, research introduces new concepts and thus incrementally alters the language used in policy-circles. Also, glimpses of new ideas and approaches may slightly alter the perception and understanding of policy-makers and advisors. Therefore, even though research findings are not directly employed in a specific policy, on the whole they still exert a relatively powerful influence over the terms used and the way issues are framed and understood. Weiss calls this the ‘enlightenment function’ of research. She also introduces another visual image to describe the process, namely ‘percolation’, which refers to the way in which research findings and concepts circulate and gradually infiltrate policy discourse.

Williamson, J. (1996) ‘Decoding Advertisements’ in Paul Marris and Sue Thornham (eds) *Media studies: A Reader*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Since different product brands within any one category (deodorants, paper towels, chocolates, etc) are not actually very different, the first thing an advertisement must do is to create a differentiation. This is done through constructing an image attached to the commodity itself. The image (e.g. ‘French sophistication’) conjures up a range of properties that the commodity (e.g. a perfume) is then implicitly associated with. This is a process of transferring meaning from one realm and attaching it to a product. Advertisements attempt to transfer meaning, for example, through the way they locate images next to each other on a page. This meaning transference only works if the target group are able to understand the meanings of the implied associations (the associations to French sophistication), and are able to make the meanings their own (identifying with the ideal type as desirable, and making it confirm attributes of one’s own identity). In sum, advertisements work because they do not attempt to sell a product; instead they sell an image, associations, meaning, ideal identity, and confirmed identity.

World Bank (1999) *World Development Report 1998/99: Knowledge For Development*. Washington, DC: World Bank. (available at www.worldbank.org/wdr/wdr98)

[From the WDR overview:] Knowledge is like light. Weightless and intangible, it can easily travel the world, enlightening the lives of people everywhere. Yet billions of people still live in the darkness of poverty – unnecessarily. Knowledge about how to treat such a simple ailment as

diarrhoea has existed for centuries – but millions of children continue to die from it because their parents do not know how to save them. Poor countries – and poor people – differ from rich ones not only because they have less capital, but because they have less knowledge. Knowledge is often costly to create, and that is why much of it is created in industrial countries. But developing countries can acquire knowledge overseas as well as create their own at home. 40 years ago, Ghana and the Republic of Korea had virtually the same income per capita. By the early 1990s Korea's income per capita was six times higher than Ghana's. Some reckon that half of the difference is due to Korea's greater success in acquiring and using knowledge. Knowledge also illuminates every economic transaction, revealing preferences, giving clarity to exchanges, informing markets. And it is lack of knowledge that causes markets to collapse, or never to come into being.

This *World Development Report* proposes that we look at the problems of development in a new way – from the perspective of knowledge. There are many types of knowledge. In this Report we focus on two sorts of knowledge and two types of problems that are critical for developing countries:

- *Knowledge about technology*, which we also call technical knowledge or simply know-how. Examples are nutrition, birth control, software engineering, and accountancy. Typically, developing countries have less of this know-how than industrial countries, and the poor have less than the non-poor. We call these unequal distributions across and within countries *knowledge gaps*.
- *Knowledge about attributes*, such as the quality of a product, the diligence of a worker, or the creditworthiness of a firm—all crucial to effective markets. We call the difficulties posed by incomplete knowledge of attributes *information problems*. Mechanisms to alleviate information problems, such as product standards, training certificates, and credit reports, are fewer and weaker in developing countries. Information problems and the resulting market failures especially hurt the poor.

The relationship between knowledge gaps and information problems, their impact on development, and the ways that international institutions and developing-country governments can better address them are the central themes of this Report. As we shall see, considering development from a knowledge perspective reinforces some well-known lessons, such as the value of an open trade regime and of universal basic education. It also focuses our attention on needs that have sometimes been overlooked: scientific and technical training, local research and development, and the critical importance of institutions to facilitate the flow of information essential for effective markets.

Zaman, F. and C. Underwood (2003) 'The Gender Guide for Health Communication Programs' CCP Publication 102. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Center for Communication Programs. (available at www.jhuccp.org/pubs/cp/102/102.pdf)

This is a practical guide to help development and health workers in the field communicate more effectively by taking gender differences into account. It has been produced by the Center for Communication Programs (CCP) at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. CCP, funded by USAID, aims to help people worldwide make important decisions about their health behaviour. Part of their work relates to communication needs assessments and training. Their gender guide for health communication programmes reflects on issues around gender, different experiences of women and men, and basic audience questions, before going through a five-step plan for effective communication. The five steps are entitled: analysis; strategic design; message/materials development, pretesting and production; management, implementation and monitoring; and finally, evaluation. The guide ends with several examples of good gender practice.

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Thematic Index

A. Relevant DFID literature

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