It is with great pleasure that Research Matters in Governance, Equity and Health introduces its first newsletter. A project co-funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Research Matters (RM) supports the effective exchange and translation of sound and innovative research to a wide range of research-users. This newsletter will be published on a quarterly basis and will contain updates about projects and activities, with a specific focus on an issue that we believe is of interest to our partners. This first issue concentrates on Knowledge Translation (see reverse).

**RM Web Site Updates @ www.research-matters.net**

**Podcasts** – listen to both the CIET-produced radio spot on sensitizing communities to ARVs and the MSP-produced spots on issues from cholera to privatization of health services.

**Briefing Notes** – ARV Conference 2005: Sharing Experiences. Download four short policy briefs (in English, French and Portuguese) and one innovative report summarizing key lessons and recommendations from this 2005 Free State, South Africa conference.

**Call for Papers, Videos, Key Readings**

**Mutual Health Insurance Schemes** (mutuelles) in West Africa. RM is currently supporting two synthesis papers examining the phenomenon in Senegal, Mali and Guinea; a 4 and 12 page brochure produced by a GEH partner; and a full-length video documentary on urban and rural mutuelles, shot in Senegal.

**Zambia Forum for Health Research**

RM is supporting an active investigation into this proposed knowledge body that will harvest, package, disseminate and broker key Zambian health research to national policymakers.

**Web Resources**

- **Habari** - a blog continually updated by IDRC Librarians, dedicated to current health equity and HS literature
- **RM Database** – search all GEH- and RM-supported events, projects and articles.
- **Tools** – lit reviews, several course readers, funding road maps...

**Governance and Corruption in the Senegalese Health System**

RM is co-supporting a conference in March 2006 designed to present, discuss and debate these GEH-supported research results from Forum Civil. Doctors have disputed the results while the government – including President Wade – has promised to examine their recommendations.
KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION

Research and evidence can have an undeniable impact on policy and practice – so long as the target audience for the evidence can absorb, understand and ultimately *use* the research results. In this sense, knowledge production is only one element of the research cycle: beyond production, knowledge must also be managed, moved and *translated* – packaged or targeted – for its key consumers.

“Everything is here. I’ll even give you a half-price special.”

“How am I supposed to cut the umbilical cord? The scissors need grease.”

“Take whatever you need from my bag! And hurry!”

These *Forum Civil* caricatures translate results on health sector corruption simply but effectively – particularly for an audience that would not normally access or even hear about these research results. If a picture is worth 1000 words, how might you distill your results into a series of images?

For successful knowledge translation (KT) to occur, researchers and research-users (government, donors, civil society, researchers themselves) must each actively participate in the knowledge process, from demanding to supplying to brokering timely and sound research evidence. KT is on-going and iterative – and above all it challenges researchers to think of themselves as so much more than simple producers of data. KT depends upon researchers developing and targeting their work with a thorough understanding of who will ultimately use their results. This can mean designing an inclusive communications strategy (eg the *Municipal Services Project*) to exchange and networking with other researchers (eg the *Politiques Publiques* project in West Africa) to incorporating the intended users of the results – policymakers, for instance – into the very design of the research project (eg the Free State *Public Sector ART project*).

“Research most effectively informs policy and program management when there is a three-way process of communication linking researchers, decisionmakers, and those most affected by whatever issues are under consideration”


For more info on KT, its basic theories, approaches and applications, see RM’s recent briefing document available online. A complete toolkit on KT for health researchers and research-users will be available in May, 2006.

*Select KT Resources for Researchers available online*

Ingie Hovland et al, ODI. *Successful Communication. 2005*

Jacques Gauthier, IDRC. *Popularize, Produce, Disseminate! 2005*

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