

# AN OPPORTUNITY LOOKING FOR A HOME

Research Communications at IDRC

Consultancy Report for IDRC's  
Communications Division & Policy and Planning Group

June 4, 2011

Wendy Quarry & Ricardo Ramírez

# An opportunity looking for a home

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



### Executive Summary

The IDRC Strategic Framework (2010 – 2015) restates the need to improve how it communicates the results of the research it supports and assist its partners to do so. It also calls upon its Communications Division to build capacity amongst its staff and partners in effectively communicating research results. In response to this, the IDRC Communications Division and Policy and Planning Group commissioned this study to look at the role the Communication Division might play, if any, in supporting PO's and Partners in Research Communications.

The study, which took place over a 2-month period (April and May 2011), involved a literature review; over 50 individual interviews both in –person and through skype, with IDRC staff, IDRC Partners and other organizations (Think Tanks, Universities and Donors), and several group discussions. The report that follows is purely our own interpretation of the findings.

A common observation during our interviews was how many instances there are of good practices taking place in Research Communications, and how little they are reflected in the documentation, shared or built up across the Centre. The know-how is distributed but not capitalized; much of it remains in the realm of tacit knowledge. Since it is central to the corporate strategy we see an opportunity to turn it into an area of excellence.

IDRC reports (Research Matters; Closing the Loop etc.) reveal the organization's wide-ranging efforts to address the issue of Research Communications, over several decades and under a variety of different titles: Knowledge Management; Knowledge Translation; Research Uptake to name a few. Each report suggests a variety of approaches and contains recommendations for the Centre to adopt. None of these suggestions appear to have been institutionalized across the centre. This raises the question as to what barriers prevent full-scale adoption of the ideas?

The result is that IDRC's strengths are not reflected in how it addresses Research Communications. While there may be advantages to the decentralized nature of these initiatives- they are outweighed by the disadvantages: duplication of efforts, fragmented institutional memory, and inefficient resource use. Communications Division efforts to train Program and Partner staff in communication planning skills have been valued, but this training tends to be done on an *ad hoc* and scattered basis. This situation is compounded by another finding: that IDRC staff and many research partners recognize the importance of "research uptake" (to use a generic term) and the variety of steps to incorporate it into project design, yet they do not associate this with the term "Research Communications" – and this term was the basis of our inquiry.

Our review of other organizations reveals a similar tug of war. Many organizations have addressed this by separating Corporate Communications from Research Communications, with a rare few building on the synergy between the two. While most organizations (including IDRC) recognize the value of involving policy-makers and other stakeholders from the beginning of a research initiative, not all are in the best position to do so. Either the research results are still in

the realm of speculation or the researchers are not positioned to know or reach the right audience. Others have regular contact with intended policy-makers, either through proximity or through specific research aimed at understanding the policy maker needs. This can lead to more demand-based research initiatives as opposed to the supply based coming from the majority of research organizations.

The literature reveals the importance of building a close relationship between communications, monitoring and evaluation, programs and policy to address research communications needs. Several organizations respond by combining these disciplines within what could broadly be dubbed, a Research Uptake team. Many are experimenting with developing explicit Theory of Change (TOC) models to put a framework around the research to policy process. Others are studying the research to policy process and doing what they call, 'ethnographies' on the needs of policy –makers.

It is apparent that this field is a buzz of global activity leading us to believe that IDRC can only gain by staying on top of this game. Shifting into this role may require a long-term plan, as has been the experience of other organizations, hence we share our conclusions as possible options; pieces of a Lego that IDRC can disassemble and re-arrange as opportunities arise:

- √ Develop a common vocabulary and list of definitions to be adopted across the Centre
- √ RC is a multi-disciplinary action-research area: it deserves a home or mechanism **comprising staff from communications; evaluation; programming and policy**: an Ottawa hub could scan the horizon and document lessons, while regional offices could take the lead in action-research.
- √ By gradually making this field **an explicit research area of its own**, it stands to gain recognition among staff and partners, all of whom are keen for further exposure to help them frame their work.
- √ **Funds spent on external Research Communications consultancies could be redirected.** We wonder if a tally was taken of all the resources spent on outsourcing this support, it might be found that there is a pool of funds that could be used instead to build in-house capacity and help support a team dedicated to Research Communications.
- √ There is interest among POs and partners for **capacity development in this area**. A place to start would be to better match PO and partners' capacity development needs with timely, relevant, and grounded training. It would help to state priority criteria for selection of projects or themes that would be eligible for support.
- √ In addition, staff and partners would welcome support in the area of **process facilitation, participatory research, and collaborative learning**. These methods lean on communication methods and media; they give staff and partners practical tips for engaging a range of stakeholders. A further option to provide certificate training in Research Communications.

# Table of Contents

<b>ABOUT THIS REPORT</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>RESEARCH COMMUNICATIONS INSIDE IDRC</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>RESEARCH COMMUNICATION IN OTHER AGENCIES</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE LITERATURE</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>OPTIONS</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>ANNEXES</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>ANNEX 1. COMMON LESSONS EMERGING</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>ANNEX 2. WHAT OTHER AGENCIES ARE DOING ABOUT RC</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>ANNEX 3. ADOPTING A COMMON VOCABULARY</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>ANNEX 4. DEFINITIONS</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>ANNEX 5. DFID'S THEMATIC FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>ANNEX 6. SUMMARY OF TYPOLOGIES</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>ANNEX 7. THEORY OF CHANGE EXAMPLE</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>ANNEX 8. RAPID OUTCOME MAPPING</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>ANNEX 9. SUMMARY OF DONORS' APPROACHES TO RC</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>ANNEX 10. NETWORKS, RESOURCES &amp; WEBSITES</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>APPENDICES.</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>1. TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>2. METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>3. PEOPLE INTERVIEWED</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>4. DOCUMENTS REVIEWED</b>	<b>55</b>

## About this report

The Communications Division and the Policy and Planning Group of IDRC commissioned this work. Together they directed us to relevant experiences and committed staff across many other parts of the Centre and beyond.

**The report is intended for all those managers and staff across the organization that are championing and learning about Research Communications.**

We emphasize *champions*. The evidence suggests that learning and innovation in this field is guided by people who are already active in experimenting and trying out different approaches within this *world-of-multiple-names*.

The report is organized as follows:

- The body of the report reads as an **Extended Executive Summary** in four parts, each with some degree of analysis.
- The **Annexes** include: extracted reference materials, samples of our analysis, and additional sources.
- The **Appendices** provide the background to the study: Terms of Reference, Methodology, People Interviewed, and Documents Reviewed.

**Terminology:** this field is known by many names, many of them laden with their own disciplinary underpinnings. Throughout this report we have kept to the term ‘Research Communications’ (RC) to encompass all the variations, although it is clear that for many staff this term does not encompass ‘research uptake’ which they recognize as fundamental. The image below is a ‘wordle’<sup>1</sup> illustrating this challenge; it was prepared for the Annual Learning Forum of 2011 (Mohan, 2010: 13). The upcoming K\* conference has produced another variation; both speak for themselves.



<sup>1</sup> <http://www.wordle.net/>

# Research Communications inside IDRC

What we learned



## Research Communications Inside IDRC

### **There is evidence of experimentation in Research Communications across IDRC**

The experiences come under a range of associated labels (*knowledge translation, knowledge to policy, research uptake* are among terms used across different program areas). While there are advantages to the decentralized nature of these initiatives, we are of the opinion that they are outweighed by the disadvantages: duplication of efforts, fragmented institutional memory, and inefficient resource use. (For a summary of findings across IDRC experiences, see [Annex 1. Common Lessons Emerging.](#))

### **Building communication skills: a challenging and welcomed area of work**

Training in communications skills is generally well accepted. There is a gap in terms of making explicit how the matching of demand and supply of training takes place: what types of programs or projects have priority; differentiating among those that must engage stakeholders Vs. those where this is not realistic; timing the delivery to coincide with ‘teachable moments’; determining where to offer the training; and avoiding duplicating efforts.

### **Lack of clarity around language**

Many POs and partners’ feedback suggests that “research communications” is understood predominantly as the end of project packaging and dissemination of research findings to different users. On the other hand “uptake” is referred to as the engagement of users at different stages of a research project to ensure their needs are reflected in its design. While such differentiation may not be shared across the Centre, it bears discussion given that clarity around language and meaning would help determine the roles and responsibilities within the organization.

### **Research Communications and Policy Development: a disconnect**

Like communication practitioners, researchers do recognize the need to engage users of research from the outset of research design (and work with communication support from the start). However, such a process is not generally reflected in project planning or monitoring procedures. As noted, Research Communications is mainly associated by staff as end-of-project dissemination effort, and disconnected with communication planning elements of Policy Development.

### **IDRC’s strengths are not reflected in how it addresses Research Communications**

IDRC maintains a global reputation by not compromising on the quality of its research and ensuring it focuses on a poverty-alleviation agenda. Its corporate communications work and its packaging of research results are highly respected both by staff and on the outside. Research Communications, however, is not currently a forte at IDRC. Since it is central to the corporate strategy we see an opportunity to turn it into an area of excellence. We see potential for IDRC to take a leading role in building the field.

### **Funds spent on external Research Communications consultancies could be redirected**

While we did not do a review of the amount of resources spent on external advice, we did hear of several instances where significant funds were used to hire external consultants to assist with research communication initiatives. We wonder if a tally was taken of all the resources spent on outsourcing this support, it might be found that there is a pool of funds that could be used instead to build in-house capacity and help support an in-house team dedicated to Research Communications.

### **Good practices in Research Communications remain in the realm of tacit knowledge**

A common observation during our interviews was how many instances there are of good practices taking place in Research Communications, and how little they are reflected in the documentation, shared or built up across the Centre<sup>2</sup>. The know-how is distributed but not capitalized; it remains in the realm of tacit knowledge. Several research partners reported innovative work that is mostly not documented and shared.

**POs and some partners appreciate the importance of ‘research to use’ pathways**, however, they would welcome advice on how to frame this more concretely. We sense that while some have developed theories of change they also lack frames of reference to make them more explicit and nuanced.

### **Benchmarking Research Communications relative to existing models and comparable organizations.**

Our review of documented IDRC experiences in the field of Research Communications points towards a number of practices that have already been recommended in reports to the Centre prepared by IDRC staff and partners. This raises the question as to why these do not yet appear to be institutionalized. They include:

- Institutionalize RC in the organization, embedding it into programs, developing a centre of excellence
- Develop a clear conceptual framework of RC from the beginning of a research endeavor
- Consider policy influence from the start of a research cycle and frame the questions accordingly
- Engage with stakeholders early on, build relationships
- Articulate a theory of change
- Develop a communication plan: (define target audiences, assess what they really want and need; appraise their communication channels)
- Produce quality research work
- Position your institution well and network
- Consider context
- Invest in human and monetary resources, recognize and value communication skills
- Make use of knowledge intermediaries
- Create research action groups, cross cutting across the centre/ project
- Harness the media
- Plan for a long-term approach
- Capacity building for staff and partners

While many of the above practices are consistent with the literature (we signal examples in the last column of [Annex 1](#)) – there is no model that fits all projects.

---

<sup>2</sup> In our meetings with POs, people often turned to one another to exclaim – “how interesting, I didn’t know that.”

# Research Communications in other agencies

Approaches, staffing, internal structures



## Research Communication in Other Agencies

This section has two parts: a check -list of highlights of each organization; and a summary analysis of emerging patterns across the full sample. A fuller description and short analysis of each organization can be found in [Annex 2](#).

The highlights focus on: RC-related structures, functions and approaches inside a sample of organizations including: governmental donor agencies (DFID, SDC, AusAID), institutes and centres at universities (IDS/Sussex, Harris Centre/Memorial), independent Think-Tanks (ODI, Gutmacher), an intergovernmental organization (Commonwealth of Learning), and a private foundation (B&M Gates). While some of these organizations see themselves as intermediaries and brokers, we did not target that aspect of their work<sup>3</sup>.

### DFID – the Innovators

- √ Research uptake separate from Corporate Communication
- √ Dedicated to working with researchers to use tools to get research to policy
- √ Involvement with M & E unit leading to a Theory of Change

### ODI – RAPID – the Research Communication Researcher

- √ Research project in itself
- √ No theory of change
- √ Searching for practical tools

### Institute of Development Studies (IDS) – the Hybrid

- √ Communication Department incorporates two teams: Central Communications and the Impact and Learning Team (ILT). Although each has nominally different objectives (corporate communication and research communication) the relationship between the two groups is nuanced since success and method of research communication is part of the corporate branding
- √ IDS has a separate Knowledge Services Department (containing data base and library).

---

<sup>3</sup> For an example of a comparative analysis of intermediary organizations (mainly in the Canadian water sector), refer to the Hitchman, 2010 report in the reference list, also available through <http://www.cwn-rcce.ca/publications/knowledge-translation/comparative-analysis/>

A more comprehensive review of donors was commissioned in 2009 including IDRC; [Annex 9](#) includes the summary of those findings (Adolf et al., 2009)

- ✓ Central Communications is a mixed group of communication people with PhDs gaining respect across the university
- ✓ Recognize the library as an information intermediary
- ✓ The University itself is evaluated on how well it impacts policy (Impact and Learning Team)

### **SDC – Champions of Institutional Learning**

- ✓ Separate Corporate Communication from Knowledge Management
- ✓ Change management through changing individuals not institution
- ✓ Shift to a learning centered focus
- ✓ Gaining trust by providing practical facilitation tools
- ✓ Focus on giving staff the space and time to learn

### **The Harris Centre, Memorial University – the Knowledge Broker**

- ✓ Separate Corporation Communication and Marketing Division
- ✓ Centre closely networked with policy makers
- ✓ Centre Director an administrative position but holds PhD to garner respect across university
- ✓ Centre focuses on local knowledge and community connections
- ✓ Engage policy makers from the beginning

### **Commonwealth of Learning – Policy and Advocacy in Transition**

- ✓ Separate Corporate Communication from Knowledge Management
- ✓ Knowledge Management houses repositories of material and experiments with different media

### **Gutmacher – Engaging policy makers from within**

- ✓ Communications is part of the Public Education Division that also covers Corporate Communication
- ✓ The staff of the Public Policy Division are immersed in US policy debates; they are situated in Washington (the other Divisions are in New York)
- ✓ Communication staff are engaged from the early stages of a research project

### **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation – a focus on Advocacy**

- ✓ Corporate communications is separate from the Global Development Policy and Advocacy Team
- ✓ “Advocacy” is the approach used for RC
- ✓ Creating a demand from policy makers: desirable but difficult – hence the focus is on supply side dissemination
- ✓ The staff in the Policy and Advocacy team has a background in comparable institutions to their grantees

### **AusAID – Research Communications uptake**

- ✓ Research communications and Corporate communications separate
- ✓ One RC team member is shared with Corporate communication on a half a week basis
- ✓ AusAID in process of institutionalizing research communications

### ***Emerging patterns***

While our sample is small, there are enough commonalities amongst the different organizational approaches to make the following observations:

- √ **Much depends on how much weight each organization is prepared to invest in Research Uptake.** DFID, AusAID and ODI, all considered to be leaders in the research uptake field, have units dedicated to the subject. DFID began by recognizing the importance of communication as something as an integral part of the development process. They also recognized that communication is a discipline itself and set up a unit within RED devoted entirely to research communication. DFID invested time and money into the discipline and 'institutionalized' it by demanding the 10% for communication in any research project (there was resistance at first but this gave way to admiration when researchers saw the effect). After a long internal battle, DFID now recognizes and gives weight to the discipline of Research Uptake (which they see as different to Research Communications - beyond dissemination to use) to the point that they have invested in a unit of 12 people devoted to studying the genre and lending support to researchers. Researchers did resist at the beginning but are now committed to the support they receive from this unit. AusAID takes Research Communications seriously and is willing to invest in a separate unit within the Central Research Division. ODI also has a separate unit for Research Communication. Researchers in the RAPID unit of ODI operate differently (go by different rules) to those focused on research. The RAPID unit does research on Research Communications, contributes to the learning for the organization as well as to a wider body of knowledge.
- √ **Research Communications and Corporate Communications** are not the same thing but are inextricably linked. Some organizations have dealt with the differences between Research Communications and Corporate Communications by dividing the functions into completely separate units. DFID, for example has done this creating quite a chasm between the two. AusAID recently separated Research Communications from Corporate Communications and report a huge benefit in making the separation. While everyone recognizes that work done by Research Communications is really part of a corporate image, some organizations insure that the two work closely together. In AusAID, for example, one staff person divides her time between Corporate and Research Communications whereas at IDS, the Director of Communications actually wears both hats and has created a hybrid where the activities are separate but the results often merged.
- √ **Staffing** of the different communication units is important. If Research Communications and Corporate Communications are linked then it is important to have staff that can bridge the divide (IDS and AusAID). Most staff of Research Communications/uptake units in our sample have backgrounds in communication; research; policy development and evaluation.
- √ **Language** and coming to grips with different terminologies is a common issue. Although DFID was the only organization that talked about confronting the issue head on (the need to rename Research Communication to Research Uptake), others made decisions as to what their different units would be called (RAPID; Research Communications; Knowledge Management etc.) thus resolving the issue at least within the organization (for a discussion on a clear vocabulary see [Annex 3](#)).
- √ **A shift in context** has shaped the thinking of some organizations. DFID's need to rename their unit to Research Uptake was mainly driven by a change in Britain's political context. At the same time AusAID reported a change in the academic context within the country where

research use is being valued along with research quality. Many organizations are conscious that funding is now more dependent on evidence of research use more than dissemination of results.

- √ **The idea of developing a Theory of Change (TOC)** is reported to ‘have opened researchers eyes’ to the value of thinking through how research may ultimately be used. DFID is in the process of finalizing a general TOC for the Research Uptake unit that has opened the door for TOC to be developing around the agency. AusAID is just starting to develop a TOC with DFID help. Most other organizations recognize that they are operating under a TOC not yet made explicit. This has brought both units into closer contact with their organization’s monitoring and evaluation divisions.
- √ **Research Communications or Research Uptake is a discipline in its own right.** The organizations that have a unit dedicated to Research Communications/Uptake note that the opportunity ‘to drill down’ into research to policy issues did open their eyes as to how broad and inclusive this subject can be. In fact several interviewees are beginning to see that Research Communication/Uptake is a discipline in its own right and commented on the importance of having staff to provide guidance on the process (DFID has a staff of 12 plus professional staff from universities and research organizations have been seconded to the Research and Evidence Division –RED- on a part time basis<sup>4</sup>).
- √ Different organizations are struggling with the need to **evaluate** the outcomes of the Research Uptake work. DFID is expecting an evaluation of its work to be completed by June, 2011. AusAID is hoping for evaluation results in about 5 years.
- √ Two organizations, the Harris Centre and the Guttmacher Institute depend on a close working relationship between their **researchers and policy makers** as the route to research uptake.

---

<sup>4</sup> Senior Research Fellows spread out across technical units within RED.

# Contributions from the literature

Concepts, frameworks, and ways of innovating



## Contributions from the Literature

The literature on and around the subject of Research Communications is vast, particularly since it comes under a multitude of names and covers a variety of disciplines. In many ways it is a subject without end since it can be viewed from such a variety of angles. In order to make sense of this, and to support some of the findings of the review, we have selected different parts of the literature that could be used to help inform future decisions on relevant models and theories pertinent to IDRC.

We have organized the contributions in a sequence that can frame a more systematic dialogue inside the Centre: a) clarifying of language and terminology; b) synthesis and sharing of the different dimensions of “research to use”; and c) signaling the potential benefits to address this field as a research topic. While we present them in a sequence, each will feed on the other in an iterative manner.

### a) Language as a first step in framing the field

There are **multiple definitions across overlapping fields** (see [Annex 4](#) for a sample of definitions). While definitions are relevant, they tend to be too encompassing to enable consensus<sup>5</sup>. This is especially the case as some interpretations focus on communication theory and methods, and others on policy development. A more practical option may be to gain clarity and agreement on basic vocabulary. [Annex 3](#) provides **a common vocabulary** to describe Research Communication activities under the label of knowledge management.

POs and partners’ feedback suggests that “research communications” is understood predominantly as the end of project packaging and dissemination of research findings to different users. On the other hand “uptake” is referred to as the engagement of users at different stages of a research project to ensure their needs are reflected in its design. This differentiation is well illustrated in a report prepared by Triple Line consulting in preparation for the AusAID/DFID conference in London, November 2010. See below: Table 1. The communication strategy side is often referred to as the ‘supply’ side, in contrast with the ‘demand’ side where it is assumed that uptake has better odds of happening with research that addresses users’ needs.

---

<sup>5</sup> Ramírez, R. & Quarry, W. 2004. *Communication for development: A medium for innovation in natural resource management*. IDRC and FAO. [http://www.idrc.ca/uploads/user-S/11490795911Communication\\_for\\_development\\_in\\_ENRM.pdf](http://www.idrc.ca/uploads/user-S/11490795911Communication_for_development_in_ENRM.pdf)

Issue	Communication strategy (as described in DFID guidelines)	Uptake strategy (as defined by review team)
Duration	Starts with inception, continues until project ends	Starts with research prioritisation, continues (through partnerships with relevant stakeholders) until (long) after the project ended
Underlying paradigm	Communications approach	User engagement approach
Underlying assumption	Research findings are potentially useful to intermediate and end users	Unless users are involved in defining the research agenda, there is a risk that research is not relevant, in which case even the best communication strategy will not be able to trigger wide scale use
Main research uptake mechanisms used	Strong focus on targeted dissemination mechanisms (but also collaboration with users)	Main mechanism is collaboration with users at different levels (including governance of research programmes, and M&E)
Key actors	Researchers and communication experts, who package research findings in ways appropriate to different users	Uptake pathway actors: Private sector, government agencies, NGOs who are partners in the research process
Main challenge	Finding the most appropriate communication method for each target group	Strengthening demand for research and building capacity of users
		
Communication strategies and uptake strategies are closely linked and combined for maximum effect		

**Table 1:** Differences and commonalities between ‘research communication’ and ‘research uptake’ strategies. Adapted from Adolph *et al* 2010, p 62.

A **focus on functions** or on themes with practical applications is another approach to dissecting language. DFID views Research Communications as a separate *discipline* and has identified five broad themes or functions within the discipline to help develop an *actionable framework*:

1. Research on communication;
2. Supporting researchers to communicate;
3. Communication of research;
4. Facilitation of research uptake and enabling environment; and
5. Knowledge management. ([Annex 5](#) expands on DFID’s thematic framework).

This framework, or an equivalent one using wording consistent with IDRCs programs and structures, could frame an internal discussion. Such a framework would also clarify how each element complements the others, and what units within the Centre take a lead, or share in the development of each.

### b) Sharing different dimensions of “research to use”

We also see a benefit in an organized sharing of the literature with staff to bring them into the debate. In particular, exposure to different typologies can provide a vocabulary for issues and dimensions that POs and partners are facing in the field.

Linking research to policy making is a battleground of terminology and definitions; there is no single framework to explain the relationship; it is context and subject matter specific. And yet there are multiple proposals that break this into bite-size summaries; some focus on how to

plan, others on stages of implementation, and others on ways to monitor and evaluate outcomes and impact. (Annex 6 provides a summary of typologies encountered in the literature). We include two examples to illustrate our point.

Nutley et al. (2007: 41) quote work by Cousins and Leithwood (1986) where they identified four ways in which research use is operationalized in organizational settings:

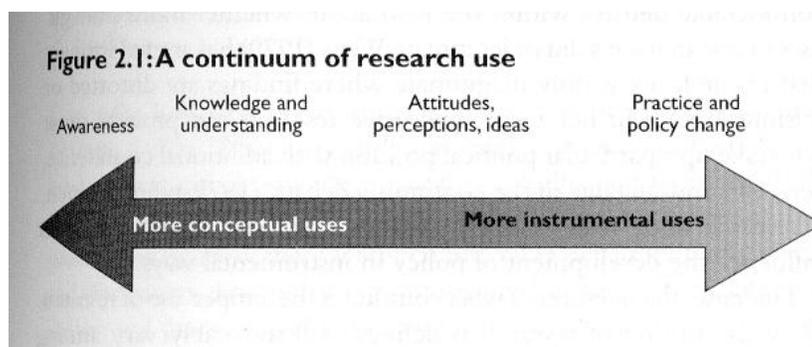
- **use as decision making:** for example to support decisions about programme funding or about the content of management of a programme;
- **use as education:** primarily conceptual uses of research, for example to shape perceptions about a programme, to enhance understanding among staff or to improve morale;
- **use as the simple processing of evaluation results:** where ‘use’ simply means that findings have been given some thought or consideration, including basic understanding of evaluation data; and
- **potential for use:** such as the extent to which individuals agree with evaluation recommendations. Cousins and Leithwood (1986) suggest this category may be better construed as antecedents to use.

Sharing this typology with POs and partners will allow them to **identify the type of use they expect to achieve with different users**. This will allow them to be more specific about expectations; or to build in additional activities to achieve the level of use they aim for.

Nutley et al. (2007: 49-51) also refer to work by Landry et al (2001a, 2001b) on the use of Canadian social science research. Here they identified six possible stages:

1. **Transmission:** The researcher has transmitted key findings to relevant policy makers and practitioners.
2. **Cognition:** The research findings were read and understood by their recipients.
3. **Reference:** The findings were cited in reports and action plans.
4. **Effort:** Policy makers and practitioners made efforts to ensure the findings were adopted.
5. **Influence:** The findings influenced the decisions of policy makers and practitioners.
6. **Application:** The findings led to applications and extension within the policy or practice communities.<sup>6</sup>

Another way to present the stages is along a continuum - as in Figure 2.1 below (Nutley et al. (2007: 51)



<sup>6</sup> Respondents to a questionnaire reported 50% confirmed having covered Stage 1, and nearly one third of the respondents had not even reached this state. Only 16% reported examples under Stage 6.

POs and research partners, when exposed to these differentiations, may be **better able to establish a range of outcomes in research use that would otherwise be worded in vague terms**. In other words, they will begin to capture the theory of change in their own projects more explicitly.

### **c) Addressing this field as a research area**

While the above items can contribute to framing this field, our readings and interviews confirmed that there are many nuances, disagreements and evolving developments worth tracking. This underlines the potential benefit of addressing this field as a research area. We highlight three dimensions: the challenge of stimulating the demand side of research; the power and drawbacks of typologies (i.e. limitations of the tools we signaled in the previous section); and lastly, the role of more systematic work on trajectories or theories of change.

**Strengthening the demand side of research needs attention.** There is a tendency to lean on the supply side of development research. Stimulating the demand side calls for early engagement of the different kinds of users. While some have proposed different models for Research Communications and Uptake: linear, relationship, systemic (Shaxton, 2010: 6-9) we find the ROMA example from ODI worthy in that it shows a cyclical pattern with specific tools to operationalize key components (see [Annex 7](#)). We also heard from agencies that feel this aspect is too difficult to institutionalize (BMGF) and from a researcher (commissioned by DFID) who is starting to conclude that we really know much less than we realize in this field.

Stephen Rayner at Oxford University has devoted his study to what he calls, **the ethnography of policymaking**. An anthropologist by training, he uses his anthropological insight to study the behavior of policy makers. He contends that most research information is supply driven. Researchers don't get involved in early detection or intelligence gathering. What seems to be really useful information to a scientist may turn out not to be relevant to an imagined stakeholder. Each has a different take on how the evidence is needed. Anthropology teaches the need to focus on what a person does rather than what a person says he does or wants and this 'participant observation' approach can be useful. Rayner is not advocating a fully participative anthropological approach but suggests a series of questions around: what kind of information do people bring to the table when decisions are made? If a piece of information is changed in one area, what difference will it make?

**Typologies can be difficult to apply in practice.** Nutley et al., (2007) signal how often fixed typologies prove difficult to apply empirically, both with policy and practice settings. The boundaries across the types are often blurred and the categories may not be mutually exclusive. In reality there is a continuum more than clear typologies.

*Research use thus emerges as an iterative, fluid and non-linear process, which may progress through many different types of research use in sometimes unpredictable ways....However, on the whole, defining typologies of research use turns our attention away from the inherently dynamic nature of the research use process. Research use types represent a 'snapshot' in time.... and so cannot easily capture the potential for flow through many different types in any given context. Frameworks that conceptualize research use as a series of stages begins to explore these ideas in more depth. (p. 46)*

The table below provides two continua: one from concrete to conceptual use, the other from substantive to strategic.

**Table 2.1: Research use as a two-dimensional continuum**

	<b>Substantive</b>	<b>Elaborative</b>	<b>Strategic</b>
<b>Concrete</b>	Research shapes the core of a decision or an issue	Peripheral use of research to further refine a position	Research is used to justify a position that has already been adopted
<b>Conceptual</b>	Research shapes a core orientation towards an issue or a basic understanding of the issue	Peripheral use of research to further refine an orientation or understanding	Research is used to confirm an orientation or an understanding that has already been adopted

Source: Adapted from Greenberg and Mandell (1991)

Through trial and error, the Centre may arrive at a selection of typologies or conceptualizations that best capture the unique nature of IDRC’s work, with nuances in different fields or type of projects.

A **Theory of Change (ToC)** is an attempt to encapsulate the expected trajectory of change and associated assumptions. This can be done as a program or as a project. DFID is developing a ToC on Research Uptake<sup>7</sup>. Several IDRC projects have developed ToCs, especially to assist in their evaluation<sup>8</sup>. ([Annex 8](#) provides an example of a ToC with a summary of the project streams that were derived.)

An example we highlight is a document entitled “Pathways for Change: 6 theories about how policy change happens” (by Sarah Stachowiak, 2009). Each pathway is illustrated with its own theory of change diagram. POs and partners expressed an interest in being exposed to these summaries as touchstones. We suspect some projects may combine different theories of change for different components of their work. POs and partners may find such examples uses to help make explicit the underlying trajectories that they may have in mind.

<sup>7</sup> Isabel Vogel <[I-Vogel@dfid.gov.uk](mailto:I-Vogel@dfid.gov.uk)> is leading this effort.

<sup>8</sup> Examples: Ofir, Z. 2009. External evaluation, The Policy Influence of LIRNEasia. External Review of SMIP. Mizumoto, A, 2010. Evaluation of “Strengthening ICTD Research Capacity in Asia “SIRCAP Programme. For the Singapore Internet Research Centre, with support of the DECI Project.

# An opportunity looking for a home

Our conclusions



## Options

This review has given us the opportunity to reflect on the possibilities of a future direction for Research Communications support within IDRC. Our information was drawn from three main sources: IDRC staff, literature and partners, interviews with staff of other organizations and other actors in the field and a literature search to help inform our conclusions. Three main conclusions coming out of these sources would include:

- √ IDRC has already invested a large amount in the study of the Centre's needs around research communications (and produced several documents with some of the same recommendations you will see below. This leads us to ask why most of these have not been taken up across the Centre. We believe a home or mechanism would be the starting point for a systematic, internal utilization of lessons already documented but not utilized to their potential.
- √ Our review of other organizations (and individuals) has made it clear that research communications or research uptake is a study in its own right and needs to have staff dedicated to the subject. Organizations that are taking the lead do have research communications or uptake units staffed with researchers and communication personnel focused on the issue
- √ The literature review has shown the richness and complications of the terrain; a mechanism is needed to stay on top of it as new material appears on a regular basis.

This scan has given us a temporary *RC-pulse* inside IDRC. We share our conclusions as possible options; pieces of a Lego that IDRC can disassemble and re-arrange as opportunities arise.

### Playing a leading role in building the field:

This field is a buzz of activity globally; IDRC will gain by staying on top of it. This refers to engaging with the external environment (contributing new insight at conferences on this topic, analyzing and making use of the many reports that emerge) and internally (coordinating an in-house approach, capturing and learning from centre-wide experiences (see below) along with partners achievements). Shifting into this role may require a long-term plan (SDC, IDS talked about 10 and 15 years of transformation respectively).

### This field deserves a home:

It is a multi-disciplinary action-research area; it deserves a home or mechanism **comprising staff from communications; evaluation; programming and policy**. Its internal design and function could be based on comparable experiences – e.g. the Capacity Building for Resource Management (CBRM) initiative.<sup>9</sup> In addition, there is **scope to demonstrate how IDRC is a**

---

<sup>9</sup> CBRM became a project with specific funding for a 5 - year time frame. The team is made up of people in the Division seconded to the project on a part-time basis. CBRM has provided a focus for thinking and information around this topic. It is now being extended with more funding for a second term<sup>9</sup>.

**learning organization through this topic** as it affects many facets of the work. IDRC has the potential to be part of building the field: an Ottawa hub could scan the horizon and document lessons, while regional offices could take the lead in action-research<sup>10</sup>.

The home or mechanism could **assemble a repository devoted to research uptake stories and literature**. It could become a ‘go-to’ place for POs and Partners full of examples, stories (see above) and latest information on research uptake practice and methodologies. It could take the lead in creating summaries and briefings for staff and partners on different facets of this field. This effort needs to also link with global efforts as is the upcoming K\* conference. Much stands to be gained by becoming a strong partner as much innovation is happening in other Canadian and international settings.

**Institutionalization with flexibility:**

This includes agreeing on **clear vocabulary** that is relevant across disciplines; recognizing that **different types of research projects require different strategies**; streamlining the field by making a Research Communication strategy mandatory for funding (few institutions have institutionalized the genre). Each step in the project cycle could include more specific references to Research Communication actions, strategies and accomplishments.

**Reflection, spaces and places:**

We see potential for creating a culture of research uptake especially because there is a thirst for process-focused reflection and sharing. Staff would welcome a **series of reflection spaces** to pause and learn from their own work in Research Communications. Systematic documentation of existing work at the regional level may be a way to start. An intern could provide a basic structure both in Ottawa and in the regions (for example, along the lines of DFID’s 5-theme framework in Annex 5). Two regional offices of IDRC already do their own learning forums, or reflection days.<sup>11</sup>

**Pooling resources:**

We noted the potential for pooling resources from funds now used to hire external consultants. An option would be to track all funds now going to external consultancies around research communications to assess whether these funds could support a small research communications unit within the Centre.

**Align training with teachable moments:**

Capacity development in an ill-defined and dynamic field can become a joint learning effort in itself if the process is made explicit. Matching PO and partners’ demands with timely, relevant, and grounded training is a challenge. Making the match making more explicit, stating priority criteria for selection (or postponement) would create an established path that can be reviewed and improved. Not all projects need or can absorb the advice at the same time or in the same format, but POs are good gatekeepers capable of shepherding the process as the needs evolve. A rationale for what is done regionally and in-country Vs in Ottawa is needed, as innovation often occurs at the project level.

---

<sup>11</sup> We also draw inspiration from the Community Development Resource Association (CRDA), an NGO in South Africa <http://www.cdra.org.za/> where 9 times a year, they take a one-week reflection break (Soal, 2007).

**Training in process facilitation:**

Staff and partners would welcome support in the area of process facilitation, participatory research, and collaborative learning. These methods lean on communication methods and media; they give staff and partners practical tips for engaging a range of stakeholders<sup>12</sup>.

**Legitimize the profession of Research Communications:**

Options include: hiring professionals in this field with a research background; providing certificates/diploma opportunities for staff to get in-service training<sup>13</sup>; creating opportunities within projects for research questions that focus on Research Communications.

**Making causal linkages and theories of change explicit.**

The conceptualization of policy use and impact is a rich field of theoretical and applied work. We collected close to a dozen different summaries and typologies (see [Annex 6](#)). Partners and staff would welcome a newsletter with summaries and examples from other projects. There is scope for coaching staff and partners to give them a vocabulary to consider the nuances and stages that appear most promising. In addition to this, there is scope for an acknowledgement and approximate identification of project types that lend themselves best to early stage communication planning Vs. those that either do not need it (due to existing capacity), or are simply not ready for them until a later stage.

---

<sup>12</sup> There are parallels and precedents with the field of Farming Systems Research and Extension, where participatory action-research addressed the combination of agronomic, social, economic, and communication issues *as a whole*. IDRC has staff and partners with a world-class grounding in FSR-E (Ronny Vernooy, Julio Berdegue, etc.)

<sup>13</sup> Cornell University used to offer a one-month certificate in Communication Planning and Strategy; FAO, WFP and IFAD offered a 10-month-part time “Mini-MBA” in management for staff interested in this area, with a diploma from John Cabot University, Rome; the University of Malmo, Sweden offers a Masters in Communication for Development that can be taken at a distance.

## Annexes

### Annex 1. Common lessons emerging

Research Communication dimensions	IDRC	Other organizations and readings
<b>Institutionalize</b> RC or KT in the Centre and in the regions – embed it in the programs and develop a centre of excellence at IDRC plus platforms in the region	RM Options for the future	
Develop clear, conceptual framework ( <b>definition</b> ) for research uptake, KT or research communication	RM options for the future	Butcher & Yaron, 2006 Carden, 2004 O’Neil, 2005 Young, 2009
Consider the issue of policy influence from the start and <b>frame proposal and questions</b> accordingly (refine this at every step of the research process)	Closing the Loop Research Matters ALF GGP 2 pager GGP Pilot	Butcher & Yaron, 2006
Engage with stakeholder early on. Bring potential policy makers into the process from the beginning – <b>relationships</b> – involve them in the research. Open training opportunities to help them see potential value of research ( <b>multi-stakeholder research team</b> ) Relationship building key – informal networks more effective than formal	Closing the Loop Research Matters Scoping Study, RM KT Tool Kit ALF GGP 2 pager	Butcher & Yaron, 2006 Jones, 2011 O’Neil, 2005 Burbridge et al., 2011 Young, 2009
Articulate Theory of Change ( <b>TOC</b> )	LIRNEasia evaluation	Butcher & Yaron, 2006 Jones, 2011 Young, 2009
<b>Develop communication plan</b> at the beginning – adjust it as results start to emerge – broaden understanding of communication and take a very mixed portfolio approach	Closing the Loop Alf GGP 2 pager GGP pilot project LIRNEasia	Butcher & Yaron, 2006 Young, 2009
<b>Produce quality research work</b> and insure that findings are couched in a realistic, sensible and concrete manner – document findings as they progress	Closing the Loop Research Matters GGP pilot project LIRNEasia	
Define <b>Target audiences</b> , learn	Closing the Loop	Butcher & Yaron, 2006

communication channels and package dissemination material accordingly	GGP pilot project LIRNEasia	Young, 2009
<b>Institutional role</b> – make sure your institution is well placed and connected – position it well and network	LIRNEasia	
Take <b>Context</b> into account (policy mapping, situational analysis)	Closing the Loop Research Matters GGP Pilot project LIRNEasia	Carden, 2004
<b>Invest</b> in human, time and monetary resources for research uptake Recognize and value communication skills (R2P distinct skills)	Closing the Loop Research Matters Scoping Study (RM) GGP Pilot	Young, 2009
Make use of <b>Knowledge intermediaries</b> Civil society and advocates, Partnership with other research institutions	Communication for Influence in RSPs Research Matters Scoping Study (RM)	Butcher & Yaron, 2006
Create <b>research action groups</b> KT advisory group Or a cross-cutting group across the centre	Research Matters Scoping Study (RM) RM Options for future Scoping study (RM)	
<b>Harness media</b>	Scoping Study (RM)	
<b>Impact often evident long after project ends</b> Mechanism to track outcomes to harvest good outcomes	Scoping Study (RM)	Carden, 2004 Young, 2009
<b>Capacity building</b> for staff and partners	Scoping Study (RM) GGP pilot project	

## Annex 2. What other agencies are doing about RC

### DFID – the Innovators

The Department for International Development (DFID) is the United Kingdom Government Department responsible for promoting development and the reduction of poverty.

<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/>

#### Key points:

- √ Research uptake separate from Corporate Communication
- √ Dedicated to working with researchers to use tools to get research to policy
- √ Involvement with M & E unit leading to a Theory of Change

#### Evolution & structure

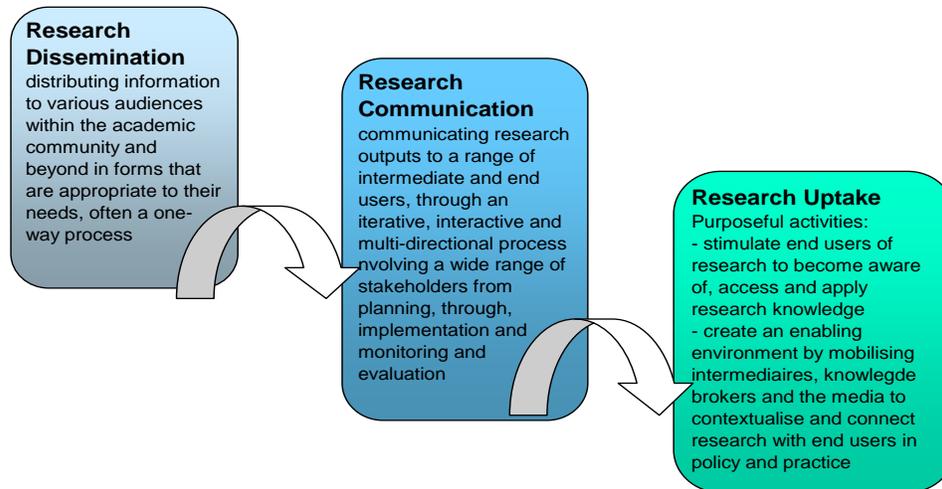
DFID has been promoting the idea of communication in its various forms for the past ten years. Mainly the focus was on Corporate Communications although there was a team devoted to research communications (within the research division) with less prominence than the Corporate need. This team has recently been renamed, ‘the Research Uptake team’ and remains in the DFID central Research and Evidence Division (RED). Corporate Communications remains a separate entity.<sup>14</sup> The Research Uptake team has 13 officers known as ‘evidence brokers,’ and one director. In addition, there is a Global Outreach Team whose basic function is to improve the relationship between RED and all the country offices (making sure that all research findings are available to country offices and insuring country priorities for future research).

Initially the Research Communications team worked through something they called, ‘infomediaries,’ such as the BBC World Trust or PANOS Institute who acted as knowledge brokers carrying DFID research results to the wider policy world. However, the current government emphasis on stressing the importance of research impact has further forced DFID to stretch their monitoring to take in impact and results in lieu of earlier work around outputs and outcomes. This had led the Research Uptake team to redefine their agenda to move from research dissemination to communication to uptake and now to impact. They have recently started to work closely with the DFID evaluation unit. This has opened them to the idea of developing a Theory of Change for the unit. It has also helped them move from a focus on communication and diffusion more to social communication (looking at context and barriers) and stressing the need for a 30% commitment (combining Uptake and M & E). [www.researchtoaction.org](http://www.researchtoaction.org). An **evaluation** of the Research Uptake unit will be available in June, 2011.

DFID has defined “research dissemination”, “research communication” and “research uptake” as follows:

---

<sup>14</sup> Knowledge Management is also separate – this is the data management, library services etc.



### Comments:

A few things stand out in reviewing the DFID approach to Research Communications:

- √ The first is that the organization itself has had a long-standing interest and commitment to the importance of **communication for development (C4D)** work. While other organizations were closing their C4D Units, DFID continued as a leader in the field (a champion). Though Research Communication at DFID has always been separated from the Communication for Development Unit, the thinking behind development communication informed the thinking of the Research Communications work.<sup>15</sup>
- √ Second, **senior management** made a **commitment** to Research Communications and **funded** a separate unit to spearhead the learning and the advocacy around this subject. At the same time DFID was able to **institutionalize** the so-called 10% rule, which proved to be beneficial<sup>16</sup> and welcomed by researchers within the organization. Some resistance came from DFID's more academic partners who needed training to help them see that 'communication' was not an add on.
- √ Third, the **context** in Britain changed with the advent of the new government and with it a sense that research was only as valuable as the impact it had on society. This came with a criticism of the amount of money being spent on what the government referred to as 'spin doctors' forcing many to rethink the use of the word, 'communication.' Two things happened here. Language became ultra important. The Research Communication team struggled long and hard to win the battle to change the name to the Research Uptake unit. This was about survival, but it also reflected the growing demand that disseminating research results wasn't enough – that more thought would have to go into the study and understanding of how policy is made such that research results would move from being known to actually being 'used.'
- √ The need to think about Research Impact opened the door to closer interaction with DFID's evaluation unit. This in turn helped the team think about developing a **Theory of Change for**

<sup>15</sup> Isobel Vogel, in conversation. Dylan Winder headed the DevCom Unit and is the person credited with introducing the 10% with tremendous support and uptake in DFID.

<sup>16</sup> ODI evaluation of DFID Research Communication work.

**Research Uptake**<sup>17</sup> which ‘opened peoples eyes to the need to ‘drill’ down to understand policy making and highlighted the importance of communication.’

- √ Finally, DFID is giving great importance to the **study and practice of Research Uptake** that is becoming a discipline in its own right. This is moving in line with a sea change said to be taking place across academia in the UK (research is valued for its use). The organization has experienced plenty of tension between academic institutions, DFID and communication people over this issue but the shift has taken place. To underscore the importance given to the study, DFID has seconded at least a dozen academics and researchers from various disciplines and universities as Evidence Advisors. Evidence Advisors are expected to act like a knowledge broker to bring the latest research findings to their colleagues and to conduct a systematic review of how policy makers uptake evidence.

### **ODI – RAPID – the Research Communication Researcher**

The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) is a not-for-profit independent Think Tank dedicated to a better understanding of the dynamics of social and organizational change.

<http://www.odi.org.uk/>

Key points:

- √ Research project in itself
- √ No theory of change
- √ Searching for practical tools

### **Evolution, role and focus**

ODI opened in the early sixties; it has been lightly funded (no core funding) but well regarded particularly for its work on research communications and research to policy initiatives.

In 2002, ODI initiated the Research and Policy Development Group (RAPID) as a result of early research on how to get research to policy in developing countries.

RAPID is, in itself a research program dedicated to understanding the relationship between research, policy and practice and promoting evidence-based policy making. It is focused on two basic streams: Understanding the link between research and policy and developing practical tools to enhance capacity and practice amongst what they call, policy entrepreneurs. RAPID analyzed over 100 case studies outlining successful incidents where evidence did play into policy to determine what strategies were used to make this happen. This led to the development of the RAPID Framework setting out best practice for researchers to consider how to get their research to policy. Figure 5.1 below summarizes the main ‘ingredient’ of their framework (from Sumner et al 2009).

---

<sup>17</sup> Research Uptake unit attempting to develop a Theory of Change for the unit

**Figure 5.1 Increasing the leverage of research for impact – ingredients of research influence**



ODI does not work through an explicit theory of change but understands that in practice many research projects have their Theory of Change implicit in their log frames.<sup>18</sup>

ODI encourages clients to think about who they want to reach (and how they might want to reach them) from the beginning of a research project.

#### ***Comments***

- √ Like DFID, ODI has set up a separate unit (RAPID) with staff (both research and communication) dedicated to the pursuit of understanding how research can influence policy and finding the tools to make this a more realistic possibility.
- √ ODI views RAPID as a research unit and seeks funding for studies that focus on this issue. This provides RAPID with a mindset dedicated to the search for understanding of the research to policy process.

#### **Institute of Development Studies (IDS) – the Hybrid**

The Institute of Development Studies (IDS) is a leading global charity for international development research, teaching and communications; and is part of the University of Sussex, Brighton, UK. <http://www.ids.ac.uk/>

#### **Key points:**

- √ Communication Department incorporates two teams: Central Communications and the Impact and Learning Team (ILT). Although each has nominally different objectives (corporate communication and research communication) the relationship between the two groups is

---

<sup>18</sup> Political reality makes it difficult for research proposals to include sections on research communication or Theories of Change since these things are very hard to measure and right now the political environment is calling for exact measures of impact

nuanced since success and method of research communication is part of the corporate branding.

- √ IDS has a separate Knowledge Services Department (containing data base and library).
- √ Central Communications is a mixed group of communication people with PhDs gaining respect across the university
- √ Recognize the library as an information intermediary
- √ The University itself is evaluated on how well it impacts policy (Impact and Learning Team)

### **Evolution, structure and focus**

The communication structure took 15 years to evolve into its current form, which combines Corporate Communications (Central Communications) with Research Communication (Impact and Learning Team (ILT) into a single Division.

Central Communications supports the branding of IDS to attract funding and manage the marketing of IDS and its departments. At the same time, IDS is aware that the mission of Research Communication is to support research uptake. As a result, IDS' research teams include specially trained communication people and provide a set of guidelines (prepared by the Centre and based on current practice around research communication) for the specific research communication work. The IDS communication team is an assembly of communication people with mixed backgrounds and the requisite PhD to gain respect across the university. Of interest is the fact that they have become much more nuanced in the way they relate to Corporate Communication, recognizing that there are elements in the IDS approach to research that can be branded.

The RC (ILT) component supports research partners in designing their communication strategies<sup>19</sup>. A separate communication strategy for each research initiative is a prerequisite for proposal funding (every proposal over 75,000 pounds has to be reviewed by the peer group as well as having a communication specialist sit on the PRG group).

The RC has done research into how adults learn to find out if the communication outputs and processes are suitable to different audiences. The ILT has a research and M&E role across IDS to deliver an innovative programme of action learning and empirical research on the use of research evidence. The ILT is staffed with specialists that bring a research background in M&E, capacity development and marketing; this gives them credibility across IDS. In addition, the head of Research Communications sits on the Management Board, and plays a role in project approval (for grants over £75K).

### **Internal functions & relationships**

The Knowledge Services Division (KSD) has a complementary mandate to support research for general audiences. This includes the IDS library. This Division sees itself as part of the Research Communication enabling environment. The IDS library is also a support to projects, not only by making its ELDIS <http://www.eldis.org/> and BLDS <http://blds.ids.ac.uk/> resources available, but also by providing relevant data, models, and information capabilities to large research programs (as was illustrated with a Climate Change Team that works on Africa Adapt). Thus the IDS library is viewed as an information intermediary and a repository.

---

<sup>19</sup> IDS uses the analogy of providing an highway and then adjusting the advice depending on the context (suggesting some projects use a VW for local exchange, while others may need a convoy of 18- wheelers to go cross-border).

IDS has set up structures to measure itself on the quality of its research and its ability to produce research that impacts policy hence the effort to track this and challenge the impact agenda. ‘We want to be everything, says Nick Perkins, a creative hybrid.

We want to do everything but evaluate how we are doing, drawing on the Theory of Change thinking and the Impact and Learning Team with our partners. We are constantly asking ourselves, do we add value?

One of our aims is policy engagement so we have developed indicators out of that and reflect on our indicators and the progress we have made. We have a rolling stakeholder review process still evolving – we continually adapt the most significant change thinking’. All of this is completely fundamental to communication and forms part of the merger of Corporate Communication with Research Communication.

### **Comments**

A few things stand out in reviewing the structure and functions inside IDS:

- ✓ **They are clear that benchmarking their work is a challenge.** The M&E framework is in the making. It focuses on the question: *Is the strategy delivering added value to us and to our partners?* They are pursuing this through a process of joint reflection with different stakeholders on relevant indicators and trends (this includes using Most Significant Change). They are keenly aware that success has different meanings in different contexts; they emphasize **positionality**: that impact is context and time dependent.
- ✓ The IDS library contributes “knowledge services” to both a general public and to research partners. The latter are provided with advice on ELDIS and the BLDS, as well as advice on data sources and data models that pertain to specific subject areas. **They see this as a means of providing an enabling environment.**
- ✓ The Impact and Learning Team sits at the juncture between Research Communications and Corporate Communications. This means that the lessons from knowledge uptake by research partners and the needs of Corporate Communications are exchanged through a research and evaluation lens. **Elements of Research Communications are part of organizational branding while also becoming part of internal learning.** Key to achieving this balancing act is having **staff with hybrid backgrounds**.

### **SDC – Champions of Institutional Learning**

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation <http://www.sdc.admin.ch/>

#### **Key points:**

- ✓ Separate Corporate communication from Knowledge Management
- ✓ Change management through changing individuals not institution
- ✓ Shift to a learning centered focus
- ✓ Gaining trust by providing practical facilitation tools
- ✓ Focus on giving staff the space and time to learn

Like DFID, SDC separates the different functions of communication. SDC has a small team dedicated to Corporate Communications (information officers, web site and public relations) and considers that the entire SDC body is responsible for the organizational learning side of communication.

They set up a Knowledge Management Unit 10 years ago, dedicated to helping the organization learn how to communicate better (internally with peers). While they have not bothered to change the name, the KM Unit is now dedicated to the question of organizational learning (how individuals learn, how groups learn and how the organization learns). SDC did not try to change the organization per se, instead KM focused on providing skills and tools to individuals to help them improve the daily sharing of knowledge. Later the KM unit took the opportunity to talk about institutional change in light of knowledge management: do we recruit according to skills and knowledge profiles? How are the thematic networks able to accumulate and bring in their knowledge? As a result, SDC disbanded their organization around functional units (education, health etc.) and set up operational divisions and created networks to bring people together into peer learning. SDC subtly shifted from a subject matter focus into a more learning focus.

### *Comments*

A few things stand out in reviewing SDC's trajectory in knowledge management:

- ✓ The methodology for organizational change rests with the ability to **create time and space for individual staff to learn systematically**. SDC contends that this type of individual learning gradually creates the conditions to introduce a more holistic organizational change process.
- ✓ While SDC uses the term Knowledge Management they prefer to talk simply about how individuals learn, how groups learn and how the organization learns. They keep to the label but with a low profile – a diluted label but a rigorous substance to organizational learning. They focus on “capitalization, synthesis, and compiling experiences”. In the beginning years they trained staff with SWOT analysis, brainstorming – simply to provide skills and tools just to improve the daily sharing of knowledge. After 3 years' time they noticed that the institution had not changed but people within it had changed. **The sequence of institutional change moved from giving people tools, starting to review human resources, and finally starting to look at institutional make-up.**
- ✓ SDC uses what they called, a “**profound partner assessment**” to review potential partners by looking into their internal ways of communicating, finding out how people work inside the organization, their sensibilities. This resonates with examples we heard from IDRC staff about finding research partners that are not only accomplished at research, but also have demonstrated communication and networking skills.

### **The Harris Centre, Memorial University – the Knowledge Broker**

The Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development helps diverse groups and individuals connect with the research resources of Memorial University, through teaching, research, and outreach initiatives. <http://www.mun.ca/harriscentre/>

#### **Key points:**

- ✓ Separate Corporation Communication and marketing Division
- ✓ Centre closely networked with policy makers

- √ Centre Director an admin position but holds PHD to garner respect across university
- √ Centre focuses on local knowledge and community connections
- √ Engage policy makers from the beginning

The Harris Centre was established in October 2004 with a mandate to facilitate and coordinate Memorial University of Newfoundland's activities related to regional policy and development. It was named after former MUN President, Les Harris known for his integrity and connections within the province. Founding Director, Rob Greenwood has a PHD in business (which gives him credibility across the Centre) and was a former provincial policy maker so is well connected to the policy community (as are many of MUN's staff). However he deliberately placed himself in Administration to free himself from academic pressures and allow him the space to focus on public relations and outreach, community engagement being central to the Centre's work.

The Centre has a well developed Marketing and Communication Division (MARCOM). They also have Communication Coordinators assigned to different research units (20% paid by the Unit with the rest paid by their own department). These roles are separate from PR. The Centre recognizes that faculty and students are key knowledge creators at the university, but knowledge mobilization requires resources and skill sets that complement those of academics. The Centre places great stock on local knowledge and the power of personal contacts and lend this expertise across the university. The Centre, and by extension all of Memorial University are deeply related to the communities in Newfoundland.

The nature of a small-scale society means that those active in policy development form a small crowd. This makes it easy to engage policy makers at the beginning of a research proposal. The Centre can site examples of policy makers sitting on advisory committees; contributing ideas for case studies and 'ground truthing' findings, resulting in a sense of ownership of the findings. They are they say, practitioners and don't put much faith on the development of Theories of Change (TOC). They learn by doing.

### *Comments*

- ✓ The Harris Centre approach combines a **localized scale of operation** (Newfoundland) with a **knowledge broker that wears several hats** (has done research, has been in politics, is a dedicated marketer) and is actively seeking new partnerships.
- ✓ They are immersed-in-context and this allows them to jump when windows of opportunity arise. **They see themselves primarily as a strategic convener** able to bring together researchers, policy makers, community stakeholders and funders. They are doing this primarily locally, but they also cited examples of work at the international level.

### **Commonwealth of Learning – Policy and Advocacy in Transition**

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is an intergovernmental organization created by Commonwealth Heads of Government to encourage the development and sharing of open learning/distance education knowledge, resources and technologies. COL is helping developing nations improve access to quality education and training. <http://www.col.org>

### **Key points:**

- √ Separate corporate communication from knowledge management

- ✓ Knowledge Management houses repositories of material and experiments with different media

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is primarily a policy – advocacy development organization providing perspectives to policy makers. It is not a research organization per se but does bring out publications that could be called research publications and do publish in peer-reviewed journals. COL has always made its documented outputs available to the public at no cost. They consider all outputs and learning materials as part of the public domain. The small number of research documents is supply driven but policy documents are always demand-based with requests coming through a variety of venues. COL works through interns to populate their outputs <http://dspace.col.org> and are now experiment with different document formats (video-based statements, for example).

COL separates Corporate communications from Knowledge Management (KM) housing the Corporate Communications with the CEO to deal with sensitive issues faced by the Corporation. KM houses what COL calls, the repositories (all the material posted to the web). COL does not have a Theory of Change (TOC) but will shortly be publishing something close to this on their blog since they do look at how their overall documents have influenced policy in developing countries (to be posted on a blog). COL is in the process of reading up how research communication should be done. COL recognizes that it is possible to control quality of research but not so easy to manage how that research is actually used. Many organizations (Gates, for example) like these things to be presented in a nice package, but COL understands it doesn't happen this way.

*Comments:*

- ✓ Like many other organizations cited in this sample, COL is careful to separate Corporate Communications from their other body of work around what they choose to call, Knowledge Management.
- ✓ COL recognizes the value of having a Theory of Change and is experimenting with developing a TOC through a blog.

### **Guttmacher – Engaging policy makers from within**

The Institute produces a wide range of resources on topics pertaining to sexual and reproductive health, including *International Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health* (formerly *International Family Planning Perspectives*), the *Guttmacher Policy Review* and *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*. <http://www.guttmacher.org/>

**Key points:**

- ✓ Communications is part of the Public Education Division that also covers Corporate Communication
- ✓ The staff of the Public Policy Division are immersed in US policy debates; they are situated in Washington (the other Divisions are in New York)
- ✓ Communication staff are engaged from the early stages of a research project

For four decades, the Guttmacher Institute has advance sexual and reproductive health in the United States and worldwide. The programing combines social science research, policy analysis, and public education designed to generate new ideas, encourage enlightened public debate and promote sound policy and program development. Their website includes an advocacy video that summarizes data from their own research. GI is unique in that its mission is to produce only research with policy relevance.

Communications helps the Research Division (the largest with 50+ researchers) package findings to non-academic audiences. The Communications Director remarked that researchers are not good at this, and this is their role: producing a 2-page fact sheet from a 35-page report, that is accessible. They warn their new staff about their extensive vetting process: researchers vet all the materials, same with policy material...the communications people have to get used to having others clear their work. When I asked whether this approach was closest to ‘knowledge translation’, the Director confirmed that it resonated well with the Guttmacher approach.

The Communications Division staff are engaged from the start of a research project. They have become an equal partner. It was not the case before, but it has become so. People have realized the value. Not that they will veto, instead their input is valued: they ask pointed questions that the researchers may not have considered. While they do offer workshops on their approach, they have not documented it as such.

The need to engage policy makers is key to the institutional work. However, they do not rely on policy makers to determine their research agenda which is informed by their own policy experts within the organization; they may have been influenced from discussions, they are aware as they are immersed in the debate.

**Comments:**

- ✓ At Guttmacher, engaging with policy makers means **having staff immersed in policy circles**. This is the same practice we witnessed at the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) that has an office across from the EU in Brussels with staff that spend much of their time immersed in policy meetings. This is a more realistic approach for organizations with a narrower focus – be it geographic or sectoral; so it may have more resonance with Think-Tanks than IDRC initiatives.
- ✓ Guttmacher plays a vocal role as an advocate while also being a research organization. For the first role, a major focus of their ‘communication’ work focuses on helping researchers get their message out to non-research audiences. For the second, the Institute publishes two refereed journals, which allows their researchers –and many others from the outside- to publish in a formal academic venue, and thus maintain recognition in these circles.

**Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation – a focus on advocacy**

The TripleLine report (Adolf et al., 2009) reported the BMGF as the highest research funder (\$450M/year) with an overall approach that uses good ‘stories’ from research to demonstrate aid effectiveness, to enhance development awareness among the general public, and to ensure a continued public and political support to research funding and provide accountability.

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org>

**Key points:**

- ✓ Corporate communications is separate from the Global Development Policy and Advocacy Team.
- ✓ “Advocacy” is the approach used for RC.
- ✓ Creating a demand from policy makers: desirable but difficult – hence the focus is on supply side dissemination.

- ✓ The staff in the Policy and Advocacy team has a background in comparable institutions to their grantees.

The Global Development Policy and Advocacy Team (P+A team) support all three program areas: Global Health (the largest), Global Development; and the US Program.

Their approach centers on advocacy:

“When we talk about advocacy, we aren’t talking about influencing legislators and politicians, or grassroots organizing and campaigning. Rather, we advocate by seeking to build a strong knowledge base upon which to act and create support for our issues, engage others to join the cause, and lend our unique voice to aid and advance the work of our partners in the field.<sup>20</sup>”

Emphasis was placed on the Think Tank initiative as an example of how they support grantees. They started by assuming that core support to do research that respond to pol makers’ needs was key. As the implementing agency, IDRC could help with formatting evaluation and communication support to get greater traction for research in country. They were interested in the recent communication survey of Think tanks that concluded, that instead of generic communication training, they required customized support.

The BMGF is often less connected to the implementation of research than IDRC, so they seek to encourage and create conditions to support grantees.

Professionals staff the P+A team with a background in other Think tanks, so they know the reality of their grantees. Two of them have an economics background and have learned advocacy from experience in other foundations.

They commissioned scoping studies (by Intermedia) in Ghana and Kenya, on policy makers’ preferred sources of information. In Ghana, radio emerged as an unexpected preference, and they in turn advised the Think-tank grantee about this opportunity.

Emphasis is placed on the supply side, as they have not been able to find a systematic way to stimulate the demand side, though they are keen to find ways/proxies to do so.

They do utilize Theories of Change internally, and likewise they encourage grantees to make the trajectories of change as concrete as possible.

The same blog mentioned above summarizes their long-term advocacy approach:

“We work with grantees and partners who have the capability to work with their own communities and stakeholders, whether it’s agricultural research in Africa, public health in Asia, or public education in the United States. We seek to make sure policy and decision makers are well informed about issues that may be different from what they are accustomed to dealing with day to day. We also seek to advance research in tough development and health issues for which the global community doesn’t yet have good answers, and make sure the product of all of this activity—research, discussion, debate—is widely and creatively disseminated into the hands of people who need to know.”

The communications team, through separate, interacts with them regularly. Communication seeks not only to promote the Foundation (corporate/PR), but also to promote development issues in the media at large, to enhance the presence of the issue, not necessarily directly linked to their own objectives.

---

<sup>20</sup> Source: <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/foundationnotes/Pages/geoff-lamb-101216-advocacy.aspx>

### **Comments:**

- ✓ The BMGF is often less connected to the implementation of research than IDRC, so they seek to encourage and create conditions to support grantees.
- ✓ Emphasis is placed on the supply side of RC since **they have not been able to find a systematic way to stimulate the demand side**, though they tried and remain keen to find ways/proxies to do so (Wendy Graham, who was part of a Gates funded research impact project, tells of her dismay at finding out how little policy makers can respond to evidence even when they have set the research agenda. Policy makers, she said have to move faster than researchers so by the time the research results are ready, the policy need has changed. Graham is also a professor at Aberdeen University in material and child health and an Evidence Advisor to DFID).
- ✓ Their advocacy work is less about demonstrating the foundations achievements, and more about putting the development issues in the public eye.

### **AusAID – Research Communications uptake**

The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) is the Australian Government agency responsible for managing Australia's overseas aid program. AusAID is an Executive Agency within the Foreign Affairs and Trade portfolio and reports to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. <http://www.AusAID.gov.au/>

#### **Key points:**

- ✓ Research communications and Corporate communications separate
- ✓ One RC team member is shared with Corporate communication on a half a week basis
- ✓ AusAID in process of institutionalizing research communications

The Australian Aid Agency (AusAID) will be doubling its budget over the next few years. The organization will move into the rank of higher spending aid agencies particularly while other countries are shrinking the aid dollar. At the same time, AusAID is going through a larger process of restructuring to ensure that the organization can link policy to evidence and that people have the skills to apply this (link policy to evidence) in their work. Through this they intend to become a serious research funder and increase their spending to at least 3% of the budget.

At present, AusAID's research funding tends to be decentralized: about 50% goes to the country offices; another 30% supports sectoral or thematic research while only 10% is taken up by the central research team.

Research communications is taken seriously. It is a separate team within the Central Research Division. Up to a few months ago the RC team was part of the Corporate Communications Branch, finding this difficult (different expectations) the two teams were separated and the work situation has improved. However AusAID research results are still very much a part of Corporate Communications. One of the RC team members divides her time between Corporate Communication and Research Communications. She is responsible for the Research Communications Team strategic plan and with Corporate Communications she manages social media. Having this hybrid approach works very well.

The Research Communications team is required to: look at evidence to be used by an external audience; make sure there is an internal audience for research evidence and design different approaches for research communication (how to use intermediaries and the demand side of research).

Research Communications team tactics include:

- Looking for incentives to push researchers to develop communication strategies
- Cultivating the demand-side so that policy makers look for evidence
- Working with intermediaries
- Insuring that research both within big institutions and local research think tanks are focused on getting research into policy debates
- Specifically insuring that research is finding its own internal audience

The team is still new to this area of work and only recently received more resources. As any growing program they are still proving that they are an important part of the agency. Focused on how to position evidence and research to establish the agency as a, thinking, learning, research focused organization.

### **Research team is a marriage between research and communication**

The team is made up of people who bring together a research and a communication background: one member has a blend of university research and communication, development work and communication experience; one is seconded from a think tank and another is a researcher from government about to finalize a PHD.

### **Theory of Change**

The Research Communications team does not have an explicit Theory of Change (TOC) but is working on developing one (with DFID help). They feel it will be useful to have a framework to help explain the different tactics to reach higher-level goals and make it clear that AusAID and its development partners have evidence both available and accessible to inform policy development.

### **Relationship to M and E**

The team is in the process of developing a stronger relationship with M and E in terms of evaluating their research. The team's research advisor is responsible for ensuring that research projects develop an M and E framework (intermediaries are required to include impact logs and stakeholder mapping etc.). This is not easy work but necessary since AusAID is trying to institutionalize research communications.

### **Research Partners**

AusAID does an annual analysis of the research across the agency. To date, approximately 50% of the research funded is with Australian partners and the rest is with international Think Tanks (IDRC, ODI, IDS etc.) whereas on the ground research through partners in developing countries receives the smallest share. AusAID wants to increase funding to research partners in developing countries in the future.

### **Capacity building**

At present, AusAID has not overall program for capacity building with partners on research communications. Once a year they bring all researchers together to Canberra for a day's training in research communication (using material from Fred Carden's work). The one -day workshop (on research communication strategies etc) is followed by e-mail support.

AusAID intends to institutionalize research communications so is looking for ways to provide incentives for partners to embed a research communications approach in their work. They are turning to DFID for support in trying to ensure that research communications is embedded in all research supported programs and want research communications to have as much profile as research design and quality.

**Comments:**

- √ AusAID is certainly in a different position to most development agencies given that they are looking to double their budget in the next few years. It is interesting to think that they are moving towards a more research oriented organization and feel that one way to do this is to develop a **separate unit** dedicated to **research communications**.<sup>21</sup>
- √ Unlike DFID, the Australians do not have a problem with naming this unit, Research Communications but did experience a tension between Corporate Communications (what Alex Bielak calls, big ‘C’ communications) and research communications mainly around the issue of differing objectives and expectations. The teams were only separated a short time ago but are already experiencing an easing of the situation. The difference with DFID here, though is that AusAID is very clear about the important connection between Corporate Communication and Research Communication and has developed the system of having one person split the time between the two entities.
- √ The **hybrid** approach between the two units is enhanced both by the **staffing** of the Research Communications unit and the shared staff person moving between the two units.
- √ The **context** in Australian universities is changing with the notion of ‘research use’ gaining ground over production of evidence.

---

<sup>21</sup> A decision taken by senior management.

### Annex 3. Adopting a common vocabulary

“**Adoption of a common vocabulary** to describe KM activities provides a platform to better understand how best to manage these activities, and enables clearer identification of the knowledge management capabilities held by various sectors within the broader business community.” (Beesley and Cooper, 2011: 48)

#### *Knowledge as an activity*

“The terms:

- “knowledge creation”; and
- “knowledge acquisition” are often used interchangeably, as are the terms
- “dissemination”,
- “knowledge transfer”, and
- “knowledge extension”,

...yet strictly speaking these are distinctly different activities. As each of these terms is described it will become apparent why **knowledge should be viewed as an activity** and how this perspective serves to enhance understanding of KM practices.

Part of the confusion in the use of these terms may rest within the variations of context in which the term “knowledge” itself is used.” (Beesley and Cooper, 2011: 51)

#### *Defining knowledge*

“Trends in knowledge management research show an increasingly psychological (as opposed to technical) view of knowledge management (*citations removed*).

In other words, knowledge is considered to be that which is embedded within individuals and occurs either as a result of experience, or is generated through thinking or reasoning; otherwise it remains as data or information (*citation removed*).

From this perspective knowledge can be seen as an activity; data and information are objects.

This distinction is also pivotal because of the critical differences in access.

Whereas data and information can be stored externally, accessed easily, and traded, knowledge (where knowledge is defined as information with meaning (*citation removed*)) can only be amassed within individual knowledge networks and can only be shared if those who have it are prepared to do so (*citation removed*).

This definition impacts greatly upon how we view knowledge and research outputs. For example, **research outcomes might be knowledge to those who created it, but once it is codified or expressed it immediately becomes information to others until they have applied thought or reasoning to it and incorporated it within existing individual knowledge networks.**

**Knowledge creation**, driven by curiosity or in response to a problem, refers to the deliberate and purposeful collation of observations, data, or facts to generate new or novel ways of understanding a particular phenomenon.

On the other hand, **knowledge acquisition** refers to the successful transfer of extant knowledge to others. That is, a researcher may have created new knowledge, but the receiver will acquire it. Only when it has been processed and incorporated into existing knowledge frameworks can that information then be termed knowledge to the receiver, and it can be said that knowledge is acquired. However, even then it is not a given that the new knowledge incorporated within the receiver's knowledge network has been "transferred" with integrity.

Therefore, **knowledge may be disseminated (or diffused) but the degree to which it is "transferred" to others is largely dependent on the communication processes used, since the acquisition of new knowledge (i.e. the restructuring of existing knowledge networks) is primarily a communication process** (*citation removed*). " (Beesley and Cooper, 2011: 51-52)

### *Communication and knowledge transfer*

"**Communication** is crucial to knowledge transfer (*citation removed*) and, consistent with a psychological perspective of knowledge management, is **the process by which individuals create and share information with each another so as to attain mutual understanding** (*citation removed*).

**Mutual understanding** is a process through which an individual's store of knowledge is continually amended and reshaped as specialised knowledge is accumulated.

The most likely conditions for knowledge transfer to take place are not necessarily through the establishment of social relationships, but **through the interconnectivity of individual world-views, which become apparent through mutual understanding** (*citation removed*). Thus, social relationships within themselves are a necessary, but insufficient condition for knowledge transfer to take place. **Social relationships act as conduits for knowledge transfer to take place, but it is the depth of understanding that transpires through two-way communications among individuals that leads to knowledge transfer.**

Current communication of research output (publication of research, or presentations/conferences/seminars) are **characterised by one-way** (single-loop) learning strategies, referred to as the "student-teacher" paradigm (*citation removed*).

Although this seems to be the preferred medium through which to disseminate research outcomes, it fails to create feedback loops leading to two-way communication. **One-way communication, at best, will result in adjustment of existing knowledge structures, and receptivity is limited by the strength of the intent to learn** (*citation removed*) **and the subjective interpretation of the receiver.**

From a Barthesian perspective the essential meaning of a single-loop communication depends on the impressions of the receiver – **the integrity of the message lies not in its creator, but in its audience** (*citation removed*).

Conversely, **double-loop learning** (via practical exercises in workshop forums, for example) **facilitates mutual understanding as shared communications serve to develop an appreciation of the Other's world-view and thought processes and then build and broaden their own.**

Knowledge acquisition then is not an "all or none" state. Elements of the incoming information may be acquired, while others may not. **Double-loop learning, or two-way communications**

**maximise the extent to which knowledge is acquired and the integrity of that which is transferred.**

Two-way communications also promote generative learning, a process in which the learner develops new concepts and attitudes, cognitively recodes existing classifications, and amends standards of judgment (*citation removed*).” (Beesley and Cooper, 2011: 52-53)

## **Annex 4. Definitions**

### **IDRC’s Communications Division**

“For the purpose of this study, IDRC understands “research communications” to encompass a broad range of activities aimed at sharing research evidence with knowledge users, from participatory research communications, to stakeholder involvement, to dissemination activities, to publications, to engagement with policymakers, to the use of knowledge brokers.” (IDRC, 2010: Consultancy Contract)

### **DFID’s Donor review on research communications**

“A two-way process (and related strategies and mechanisms), whereby researchers interact and communicate with potential or actual intermediate and end users of research with the aim of making research more relevant for users, and to facilitate the understanding and application of research by users.” (Adolf et al., 2009: 6)

### **Terminology proposed for the workshop “Improving the impact of development research through better communication and uptake workshop” 29-30 Nov. 2010-London. (Shaxton, 2010: 4)**

Although there is no settled language around research communication and uptake, it is useful to describe a few key terms used in the rest of the paper – though they should be seen as suggestions, not final definitions, and are presented in no particular order.

### **Research dissemination**

Processes which ensures the widest reach of the research to potentially relevant audiences. Dissemination usually occurs once research results are obtained, such as through conferences, academic publications, online publications and other channels. The dissemination audience is the broad group of people to whom this process is directed.

### **Research communication**

The ability to interpret or translate complex research findings into a language format and context that people who are not experts in that particular issue can understand. It goes beyond the dissemination of research results and involves a network of participants and beneficiaries who also require opportunities to articulate their own needs. Research communication is driven by demand rather than from the top down (see Carter & Paulus, 2010).

### **Research uptake**

Adolph et al (2010) define this as ‘the process of becoming aware of and accessing research outputs, and the institutions, policies, systems and mechanisms supporting this process’; and note that there are commonalities and differences between research communication and research uptake (as in the presented in the section “Contributions from the Literature”).

## **The Research Communication Strategy Group (RCSG-UK)**

“Research communication is defined as the process of interpreting or translating complex research findings into a language, format and context that non-experts can understand. It goes way beyond the mere dissemination of research results. It involves a network of participants and beneficiaries. Researchers themselves, journalists, editors and their media, intermediaries who provide links between stakeholders: all these form an interdependent network linking their differing roles in the communication process. Donors, policy makers, governments generally, user organisations and the ultimate, individual beneficiaries are all potential users of research whose information needs have to be addressed in very different ways and within very differing contexts. They also require opportunities to articulate their own needs so that communication is driven by demand rather than from the top down.

Communicating research is unlike marketing and promoting a product or service; it is a process that transforms raw research outputs into something that addresses the expressed needs of beneficiaries. It can have a vital advocacy role: relevant and timely information can result in positive interventions by policy makers and governments.” (Carter and Paulus, 2010: 8)

## **Closing the loop**

Closing the Loop is an approach to programing and projects that seeks to ensure the awareness, understanding, and ownership of research outputs by decision-makers at all levels. Its goals are to increase the relevance and utilization of research outputs, thereby enhancing the influence of the researchers, institutions, and work we support.

## **WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION? (GEH, IDRC)**

“...the concept lacks a collectively understood, shared term and definition at IDRC and is often confused with research communications. As a result, approaches to KT vary widely in terms of how systematic they are, what activities are pursued, and which tools, strategies, and resources are drawn upon by PIs....

In addition, KT is distinct from research communications since KT goes beyond the boundaries of end-of-project research results dissemination and/or diffusion. It is a dynamic, two-way ongoing and iterative process requiring active and conscious participation of both researchers and research-users, and is based on the principles of partnership between producers and users, integration and simplification....

Additionally, knowledge translation is distinct in that that it requires specific capacities: the ability to engage in knowledge brokering, such as linking knowledge producers and users in dynamic ways; knowing the policy process; and the content expertise and basic research skills necessary to gather, appraise, and analyse, synthesize and package knowledge and evidences” (Seifried, Jessani and Reid, 2010: 5-6)

“As one informant noted, ironically, KT does not communicate itself well.” What is perceived as KT is widely considered by all IDRC staff informants to be an important process and practice. Problematically, though, it is often confused with “research communicaitons” and is a concept with no established, widely shared understanding.” (Seifried, Jessani and Reid, 2010: 5-6)

“Known by a host of names, knowledge translation (KT) is such a tangle of actors, ideas and approaches as to defy a single definition. There are academic explanations of KT, there is KT in action, to some it means communications, to others linkage and exchange. Reduced to its

essence, through, KT is the middle, meeting ground between two fundamentally different processes: those of research and those of action.” (Seifried, Jessani and Reid, 2010: 23)

“Overall, there is no shared definition of KT at IDRC... There is some lack of clarity about how KT and research communications are distinct.” (Seifried, Jessani and Reid, 2010: 7-8)

### **Knowledge translation (CIHR-Canada)**

“The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) defines KT as,

...The exchange, synthesis and ethically-sound application of research findings within a complex set of interactions among researchers and knowledge users. In other words, knowledge translation can be seen as an acceleration of the knowledge cycle; an acceleration of the natural transformation of knowledge into use.” (Seifried, Jessani and Reid, 2010: 6)

At CIHR, knowledge translation (KT) is defined as a dynamic and iterative process that includes synthesis, dissemination, exchange and ethically-sound application of knowledge to improve the health of Canadians, provide more effective health services and products and strengthen the health care system. This process takes place within a complex system of interactions between researchers and knowledge users which may vary in intensity, complexity and level of engagement depending on the nature of the research and the findings as well as the needs of the particular knowledge user. (<http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/29418.html> - accessed 6 Apr'11)

### **Knowledge management**

“One of the problems with knowledge management is the lack of widely agreed definitions of what it means. Although some individuals can give extremely clear definitions of what they mean, what is actually understood by the term ‘knowledge management’ varies in practice. It is variously applied to the following:

- re-definitions of the role of librarians and archivists;
- the development of specialized computer applications, sometimes referred to as decision-support systems, some of which support knowledge management while others claim to ‘deliver’ it;
- organization-wide procedures and systems designed to ‘operate’ knowledge management;
- the existence of panels or *ad hoc* working groups aiming to identify and then improve specific areas of practice.”

Some definitions emphasize the term ‘knowledge management’; others see the process in terms of improved institutional learning, or as part of (or an outcome of) information management.” (Powell, 2003: 49-50)

### **KT and KM – Canadian Water Network**

- **Knowledge translation (KT)** is a process by which relevant research information is made available and accessible for practice, planning and policy-making through interactive and iterative engagement with intended research users.
- **Knowledge brokering (KB)** includes all the activities in which intermediaries (knowledge brokers) or intermediary organizations link the producers and users of knowledge to strengthen generation, dissemination and eventual use of that knowledge. <http://www.cwn-rc.ca/publications/knowledge-translation/>

## Annex 5. DFID's Thematic Framework

(Carter & Paulus, 2010: 9)

### **1. Research on communication**

Research on communication is an activity itself, as well as being essential to the development effort. It is a relatively new discipline, with many unknowns: the role of the media; effectiveness of partnerships and processes of engagement; the potential of information and communication technologies; and the technical, social and other barriers to effective communication.

### **2. Supporting researchers to communicate**

Researchers are familiar with communicating their research to others in their field of work through peer-reviewed literature. However, researchers need incentives to communicate more widely and need support in that broader role: skills building; the assistance of communication professionals; coalitions of trust with journalists and editors; and communities of practice linking researchers with intermediaries and policy processes.

### **3. Communication of research**

The quality of the science may not be the only thing that influences decision making, even if a robust culture of science and evidence exists. There is a need to make existing information more accessible and to analyse and synthesize research to provide tailored information services. There is also a need for more harmonised and effective communication of research across institutions using agreed language, tools and standards.

### **4. Facilitation of research uptake and enabling environment**

Effective research begins with clear identification of the needs of the target group. Many factors hold back the effective application of relevant research to alleviate poverty. These include technical barriers such as internet access or lack of equipment, language problems, social and cultural issues and questions of local expectations. The environment is changing constantly and rapidly, as are local political circumstances. Research communicators need to understand and be sensitive to all these factors for their work to bring about the desired outcomes.

### **5. Knowledge management**

Many research communication programmes are experimental, and a substantial body of robust and quantitative data to demonstrate the cost effectiveness of investing in communication is steadily being built. Development outcomes need to become more visible. Monitoring and evaluation tools for research communication need to generate robust and credible data about outcomes and impact. Lessons can be learned more systematically across communication programmes.

## Annex 6. Summary of typologies

During this scan we collected the following summaries / typologies:

- Four types of **barriers to beneficiary participation in research** (Whitty, 2011)
- Four ways to **operationalize research use** (Nutley et al., 2007)
- Seven **models of research use** (Nutley et al., 2007)
- A six-stage **ladder of research use** (Nutley et al., 2007)
- **Factors affecting** how research gets used (Nutley et al., 2007)
- Seven types of **policy influence** (Carden, 2004)
- **Policy influencing approaches** (Jones, 2011)
- **Typology of influencing activities** (Jones, 2011)
- Five **knowledge-for-action theories** (Ottoson, 2009)
- Six theories about **how policy change happens** (Stachowiak, 2009)
- Six lessons/ steps to **RAPID outcome mapping** (Young, 2009)

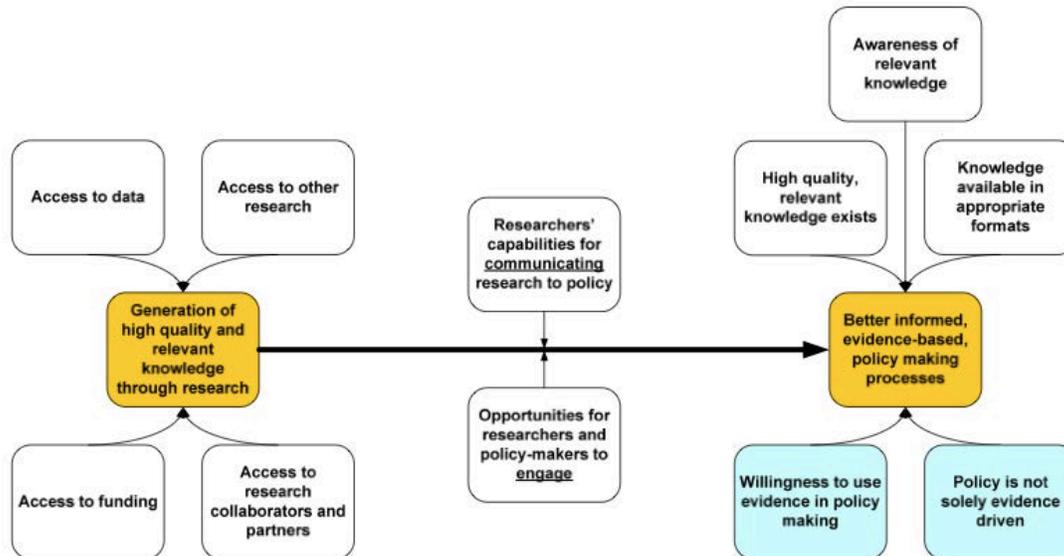
A research partner and a PO cannot and should not be expected to know this area, but our interviews confirm that they are keen to have guidance on options, so as to move into a more systematic, planned approach from the early stages of research design.

We have prepared a one-page summary of most of the above, to be shared separately.

## Annex 7. Theory of Change Example

Carter and Paulus (2010: 98) provide an example of a ToC for a project.

### GNet's outline theory of change



“ This diagram summarises GNet’s theory of change and the factors on which it needs to work to facilitate the communication of research to policy. It identifies three streams (which GNet addresses in its new strategy).

1. High-quality research which is relevant to policy issues. For this, researchers need access to good data, access to the latest thinking on issues of concern through access to published journals, working papers and conferences and access to research funding. This is an area of current strength for GNet;
2. Effective communication and outreach activities. Supporting researchers’ capabilities to communicate their research to policy and more opportunities for researchers and policy actors to engage with each other on specific policy issues. This is an area where GNet needs to refine its approach in building capacities for research communication and creating opportunities for engagement between policy actors and researchers.
3. Use of research-based evidence in policy-making processes. GNet can influence the accessibility of research-based knowledge which is communicated to policy actors, but not the awareness and application of that knowledge. However it can certainly ensure that research evidence is more accessible and provided in appropriate formats for the various policy audiences and uses, and that it is, for example, arranged thematically.” (pp 98-99)

In the references we include a paper by Pemsil & Seidel-Lass (2010) with an example of the impact trajectory for a fisheries project in Bangladesh.

## Annex 8. RAPID Outcome Mapping

(Young, 2009)

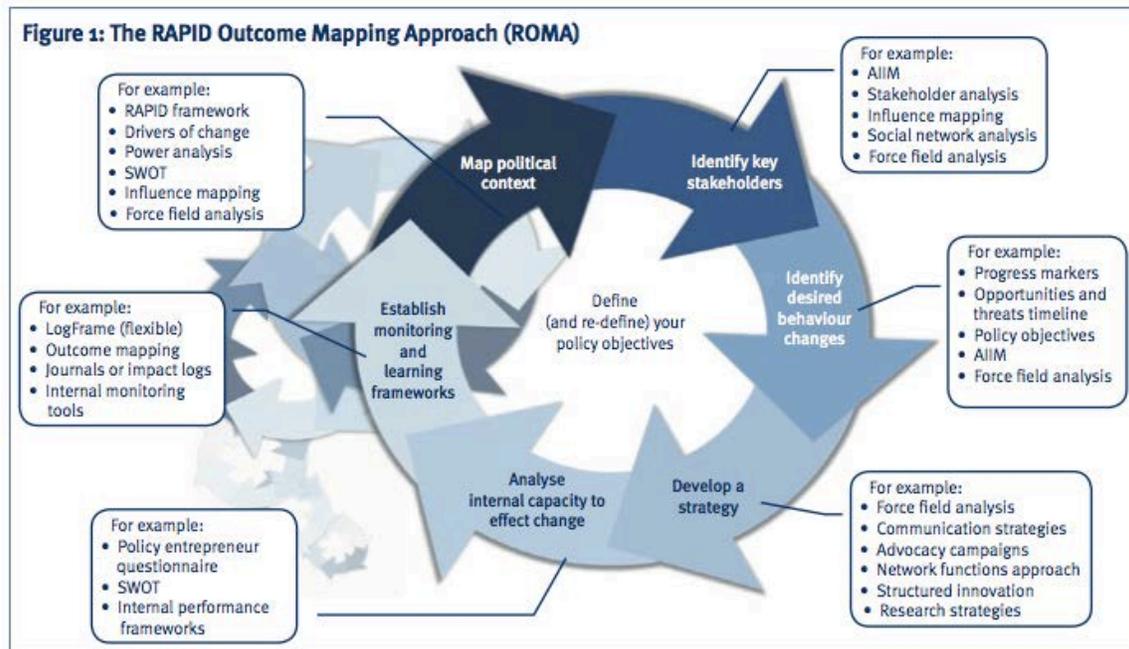


Fig1. Eight ROMA steps & associated tools

### Lessons/steps

1. Define a clear, overarching policy objective.
2. Map the policy context.
3. Identify the key influential stakeholders.
4. Develop a theory of change.
5. Develop a strategy.
6. Ensure the engagement team has the competencies required.
7. Develop a monitoring and learning system.

## Annex 9. Summary of donors' approaches to RC

The main findings of the Triple Line report<sup>22</sup> (Adolf et al., 2009: 5) are the following:

1. General consensus on the **importance of research communication** among the donors interviewed, and wide interest in developing appropriate programmes and mechanisms.
2. Little evidence of a **strategic approach** within individual agencies, with research communication generally dispersed within the organisation.
3. Emphasis continues to be on the **supply side** of research, with a weak understanding of and capacity to support the **demand side** of research communication.
4. Many **examples of good practice** and of innovative initiatives, also related to engaging users and other stakeholders in the research communication process.
5. Several donors are placing a priority on being a **learning organisation**, with research communication contributing to internal knowledge management.
6. No comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation **systems** in place to assess the effectiveness and relevance of various research communication approaches, and to feed this information back into research communication policy and investment decisions.
7. Most donors maintain their **own webportals/archives** of research findings.
8. There is a strong interest among donors to explore and expand **open access** to funded research findings.
9. Most donors would **welcome strengthening networking** and linkages between donors interested in research communication to improve efficiency and effectiveness, for shared learning and for greater impact.
10. **DFID** is recognized and valued as one of the **leaders** in the field of research communication.

---

<sup>22</sup> “The study reviewed existing documents on donor interests and investments in research communication, before selecting 20 donors for a closer assessment, out of which 17 were interviewed. These include two multi-lateral agencies, eight (with DFID) bilateral agencies, two government-funded research bodies and five corporate or private foundations.” (p. 5)

## Annex 10. Networks, resources & websites

The Terms of Reference call for networks, resources or centres that can become touchstones for the Centre to monitor. Since we have confirmed that RC is very much associated with disciplinary trajectories and models, the following is by necessity incomplete, but indicative of the growing attention devoted to this field.

### COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**The Communication Initiative** includes sections by sector and has an advanced search option – a very comprehensive collection

<http://www.comminit.com/>

**Public communication of science and technology**

[http://www.upf.edu/pctacademy/PCST\\_Network/](http://www.upf.edu/pctacademy/PCST_Network/)

### KNOWLEDGE AND IMPACT

**IKM Emergent** is a research and communication programme founded on a critical analysis of current practice in the use of all forms of knowledge, including formal research, within the international development sector. IKM Emergent believes that historically the development sector has adopted a too linear and simplistic understanding of how development takes place and therefore of how it needs to act in order to make change happen. As a result, the sector has generally based its work on too limited a range of knowledges from too limited a range of sources. IKM's philosophy is based on the conception of multiple knowledges, multiple realities.

[http://wiki.ikmemergent.net/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://wiki.ikmemergent.net/index.php/Main_Page)

**Research to Action (R2A)** is here to provide guidance and inspiration on how to bring development research into focus and into use. It is a platform that researchers can use to learn the 'How, What, When, Where and Why' of communicating effectively with those audiences who will be able to put their research to work.

<http://www.researchtoaction.org/>

R2A hosts the website stemming from the London 2010 workshop entitled *Improving the impact of development research through better research communication and uptake*.

<http://www.researchtoaction.org/donor-meeting/>

**Research Impact: Turning research into action.** We believe knowledge has a greater impact when it is shared and implemented. ResearchImpact, Canada's knowledge mobilization network, is a service-oriented program designed to connect university research with research users across Canada to ensure that research helps to inform decision-making.

<http://researchimpact.othree.ca/newhomepage>

**The Impact Alliance** is a global network committed to strengthening the capacity of individuals and organizations to generate deep impact within the communities they serve. We believe that smarter organizations generate greater social impact, resulting in a better world. We accelerate the development of *smarter* organizations through facilitating knowledge exchange and learning, open innovation and partnerships.

[http://www.impactalliance.org/ev\\_en.php](http://www.impactalliance.org/ev_en.php)

**UK Collaborative on development Sciences** (UKCDS) brings together key UK funders and

stakeholders who provide support for research relevant to development. Our **vision** is that UK research funding maximises its impact on international development outcomes. We **aim** to encourage and facilitate working relationships for effective research for development.  
[http://www.ukcds.org.uk/page-About\\_Us-2.html](http://www.ukcds.org.uk/page-About_Us-2.html)

**Knowledge translation and brokering**, Canadian Water Network <http://www.cwn-rce.ca/publications/knowledge-translation/>

#### **K\* Conference**

An International Conference to Create a Multi-Sectoral Forum for Information Exchange in the K\* field: Spanning the Spectrum of Knowledge Management and Mobilization Activities April 2012, Niagara, Ontario, Canada **For more information Contact:** Dr. Alex Bielak, UNU-INWEH [bielak@inweh.unu.edu](mailto:bielak@inweh.unu.edu)

## **AGRICULTURE AND COLLABORATIVE NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

**Collaborative management:** <http://learningforsustainability.net/>

#### **Triple A Framework:**

**Availability, Accessibility and Applicability of the CGIAR Research Outputs**  
<http://ictkm.cgiar.org/what-we-do/triple-a-framework/>

#### **A moving story: Putting the film in context**

<http://ictkm.cgiar.org/2010/11/05/a-moving-story-putting-the-film-in-context/>

**Coherence in Information for Agricultural Research for Development (CIARD) is a global initiative working to make agricultural research information publicly available and more accessible**

<http://www.ciard.net/ciard-brochure>

#### **CIARD initiatives**

<http://www.ciard.net/history>

#### **CIARD members**

<http://www.ciard.net/network>

## **HEALTH COMMUNICATION**

#### **Knowledge for Health**

<http://www.hcpartnership.org/index.php>

#### **The Health Communication Unit, University of Toronto**

[http://www.thcu.ca/infoandresources/health\\_comm\\_map.cfm](http://www.thcu.ca/infoandresources/health_comm_map.cfm)

#### **The Coalition for Health Communication**

<http://www.healthcommunication.net/>

#### **Health communication online Masters program (U of Illinois)**

<http://engage.illinois.edu/entry/4846>

## DFID SUPPORTED RESEARCH COMMUNICATION PROGRAMMES

Source: Adolf et al. 2009 report, (p 39)

1. Agfax/ New Agriculturalist: Communicating research: contributing to sustainable development (WRENmedia) <http://www.new-ag.info/> and <http://www.agfax.net/>)
2. AGRIS: Information Systems in Agricultural Science and Technology (Food and Agriculture Organisation, <http://www.fao.org/agris/>)
3. BBC WST Policy and Research Programme on the Role of Media and Communication in Development (BBC World Service Trust)  
[http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/trust/researchlearning/story/2005/09/050913\\_globalpartnership.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/trust/researchlearning/story/2005/09/050913_globalpartnership.shtml)
4. CommGap: Mainstreaming communication in development (multi-donor trust fund with World Bank, <http://www.commgap.com/>)
5. Fostering Trust and Transparency in Governance (Systems in the ICT Environment/ International Records Management Trust, <http://www.irmt.org/researchReports.html>)
6. GDNNet: Global Development Network (GDNNet – The electronic voice of GDN’, [www.gdnet.org](http://www.gdnet.org))
7. ICT4D: Information and Communication Technologies for Development (DFID – IDRC, <http://www.idrc.ca/ict4d>)
8. *infoDev* (World Bank, <http://www.infodev.org/en/index.html>)
9. Makutano Junction TV Drama (Mediae Trust, <http://www.makutanojunction.org.uk/>)
10. MK4D: Mobilising Knowledge for Development (IDS) <http://www.ids.ac.uk/go/knowledge-services/mk4d> with its five components:
  - a. ID21communicatingdevelopmentresearch(<http://www.id21.org/>)
  - b. ElectronicDevelopmentandEnvironmentalInformationSystem (ELDIS) (<http://www.eldis.org/>)
  - c. British Library for Development Studies (BLDS) (<http://www.blbs.ids.ac.uk/>)
  - d. BRIDGE–MainstreamingGenderEquality (<http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/>)
  - e. SLI(StrategicLearningInitiative) (<http://www.ids.ac.uk/index.cfm?objectid=965E7F6F-5056-8171-7B416C2A264BCDF5>)
11. PERI: Programme for the Enhancement of Research Information (International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications, <http://www.inasp.info/file/104/peri-programme-for-the-enhancement-of-research-information.html>)
12. RELAY: Research Communication Programme (PANOS, <http://www.panos.org.uk/relay>)
13. Research Africa: SARIMA (Research Research Ltd, Research (Africa) (Pty) Ltd, Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), <http://www.research-africa.net/>)
14. Practical Answers (Practical Action, <http://practicalaction.org/practicalanswers/>)
15. R4D: Research4Development (CABI and DFID, <http://www.research4development.info/>)
16. SciDev: The Science and Development Network, <http://scidev.net/en/>)
17. SjCOOP: Peer-to-Peer Monitoring in Science Journalism (WFSJ / World Federation of Science Journalists <http://www.wfsj.org/projects/page.php?id=55>)

## Appendices.

### 1. Terms of Reference

#### Objectives

1. Assess needs and expectations among IDRC program officers and grant recipients in the area of research communications. Identify research support activities being carried out and the way in which POs advise recipients on the communications aspects of research projects and RSPs. Assess how project level communications activities measure up to existing research communication techniques.<sup>23</sup> Identify what kind of communications support research recipients expect from IDRC and what support is expected from Communications Division. *Outcome: a measure of IDRC needs and expectations based on a sampling of IDRC research projects. The consultants will build on the work done by Research Matters —reflected in the report “Perceptions on Knowledge Translation at IDRC: an Informal Scoping Exercise by Research Matters” — but go into greater depth.*
2. Identify the assumed causal links / theories of change implicit in the program officers’ and grant recipients’ responses and their expected outcomes. Assess how these compare with the conceptualization of communications activities and expected outcomes in the models and approaches developed by comparable agencies and organizations: DFID, ODI, AusAID, US National Science Foundation, Guttmacher Institute, European Centre for Development Policy Management, and any other agreed to by the consultants and the project authority. *Outcome: an assessment of IDRC’s existing approach benchmarked against communications support programs in comparable agencies.*
3. Based on the needs assessment, identify the models and approaches (or aspects of these) — among those tested at IDRC (listed in the bullets on page 2 and 3) and/or developed by comparable agencies — that would help the Centre step up its support for research communications. Identify resource implications. *Outcome: the identification of the basic elements that a program to support research communications at IDRC should include and the costs associated with this support.*

#### Statement of Work

- Based on the information gathered and using the criteria of effectiveness, ease of implementation, and resource implications, the consultant will outline IDRC’s options in developing a program of activities over the next five years to
  - Support IDRC grantees in their efforts to communicate their research results and promote uptake

---

<sup>23</sup> These techniques include communications planning (situational and environmental analysis, objectives, target audiences, messages, tools and tactics, and evaluation) as well as policy engagement strategies and the use of knowledge brokers.

- Increase the capacity of IDRC grantees to effectively communicate research results
- In doing so, the researchers will answer and/or consider the following questions:
  - What are the best ways for IDRC to support grantees' research communication efforts, promote research results uptake, and improve capacities for research communications?
  - What weight should an IDRC research communication program give to the objectives of supporting research communication and results uptake, versus improving capacities?
  - What are the resource implications for a program of this nature at the Centre?
  - What are some known challenges, and how can they possibly be overcome?
  - What should be the division of labour between the Communications Division, Programs, and perhaps other units at the Centre?
  - What networks, resources, or centres that already exist in the area of research communications should IDRC monitor? (such as the International Network on Public Communication of Science and Technology)

This advice will help the Director of IDRC's Communications Division to determine how IDRC should support research communications at the project level, how responsibilities and resource requirements for research communications could cut across IDRC, and which division(s) at IDRC is the most natural "owner" of such responsibilities?

## 2. Methodology

The methodology used in this consultancy combines elements of scoping studies with organizational scans. A ‘scoping study’ can be undertaken to “...examine the extent, range and nature of research activity. This type of rapid review might not describe research findings in any detail but is a useful way of mapping fields of study where it is difficult to visualise the range of material that might be available.” (Arksey and O’Malley, 2005: 7) We have pursued this purpose, but not in a comprehensive manner. Beyond recognizing the field of Research Communication, it was important to understand how its different functions and variations are expressed across the Centre. We therefore also borrowed from the management literature on ‘organizational scans’: “The organizational scan is used to get a clear and pinpointed picture of the current state of the organization. It gives insight into the mutual relations of departments, the mutual relations of management and staff and the mutual relations of the organization and its stakeholders.”<sup>24</sup>

Having done such exercises before, we relied on the development -early on- of working hypotheses. We explored emerging themes through on-going dialogue between the two of us, as we too often interpret findings differently.

### *The data collection included:*

- A review of documentation from a variety of IDRC projects and programs.
- A non-comprehensive review of published literature. For published literature in journals several on-line searches were completed through [Ingentaconnect.com](http://ingentaconnect.com) using combinations of key words including: research communications, knowledge management, research uptake, knowledge translation, research to policy, along with related terms (case study, typology, terminology). Practitioner (gray) literature was collected from multiple sources including IDRC, representatives of other agencies, websites, and our own collections.
- Semi-structured interviews with IDRC included:
  - Embedded communications officers
  - Staff from the Communications Division in Ottawa
  - Staff from the Communications Division in regional offices
  - Program officers involved in the research communications support efforts
  - Other regionally-base staff
- Semi-structured interviews with non-IDRC staff
  - Research recipients of 9 projects selected for us by IDRC to represent a cross-section of themes, Research Communication experience, location, and duration.
  - Representatives of other agencies, development funders who are involved in research communication support.
- Scanning other existing networks, centres, or resources that could be helpful for IDRC to monitor ([see Annex 9](#)).
- Participation in the May 5-6 Webinar of the KM Impact Challenge un-Conference “Discovering measures that matter for knowledge management”, Washington, DC.

---

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.osotraining.nl/organizational.html>

***The verification of finding took place via:***

- Iterative feedback with IDRC as we progressed: sharing data collection guides, and emerging findings
- A presentation to senior staff one week after the draft report was submitted, to receive critiques and suggestions (May 27<sup>th</sup>)
- A workshop where staff were invited to analyze emerging findings (also May 27<sup>th</sup>)

***Scope and limitations***

This consultancy included 34 days by two consultants, spread over less than a 2-month period. When it came to reviewing IDRC documented experiences under related labels, and IDRC staff on-the-ground experience in related topics, we felt the proverbial challenge of only seeing the tip of the iceberg.

We were also aware of work already done by various Divisions within IDRC and the wide range of scoping studies; conferences and literature reviews recently undertaken by other agencies (DFID, AUSAID etc.).

The literature covered is far from comprehensive, as it typical of a multi-disciplinary topic with multiple and overlapping keywords and subject-matter variations. A significant challenge remains: finding an all-encompassing framework. What we found were collections of relevant models and theories that inform the subject matter (see articles by Geisler, 2007; Heisig, 2009; Ottoson, 2009; and Stachowiak, 2009). While we felt less hopeful in finding a common definition (see [Annex 2](#)), the most promising is a proposed **common vocabulary of knowledge management** (see Beesley and Cooper, 2011; for a summary see [Annex 3](#)).

A pleasant surprise was the frequent observation by IDRC staff that our interviews **created a reflection space on communication process** that was welcome. During group interviews we witnessed, time and time again, interactions and discoveries of mutually relevant work in progress that staff members had not been aware of. This signals an opportunity to demonstrate the *process side* of communication through a more relaxed, systematic sharing of lessons, as much innovation is brewing and so little time is allocated to learning from it (two regional offices reported doing reflection sessions on a regular basis).

### 3. People interviewed

Date	Name and Organization	Remarks
23-Mar-11	<b>Kerry Albright</b> Research Uptake Team DIFD Research & Evidence Division London, UK	Face-to-face meeting (WQ)
23-Mar-11	<b>Harry Jones</b> RAPID Overseas Development Institute, ODI London, UK	Face-to-face meeting (WQ)
8-Apr-11	<b>Rafael Ramírez</b> Saïd Business School Oxford University, UK	Skype call (RR, WQ)
11-Apr-11	<b>Lousie Guenette</b> , PPG, <b>Michelle Hibler</b> , Communications Division, IDRC	Skype call (RR, WQ)
12-Apr-11	<b>Isabel Vogel</b> DFID Research & Evidence Division London, UK	Skype out (RR, WQ)
14-Apr-11	<b>Nick Ismael-Perkins</b> , Head of Research Communication, IDS University of Sussex, UK	Skype call (RR, WQ)
18-Apr-11	<b>Lauchlan Munro</b> VP Corporate Strategy & Regional Mgt., IDRC	Face-to-face meeting (WQ, RR)
18-Apr-11	<b>Angela Prokopiak</b> , Communications Div. <b>Gerd Schonwalder</b> , Policy & Planning Group IDRC	Face-to-face meeting (WQ, RR)
19-Apr-11	<b>Steven Rayner</b> Director, Institute for Science, Innovation & Society University of Oxford, UK	Skype call (RR, WQ)
19-Apr-11	<b>Mary O'Neill</b> , Climate Change and Adaptation in Africa; <b>Maria Urbina-Fausser</b> , Think-tank initiative	Face-to-face meeting (WQ, RR)
19-Apr-11	<b>Silvia Caicedo</b> , Acacia <b>Sharmila Mhatre</b> , <b>Rosalie Vezina</b> , GEH <b>Marion Sandilands</b> , GGP/SIG	Face-to-face meeting (WQ, RR)
20-Apr-11	<b>Tricia Wind</b> , Evaluation Unit	Face-to-face meeting (WQ, RR)
20-Apr-11	<b>Michelle Hibler</b> , <b>Pauline Dole</b> , <b>Isabelle Bourgeault-Tasse</b> , <b>Jennifer Pepall</b> , <b>Rowena Beamish</b> , <b>Angela Prokopiak</b> Communications Division and <b>Lousie Guenette</b> , PPG	Focus Group (RR, WQ)
26-Apr-11	<b>Andrea Puppo</b> (Uruguay), <b>Prem Koman Damodaran</b> (Singapore), Regional Communications Division Staff.	Skype call (RR, WQ)
27-Apr-11	<b>Vivianne Ngugi</b> (Kenya), Regional Communications Division Staff.	Skype call (RR, WQ)
27-Apr-11	<b>Manuel Flury</b> Deputy Head Knowledge and Learning Processes Division, SDC, Bern	Skype call (RR, WQ)
28-Apr-11	<b>Robert Greenwood</b> , Director, Harris Centre Memorial University St. John's NFL	Phone conferences (RR, WQ)
28-Apr-11	<b>Joseph Thomas</b> , Partner/Villgro Innovations Foundation, Chennai, India	Skype call (RR, WQ)

29-Apr-11	<b>Venkataraman Balaji</b> , Director, Technology and Knowledge Management, Commonwealth of Learning, Vancouver, BC	Skype call (RR, WQ)
29-Apr-11	<b>Bill Carman</b> , Communications Division.	Face-to-face meeting (WQ)
29-Apr-11	<b>Wardie Leppan, Ibrahim Daibes, Veena Ravichandran...</b> Ottawa-based POs.	Face-to-face meeting (WQ) RR by phone
2-May-11	<b>Merle Faminow</b> , Uruguay-based PO	Skype call (RR)
2-May-11	<b>Gustavo Suarez</b> , Communications Director, Guttmacher Institute, New York	Skype call (RR)
3-May-11	<b>Walter Ubal</b> , Uruguay-based PO	Skype call (RR)
4-May-11	<b>Ximena González-Nuñez</b> , and <b>Myriam Velia SADRN / TIPS</b> , South Africa	Skype call (RR)
4-May-11	<b>Rima Nakkash</b> , Partner, AUB, Lebanon	Phone call (RR)
6-May-11	<b>Ellie Osir</b> , Singapore-based PO	Skype call (RR)
9-May-11	<b>Julio Berdegue</b> , RIMISP, partner, Chile	Skype call (RR)
9-May-11	<b>Ulysses Panisset</b> , Partner, WHO, Geneva	Skype call (WQ)
10-May-11	<b>Kathryn Toure</b> , Regional Director WARO	Skype call (RR)
10-May-11	<b>Mumukshu Patel</b> , Global Development Policy and Advocacy Team. B&M Gates Foundation, USA	Skype call (RR)
11-May-11	<b>Paul Okwi</b> , Kenya-based PO	Skype call (RR)
11-May-11	<b>Ulysses Panisset</b> , Partner WHO	Skype call (WQ)
12-May-11	<b>Alex Bielak</b> K* Conference, Hamilton, ON	Face-to-face meeting (RR) and skype (WQ)
12-May-11	<b>Antonio La Vina</b> and <b>Mary Grace Santos</b> Ateneo de Manila, partner, the Philippines	Skype call (RR)
16-May-11	<b>Joanna Pickles</b> AusAID	Skype call (WQ)
16-May-11	<b>Suzanne Taylor</b> CBRM, IDRC	Skype call (WQ)

## 4. Documents reviewed

### **IDRC CORPORATE DOCUMENTS**

- IDRC. 2010. IDRC's Communication Strategy 2010-2015. Prepared for the Board of Governors of IDRC.
- IDRC. 2009. Innovating for Development Strategic Framework 2010-2015. Approved by the Board of Governors, 27 Oct. 2009.
- IDRC. 2002. Closing the loop: Communication for Change at IDRC.

### **IDRC PROJECT REPORTS**

#### ***CCAA Program***

- IDS with KIPPRRA, Kenya; Chancellor College, Malawi & TanzaKesho Consult. Ltd. Tanzania. 2011. *Research to policy for adaptation: Linking African researchers with adaptation policy spaces*. Research to Policy for Adaptation. Final Technical Report March '09-Feb. '11.

#### ***Evaluation Unit***

- Carden, F. 2009. Knowledge to policy: Making the most of development research. Sage and IDRC.
- Ofir, Z. 2009. External evaluation, The Policy Influence of LIRNEasia. External Review of SMIP.
- Neilson, S. 2001. IDRC-supported research and its influence on public policy: Knowledge utilization and public policy processes: A literature review.

#### ***GGP – Research to Policy Support Program***

- Robino, C. & Sandilands, M. 2011. Bridging research supply and policy demand: GGP's Research to Policy Support Program. Final Learning Report.
- R2P - Program brief. Commissioned for the ALF, 2011.
- IDRC, 2009. GGP's Research to Policy Support Program – Pilot Phase, Final Report.

#### ***GEH – Research Matters***

- Barnett, A., Wille, C., Khakee, A. & Williams, G. 2010. Evaluation of Phase II of the SDC/IDRC/GEH Research Matters Project. The Policy Practice, UK.
- Jessani, N. & Reid, G. 2010. Briefing note: Research Matters – Options for the future.
- Seifried, A., Jessani, N. & Reid, G. 2010. Perceptions of knowledge translation at IDRC: an informal scoping exercise by *Research Matters*.

#### ***PBD – Partnership and Business Development Division***

- Bassey, M.W. 2009. Evaluation of the IDRC Project on Capacity Building in Resource Mobilization.

#### ***PPG – Research Support Projects***

- Mohan, S. 2010. Review of Communicating for Influence in Research Support Projects. (Draft 3). Commissioned for the ALF, 2011.

## IDRC COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA TRAINING EVENTS

Annual Learning Forum (ALF), Ottawa, 2011. Agenda; Skill Building Workshops; Unposter sessions; rPCR review; Interviews with Regional Communication Officers. Organized by the Evaluation Unit.

Communication and Media Training for PANAsia partners, Hyderabad, India. 2008. Organized by PANAce. <http://communicating4influence.wordpress.com/about-the-workshop/>

## IDRC KITS, GUIDELINES, BOOKS

Communications Division toolkit. 2008-09. On-line at [http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-134125-201-1-DO\\_TOPIC.html](http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-134125-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)

Research Matters. 2008. Knowledge Translation: A 'Research Matters' Toolkit. IDRC. [259 pages]

Gauthier, J. 2005. Popularize, produce, disseminate. IDRC People, Land and Water Initiative. IDRC.

Bessette, G. (ed). 2005. *People, land & water: Participatory development communication for natural resource management*. IDRC People, Land and Water Initiative. IDRC.

Ramírez, R. & Quarry, W. 2004. *Communication for development: A medium for innovation in natural resource management*. IDRC and FAO.

## PUBLISHED ARTICLES, STUDIES, REPORTS & LITERATURE REVIEWS

Adolf, B. with Proctor, F.; van der Gaag, N, Davies, J. & Carlile, L. 2006. *Learning lessons on research uptake and use: Donor review on research communication*. Triple Line Consulting, London, for DFID.

Arksey and O'Malley, 2005. Scoping studies: towards a methodological framework. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 8(1): 19-32.

Beesley, L.G.A. & Cooper, C. 2011. Defining knowledge management (KM) activities: Towards consensus. *Journal of Knowledge Management* 12(2): 48-62

Bielak, A.; Campbell, A.; Pole, S, Schaeffer, K and Shaxson, L. 2008. From science communication to knowledge brokering: The shift from 'science push' to 'policy pull'. In: Cheng, D.; Claessens, M.; Gascione, T. & Metcalfe, J. (Eds) *Communicating science in Social Contexts: New models, new practices Strategies for the future*. (pp. 201-226). Springer: Dordrecht.

Booth, D. 2011. Working with the grain and swimming against the tide: Barriers to uptake of research findings on governance and public services in low-income Africa. *Africa and Power Politics Working Paper 18*. ODI: London.

Burbridge, A.H.; Maron, M.; Clarke, M.F.; Baker, J.; Oliver, D.L. & Ford, G. 2011. Linking science and practice in ecological research and management: How can we do it better? *Ecological management & restoration* 12(1): 54-60.

Butcher, C. & Yaron, G. 2006. *Scoping study: Monitoring and evaluation of research communications*. Prepared by IDS for the Research Communication M&E Steering Group. UK.

Carden, F. 2004. *Issues in assessing the policy influence of research*. Unesco: Paris.

Carter, I. & Paulus, K., 2010. *Research communication: Insights from practice*. A working paper of the Research Communication Strategy Group.

Geisler, E. 2007. A typology of knowledge management: Strategic groups and role behavior in organizations. *Journal of Knowledge Management* 11(1): 84-96

Gonsalves, T. & Baranyi, S. 2003. *Research for policy influence: A history of IDRC intent*. IDRC.

- Harrison, T. & Nutley, T. 2010. *A review of constraints to using data for decision making. Recommendations to inform the design of interventions*. Measure Evaluation for USAID.
- Hitchman, K. 2010. *Organizational structure and functions within intermediary organizations: A comparative analysis*. Waterloo, ON: Canadian Water Network.
- Hyder, A.A.; Corluka, A.; Winch, P.J.; El-Shinnawy, A.; Ghassany, H.; Malekafzali, H.; Lim, M.K.; Mfutso-Bengo, J.; Segura, E. & Ghaffar, A. 2011. National policy-makers speak out: are researchers giving them what they need? *Health Policy and Planning* 26(1): 73-82
- Heisig, P. 2009. Harmonisation of knowledge management – comparing 160 KM frameworks around the globe. *Journal of Knowledge Management* 13(4): 4-31.
- Jones, H. 2011. *A guide to monitoring and evaluating policy influence*. ODI Background Note.
- Neilson, S. 2001. *IDRC-supported research and its influence on public policy: Knowledge utilization and public policy processes*. A literature review. IDRC.
- Nutley, S.M.; Walter, I. & Davies, H.T.O. 2007. *Using evidence: How research can inform public services*. Bistol: The Policy Press.
- Parkhurst, J.O.; Hyde, A.; South, A.; Brehmer, L.; Miller, A. Newell, J.N., 2010. Improving communication of research findings: identifying the sources of information most important to national disease control officers in low- and middle-income countries. *Tropical Medicine & International Health* 15(10): 1252-1255.
- Pemsl, D.E. & Seidel-Lass, L. 2010. Informal networks in policy processes: The case of community-based fisheries management in Bangladesh. *Journal of Development Effectiveness* 2(4): 486-503.
- Powell, M. 2003. *Information management for developing countries*. Second Edition. Oxford: Oxfam Development Guidelines.
- O’Neil, M. 2005. What determines the influence that research has on policy-making? *Journal of International Development* 17: 761-764
- Ottoson, J. M. 2009. Knowledge-for-action theories in evaluation: Knowledge utilization, diffusion, implementation, transfer, and translation. In J. M. Ottoson & P. Hawe (Eds.), *Knowledge utilization, diffusion, implementation, transfer, and translation: Implications for evaluation*. New Directions for Evaluation, 124, 7–20.
- Ramalingam, B. 2011. Learning how to learn: eight lessons for impact evaluations that make a difference. *ODI Background Note*: April.
- RIMISP. 2010. *Rural territorial dynamics program. Annual report*. Santiago de Chile.
- Shaxson, L. 2010. *Improving the impact of development research through better research communications and uptake*. Delta Parntership, for UKAid, DFID, Australina Government Aid Program and UKCDS.
- Soal, S. 2007. Towards “better” evaluation – an account of one internal practice. Paper presented at the *Australasian Evaluation Society (AES) Conference*, September 2007, Melbourne.
- Sumner, A.; Ishmael-Perkins, N. and Lindstrom, J. 2009. Making science of influencing: Assessing the impact of development research. *IDS Working Paper 335*. IDS: Brighton.
- Whitty, B. 2011. *Whose research? Beneficiary participation in research and advocacy processes*. One World Trust: London.
- Young, J. 2009. Helping researchers become policy entrepreneurs. *ODI Briefing Paper 53*. London.