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Communicating Research for Impact and Influence - Roodevallei Hotel, Pretoria, South Africa – 11th -15th November 2013

Workshop Report

Background

The Canadian International Food Security Programme (CIFSRF - www.idrc.ca/cifsrf) will be completing its phase 1 in September 2014. Projects funded under this programme are generating research results and development outcomes from their empirical work. These will need to be packaged, communicated and disseminated to different audiences in order to influence development and research on agriculture and food security.

A challenge for many of the CIFSRF projects is to effectively develop and implement an effective communication strategy that can help to put research into use. CIFSRF therefore decided to support and encourage effective communication, publication and dissemination of project results through a five-day workshop, facilitated by UK-based communication company, WRENmedia, together with an African co-trainer, Beatrice Ouma of the Future Agricultures Consortium. Through a series of outputs, the workshop was intended to raise the visibility of the programme in the region, in Canada and globally, and explore opportunities for scaling up and uptake of innovative results, or for influencing programming in agriculture and food security in the region.

Objectives

A central objective of the workshop was to strengthen the capacities of CIFSRF research teams to understand and use effective strategies, approaches and tools for engaging with policy processes, and for linking their research to influence policies. In particular, the project teams were supported in producing three outputs: an outcome story to document significant outcomes during the first 4 years of the project; a policy brief on one issue informed by the research process; and a communication strategy (including timelines/milestones and budgeting) for the final year of the project.

Planning the workshop

Principal investigators from the nine CIFSRF-supported projects in sub-Saharan Africa were invited to send project team members (including themselves) to attend the workshop. For each project, a maximum of four team members were able to attend; the total number invited was 32. Also present at the workshop were five staff from IDRC and CIFSRF - Pascal Sanginga, Bill Morton, Gloria Lihemo, Louise Guénette and (for the final two days) Kevin Thiessen.

Following discussion and email exchange with Pascal Sanginga of IDRC, an initial draft workshop programme was devised by WRENmedia, based on their experience in delivering similar workshops with African research teams. This was followed up by a needs assessment process, in which workshop participants were invited to indicate their levels of familiarity with a wide range of communication approaches, state their challenges in communicating research, and their priorities for learning during the week.

As a result of the needs assessment and further discussions with Pascal Sanginga and Bill Morton, WRENmedia adjusted the draft programme, essentially removing some sessions on wider use of mainstream media to communicate research, and focussing on the production of the three outputs mentioned above. At the request of Pascal Sanginga, it was decided that the outcome stories

produced by the project teams would highlight gender-related outcomes, as this was both an important subject and one that projects tended to find reporting on difficult.

Venue
With advice from IDRC and other organisational partners, WRENmedia proposed a number of venues for the workshop, including locations in Kenya, Uganda and South Africa. The Roodevallei Hotel in Pretoria, South Africa, was selected, on the basis of offering a suitable working atmosphere, high standards of service, administrative support with visa applications, indoor and outdoor work spaces, and competitive prices.

The workshop venue at the Roodevallei Hotel was ideal, in offering an appropriately sized and well lit main training room, and a pleasant, shaded, outside garden area with covered tables, immediately adjacent to the training room, where project groups were able to discuss and work comfortably, without disturbing others. Given the intensity of the workshop activities in getting the various outputs to a near-finished form, having this peaceful and pleasant outside working space was very beneficial.

Travel
Travel arrangements (i.e. flight bookings) for the majority of participants were made and paid for by the projects themselves. WRENmedia was responsible for booking travel for seven participants, whose costs were borne by IDRC. Transport to and from the airport for all participants was arranged by WRENmedia using a local transport company.

Visas
WRENmedia provided letters of invitation to the workshop, and the Roodevallei Hotel provided confirmation of accommodation, to assist participants in applying for visas.

Project information
WRENmedia advised participants on the types of information they would need to bring to the workshop, in order to work effectively on their communication outputs. This included research data, testimonies and quotes, and photographs. In particular, project teams were advised to bring information that would be useful in reporting on gender-related outcomes.

The workshop

Attendance
Two invited participants failed to attend the workshop because of late application for visas, namely Esther Njuguna (Kenya) and Geda Regassa (Ethiopia). The absence of Esther Njuguna in particular was very regrettable, as she was a key member of her project team, who therefore faced greater challenges in working on their output documents. One other team member – Prof Ayanwale (Nigeria), arrived on Day 2 after needing to get a new passport.

Attendance was otherwise good; two members of the South African team were absent on one occasion each, in order to meet important project-related commitments, but otherwise played a full part in the workshop. Despite long working hours – including scheduled evening work – no participants were observed to absent themselves from the workshop or devote their attention to other work. Given their heavy workloads and ongoing need to handle email communication etc., this commitment was commendable.

Programme
While small adjustments in the timing and order of some sessions were made, in general the workshop followed the planned

programme very closely. Annex 1 contains the full programme, revised shortly after the end of the workshop, to show the activities delivered.

The broad approach was to work through activity-based sessions, rather than 'from the front' presentations. Thus, participants were grouped and invited to analyse examples of outcomes stories and policy briefs produced by other organisations, in order to consider how to write their own. They were provided with guiding questions, sometimes in tabular form, in order to facilitate their in-project discussions and to identify information needed in compiling their outputs.

The majority of group time was spent working in project teams to discuss, draft and refine their outcome story (over roughly 2 days), policy brief (1.5 days) and communication strategy (1 day). Their draft stories and briefs were critiqued by other projects in a peer review process, providing constructive suggestions on how they could be strengthened. IDRC staff also provided written feedback during the drafting process, to ensure groups were on target and meeting the desired goals for the communication products.

The group work sessions were broken up with other activities, to provide variety and focus, including two short sessions on use of photographs, a 'dragons den', where participants presented their key messages on gender outcomes in an imaginative, impactful way to two potential 'policy makers/donors' (Louise and Kevin), and viewing digital stories (photos with audio) covering the work of the Tanzanian and Ethiopian projects, produced by IDRC Corporate Communications department.

On the afternoon of Day 3, the participants had a break from the hotel, travelling into central Pretoria to visit the offices of the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN), to see the Union Building, and to visit a shopping mall. Including the sightseeing and shopping elements of this trip was felt to be important, in responding to criticism expressed at previous IDRC workshops, where participants complained they had no opportunity to 'see' the host location/country.

Input from FANRPAN

With experience in influencing policy processes, including on gender-related issues, the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) were invited to be partners in the workshop, and had input at two points. On Day 1, Sithembile Ndema gave a presentation introducing the network, and explaining work it has been involved with in Malawi and Mozambique to support Theatre for Policy Advocacy. Using drama has proved an effective way to create discussion about gender-related issues, and to raise awareness about these issues among local level administrators.

On the afternoon of Day 3, the participants were invited to visit FANRPAN's office in Pretoria to learn more about the network's activities. CEO Lindiwe Sibanda gave an opening address of welcome, explaining the origins of FANRPAN. Hlami Ngwenya described knowledge management systems in FANRPAN, and Sithembile Ndema gave a short presentation (as intended in the workshop programme) on the network's use of social media to influence policy processes.

While the input from FANRPAN was very welcome, it could have been more carefully tailored to fit with the objectives of the workshop. In terms of the presentation on Day 1, only a relatively small part of this addressed the key topic intended – creative approaches to influencing gender policy processes. Of the presentations given at the FANRPAN office, only the short presentation on use of social media really matched with the facilitators' expectations. Initially a less formal style of visit had been anticipated, which would allow for a more productive question and answer session to address in more detail the participants' concerns and queries regarding use of social media in influencing policy, or to explore ways of influencing gender policies in more depth. The introduction

to FANRPAN and the talk on knowledge management did not really serve much purpose in terms of the workshop goals.

Participants' evaluation

All thirty workshop participants completed a workshop evaluation form on the final day. The following is a summary of their responses.

1) Organisation of workshop

These aspects (invitations/booking management, info about workshop, hotel and meals, venue (training room), and transport) were all rated either Very Good or Good by over 90% of participants, except for the venue, which was rated Fair by 7 participants.

Critical comments regarding the venue (including hotel) included:

- preference to be located in urban area for evening relaxation
- aircon not working adequately
- poor lighting
- internet poor in rooms
- more diversity needed in meals

No aspect of the venue received criticism from more than two people.

2) Content of workshop

All the sessions were rated as either Very Good or Good by over 90% of the participants. In commenting in more detail on the workshop programme, the following issue was raised:

Time was too short/programme was too busy

Twenty participants (66%) referred in some way to the busyness of the programme, the lack of time to tackle tasks adequately, or the need to work long hours into the evening and lack of 'downtime', as making the week very hard work. While a minority acknowledged that such long hours were necessary, the majority would have preferred less content, a longer course, rest days before and/or after the workshop, or simply not having to work in the evenings.

3) What did you learn at the workshop that will make the most difference in your work?

Learning how to write an outcome story (18 people) and a policy brief (15 people) were by far the most popular responses. Other responses included:

- writing a communications strategy (4 people)
- being focussed and precise (3)
- presenting results to non-scientists (2)
- supporting findings with evidence (2)
- getting feedback from IDRC (1)
- how gender fits in food security (1)

4) Any changes to propose to project team?

- Producing more outcome stories/policy briefs etc. (4)
- Must plan communication from outset of project (3)
- Expand team with communication specialists (2)
- Help team better understand how outcomes will impact real people (2)
- Revise communication strategy (1)

- Refocus research activities to ensure necessary info can be collected (1)
- Be more careful in writing project proposals, not to overstate impacts (1)

5) What aspect of workshop did you like the most?

- Preparation of policy briefs (9)
- Preparation of outcome stories (8)
- Peer review during drafting process (5)
- Using own data to develop outcome story/policy brief (2)
- Provision of outcome story examples (1)
- Team bonding (1)
- Deep thought needed to develop key message (1)
- Networking (1)

6) What aspect did you like the least?

- Long hours/too many sessions in one day (4)
- Too packed/pressure to finish/time constraint (3)
- Hot room/poor audibility/lack of space in room (3)
- Photography – needed practical guidance (2)
- Policy brief – project is not ready for this (1)
- Communication strategy (1)
- FANRPAN visit (1)

7) Other feedback?

- Too much evening work/lack of downtime
- Need more time – divide into 2 workshops/longer training period needed
- Reduce objectives to outcome story and policy brief
- Make clearer distinction between outcome story and policy brief
- Need session on improving Powerpoint skills/posters and multimedia
- Need more opportunities to write for different audiences
- Choose urban location so more opportunities in evening
- "Work for money is better than work for meals" – presumably a request for a per diem or other form of financial recompense
- Allow non-attending team members to have input prior to workshop
- Do assignments in advance, and use workshop to refine them
- Need more networking opportunities between project teams
- Arrange system for better audibility of participants – i.e. use some kind of PA system
- More emphasis on communication strategies
- Provide more feedback

Further support requested

The project teams were asked, as part of the evaluation, to list what further support they would like in order to carry out their planned communication activities.

ASAPAM (Mali)

- Support from CIFSRF and IDRC might be needed – resources and funding – to implement communication activities that were not initially planned, and others that were planned but without appropriate budget.
- Having funds enough, support from WRENmedia would be much appreciated.

- Training in communication for other team members could also be considered very useful.

CBPP vaccine development project

- IDRC – for experts to help us develop an audio-slide-show documentary
- WRENmedia – outcome stories and policy briefs and other applicable publications
- A partnership of scientific reviewers between ARC-OVI

KARI-McGill project

- It would be good for the project to have funds to hire a full time communications person to assist in coordinating implementation of the strategy, including organising of the continental CIFSRF conference in June or July which we hope will be in Nairobi.
- We would like to make more use of resources available to us from IDRC Ottawa and Nairobi in terms of support for communication aspects (e.g. access to photos, expertise, publication support).

Better Vegetable Opportunities for Nigerian Women

- IDRC's technical support to conclude and produce the outcome stories and policy brief.
- WRENmedia support to layout and design the outcome stories and policy brief.

Better Fertiliser Use in the Sahel

- Support to participants to conference on food insecurity in Canada (August)
- Editing of the policy brief and outcome stories.
- Visiting scientist to Saskatchewan to finalise papers.

Livestock vaccine for sub-Saharan Africa

- Difficult to say, although maybe help with including video snippets etc. in Powerpoint presentations.

Improving human nutrition in Ethiopia through plant breeding and soil health

- Feedback on refining selected activities and tools (in comm. strategy)
- Terms of reference for consultants
- Draft communication strategy and the tools.

Goat and root crops project, Tanzania

- More training of the rest of the research team by professionals like WRENmedia.
- Facilitation of WRENmedia or other competent communication experts to continuously provide backstopping during development of our communication materials for the rest of the project period.

Debriefing meetings

The IDRC and WRENmedia teams met at the end of each day's training to discuss the progress and refine the plan for the following day. We also met at the end of workshop to share thoughts in how things could be improved if a similar workshop were to be carried out in future. The main suggestions were:

- A more systemised approach to how IDRC and WRENmedia staff interacted with the project groups during their independent work sessions would be beneficial.
- Having a clearer explanation of an outcome, a process – some basic concepts – would help participants to understand the task of writing outcome stories better.
- Spend time looking at objectives of the research communication and the audience for this communication at the beginning of the workshop, in order to make the context of the outcome stories and policy briefs clearer.

- Another possible element to include would be appropriate tools for communication for development (e.g. could include video).
- Some changes in how project teams are organised for the production of outputs could be valuable, to address issues in group dynamics (i.e. tendency for some individuals to dominate and others to have less input or influence in the group).

Suggestions/things to consider for future training

To achieve greater efficiency in production of outcome stories and policy briefs, project teams could be divided into pairs or (if necessary) threes, once an initial 'whole team' brainstorming exercise was complete. These smaller groups could concentrate on all or part of a product, and have the opportunity to share their work with the whole team as necessary, in order to get feedback and make adjustments.

Alternatively, or in addition, each product (outcome story, policy brief etc.) could have a 'champion' in the team, who would be responsible for directing team discussions and ensuring a good rate of progress. This would be intended to address an observed problem in Pretoria of team discussions being loose and poorly driven.

As suggested above, the 'know your objectives' and 'know your audiences' sections of the 'how to make a communications strategy' session could be brought forward to the first day of the workshop, in order for participants to understand the goals behind the communication products they were going to be working on.

The workshop organisers need to consider carefully whether to reduce the content of the workshop, or increase the time available, in order to put the participants under less pressure. While the achievements of the workshop in Pretoria were impressive, in essentially getting the outcome stories and policy briefs to an advanced draft stage, and having a detailed communication strategy drawn up, the high number of 'complaints' about the long hours deserve at least to be listened to. In a five day workshop of this kind, aiming to achieve 2 of the 3 main objectives (most likely, outcome stories and policy briefs) is more reasonable, if participants are to have necessary time for rest and relaxation in the evenings, as well as stay on top of email and work commitments outside the workshop. An extra day could be added to allow time to develop communication strategies, although this might raise other difficulties.

With a longer lead up time to the workshop, it might be possible for project teams to gather input from non-attending project members (as suggested by one participant in their evaluation), and even make some initial progress in defining key messages or identifying issues for policy briefs. This process would need to be closely led or monitored by the training facilitators, to ensure that all project teams were achieving a similar level of progress. It would probably require more 'ownership' by principal investigators of the training process, whose responsibility it might be to ensure that this preparatory work was done to a sufficient level.

A more robust system of reporting on travel and visa arrangements could be beneficial in ensuring that all participants are on track with their various applications. This might ideally be managed by either the principal investigators or by an IDRC staff person – i.e. someone with sufficient 'clout' to ensure that appropriate actions were being taken in good time.

More in depth pre-workshop discussions with partner organisations (such as FANRPAN) could be valuable in helping to ensure that these sessions achieve what is intended. It could be worth the organisers considering payment of these guest resource people, although previous experience suggests this does not necessarily achieve the desired result. Finding ways to engage partners more fully in the planning process may be a better option. Facilitators need to be very clear about what they are hoping for, and communicate this clearly to the partners.

Annex 1: Participant list

Ethiopia
Carol Jean Henry
Atul Nayyar
Sheleme Beyene Jiru
Tewodros Tefera Ameda
Zenebe Worku Woldeyes

CBPP
Elizabeth Muthoni Waithanji
Mary Romona Ndanyi
Virginia Wangari Ndungu
Wesonga Hezron Okwako

Tanzania
Faustin Paul Lekule
Devotha Baltazary Mosha
Joyce Lyimo-Macha
Deogratias Dominic Shayo

Nigeria
Durodoluwa Joseph Oyedele
Adebooye Odunayo Clement
Adeolu Babatunde Ayanwale
Alao Titus Oluwagbenga
Olanike Fasilat Deji

KARI-McGill
Zipporah Bukania
Kimberly Lynn Bothi
Leigh Brownhill
Lutta Muhammad

Benin
Ibro Madougou Abdoulaye
Baco Mohamed Nasser

Mali
Hamidou Nantoumé
Jean Bonneville

South Africa
David Wallace
Arshad Mather
Thireshni Chetty
Safiyya Goga

Annex 2: Programme

Communicating Research for Impact and Influence - Roodevallei Hotel, Pretoria, South Africa - 11th -15th November 2013

Day 1

Setting the scene (Facilitator – Pascal)
Pascal Sanginga sets the scene for the workshop in a presentation – 'Showing decision makers the value of science' – which highlights:

- the need to show impact in the lives of ordinary people from CIFSRF projects;
- persistent failings in research communication;
- how to track outcomes (not impacts) from research projects;
- the need for projects to provide evidence of their value;
- and the purpose of the workshop in working on three key products:
    - outcome stories,
    - policy briefs,
    - communications strategies.

Brief introductions to the training facilitators (Mike Davison, Susanna Thorp, Olivia Frost, Beatrice Ouma), IDRC/CIFSRF participants (Bill Morton, Gloria Lihemo, Louise Guénette), FANRPAN guest speakers (Sithembile Ndema and Hlami Ngwenya) and workshop participants (by principal investigators).

Writing outcome stories – part 1 (WRENmedia)
Participants are firstly mixed up, by asking them to move around and find people whose birthday is in the same month as their own. They then sit in groups of four. Each group is presented with four outcome stories representing a variety of formats, lengths and styles. They are allocated one to each group member, and they are asked to identify:

- What different types of evidence of change the outcome story contains? (e.g. statistical, anecdotal, testimony, photographic etc.)
- What different types of change have been documented? (e.g. behaviour, attitude, practices, livelihoods etc.)

Facilitator gathers oral feedback on their observations for each of the four stories.

Purpose: To get participants thinking about types of evidence and types of change that may be relevant for their own outcome stories. To see some models of outcome stories, in order to better understand how outcomes can be documented.

Writing outcome stories – part 2 (WRENmedia)
Pascal explains the difference between outcomes and impacts and why gender-related outcomes have been chosen as the focus for the outcome stories to be produced at the workshop.

In particular, he outlines the following issues to be addressed:

- What difference has the project made in lives of poor men and women (how many/how much)?
- What are the three to five most important results of the project that have led to this success?
- How is the project unique/different?
- Outcomes may be changes in policy, practice or technology. They may not have yet produced impacts (i.e. real changes in people's wealth, health etc.)

Project teams are given copies of the 13 AFS Expected Outcomes, plus the gender outcome indicators tracking table, and work to identify gender outcomes from their projects – either outcomes already achieved, or prospective outcomes assuming the research process continues as anticipated.

Lunch

Engaging with policy making processes (Sithembile Ndema and Hlami Ngwenya, FANRPAN)
Sithembile Ndema (with support from Hlami Ngwenya) gives an introduction to FANRPAN and its use of creative approaches to influence gender policy processes, including:

- FANRPAN's strategic partnerships
- Capacity development for policy advocacy
- Knowledge management and communications
- Policy advocacy and engagement platforms
- Using theatre for policy advocacy
- How gender fits into policy space
- Ensuring a gender perspective in policy development

Short question and answer session.

Writing outcome stories – part 3 (WRENmedia)
Project teams begin planning how they will present their key messages on gender outcomes in an imaginative/impactful way.

Describing pictures – and being aware of assumptions (WRENmedia)
Trainees are divided into groups of six, and each given a striking photograph. They take it in turns to describe their photograph to the other group members, who must try to imagine it from the description. When each photograph is revealed, groups discuss how well the describer did, and any significant omissions/failings in communication.

Facilitator summarises the purpose of the activity, in particular the challenge of communicating clearly when the 'audience' has very limited knowledge of the subject compared to the communicator.

Evening work
Project groups continue refining their key messages on gender outcomes, to be presented in an imaginative way on Day 2.

Day 2

Writing outcome stories – part 4 (WRENmedia)
A representative (or more than one) of each project group presents a key message/s on the gender outcomes of their project in an imaginative/impactful way – e.g. using drama, artwork, powerpoint etc.

Participants are 'tested' to see what they can remember from this series of short presentations.

Writing outcome stories – part 5 (WRENmedia)
(before and after Lunch)
Project teams draft a gender outcome story, based on given structure:

- Key message
- Motivation/context

- Outcomes (including evidence for these)
- Extra material to be included (photos, graphs, tables, quotes/testimonies etc.)

Photographs – what makes a good picture? (WRENmedia)
Analysing a series of printed images that illustrate good and bad points in typical project photographs. (Including lack of clear focus/message, poor composition, use of action and activity, depicting empowered people, technical ability to handle bright and low light, use of focus, filling the frame, etc.)

Writing outcome stories – part 6 (WRENmedia)
Participants are divided in three groups, each consisting of 2 or 3 project teams. They are facilitated to give constructive feedback on each others draft outcome stories, focussing on these issues:

- How clear, new and innovative are the outcomes presented?
- What evidence is included?
- What type of language is used – technical jargon/simple terms?
- Any other comments?

Evening work
Project groups revise outcome stories based on the comments received in group critique.

Day 3

Photo competition (WRENmedia)
Participants invited to take photos on a number of themes. (portrait, action, gender…) for a competition, to be 'judged' at end of workshop.

Writing policy briefs – part 1 (WRENmedia)
Participants are numbered from 1-4, to form four mixed groups. These are given a series of questions to analyse a policy brief. The four groups are facilitated in analysing four different policy briefs by the facilitators, sitting at four large tables. After analysing one brief, the groups then move to a new table, and facilitator, in order to analyse a second brief using the same criteria.

Writing policy briefs – part 2 (WRENmedia)

Project teams discuss the following questions:

- Which of our findings have the most significant policy implications?
- How do these findings connect to wider policy and development programmes, or the food and nutrition security agenda?
- What support are we looking from policy makers to improve the impact of our research?
- Who should we be targeting with our policy brief?

Writing policy briefs – part 3 (WRENmedia)
Project groups are given a series of guiding questions in order to consider what information they ought to include in different sections of a policy brief related to their project.

- Background
  - What is the extent of this issue, in your country or beyond?
  - What is the effect of this issue on food and nutrition security or development more broadly?
- Evidence
  - What key findings from your research have a bearing on this issue?
  - Are there particular facts, data or examples that deserve to be known/understood by policy makers?

- Recommendations
    - What recommendations would you make regarding future research on this issue?
    - What recommendations would you make on policy to address this issue?
- Sources and further information
    - Where can policy makers get more information or more in depth evidence?
    - What online resources are available on this issue, to support your position?

Participants are given an ODI background note on *Policy briefs as a communication tool for development research*.

Lunch

Visit to FANRPAN (Lindiwe Sibanda, Hlami Ngwenya, Sithembile Ndema)
Lindiwe Sibanda, CEO of FANRPAN welcomes the participants and gives a brief introduction to FANRPAN. Hlami Ngwenya gives a presentation on knowledge management processes in FANRPAN. Sithembile Ndema gives a presentation on how FANRPAN uses social media in targeting policy makers and others with research messages.

Visiting the Union Building and other parts of Pretoria for sightseeing/shopping.

Evening meal – a barbecue at the hotel.

Day 4

Writing policy briefs – part 4 (WRENmedia)
Project teams prepare and deliver (by a project representative) a 2 minute presentation on their chosen policy issue to a 'dragon's den' panel of 'policy makers' (Louise Guénette, Kevin Thiessen and Pascal Sanginga), in order to win support for their recommendations.

Writing policy briefs – part 5 (WRENmedia)
Project teams write draft policy brief based on IDRC policy brief template. Email to facilitator for printing.

Lunch

Writing policy briefs – part 6 (WRENmedia)
As with outcome stories, participants are divided into three groups, each consisting of 2 or 3 project teams (but different combinations than used in outcome story critiquing).

The large groups offer constructive feedback on the two or three draft policy briefs produced by the group members – with instruction to offer point out one 'good' thing about each brief, and one area for improvement (including a recommendation of what that improvement might be) on each policy brief.

Making an actionable communications strategy – part 1 (Pascal and WRENmedia)
Pascal advises of events coming up in the final year of the projects where communications input from the projects will be needed – e.g. end of project workshops, high level dialogue meeting.

Project teams write two lists of events coming up in the next year where communicating their research outcomes will or may be possible. One list contains events that are very specific to the topic of their research. The second list contains events that may be of interest to other teams.

Making an actionable communications strategy – part 2 (Louise and WRENmedia)
Louise Guénette advises on the information requirements of CIFSRF's Canadian funders, in order for project teams to understand how they need to be including this audience group in their communications strategies.

Project teams work through a series of questions in order to identify their audiences, and what they hope to achieve in communicating with them.

- Who are the people, at what level and in what institutions that you want to influence or inform with your research?
- Why should they listen to you/care?
- Will they agree with you? Are they potential partners?
- What role might they play in the research's uptake?
- How might they be useful in relation to the achievement of your objectives?

For each audience identified, they discuss:

- What do you want this audience to do as a result of your communication with them? Act differently? Think differently? Design or implement policies differently?

Participants are also given copy of *CIFSRF Audience mapping and messaging* table.

Evening work
Project teams divide into two groups, to continue work on the outcome stories and policy briefs, based on feedback from group discussions (for policy briefs) and written feedback from Pascal, Bill and Kevin (for outcome stories).

Day 5

Making an actionable communications strategy – part 3 (WRENmedia)
Beatrice Ouma gives an introduction to the importance and value of communication strategies. Participants are given a sample communication strategy (Future Agricultures Consortium regional outreach strategy) and an IDRC guideline paper on *Developing a communications strategy*.

Project teams draft an actionable communications strategy for the final year of their project, including milestones, timelines and budget allocation, based on a series of questions (focussed on who is best to communicate and how, timescale and resources) and a given template.

Audience	**Key messages**	**Activities and tools**	**Timeline**	**Responsibility**	**Resources and budget**
Identify those audiences with whom you need to communicate to achieve your project goals. (be specific e.g, permanent secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture)	Identify the key message you would like to communicate to this audience.	Identify the tools and activities that are most appropriate to communicating the key messages to your target audience. (be realistic about time and resources available)	Indicate a timeline by which you would do a particular activity.	Indicate the person from within the project team who will take the lead in a particular activity.	Indicate the resources needed to complete your activities.

Action plans and commitments to implement communication strategies (Pascal)
During the above session, Pascal outlines the need for project teams to agree on specific milestones and deliverables in implementing their communication strategies, and advises on budgetary availability.

Lunch

Finalising workshop outputs (WRENmedia)
Project teams are given roughly 2 hours to progress/complete their three outputs – outcome story, policy brief and communication strategy. These are emailed to facilitator by a given time.

Workshop evaluation (WRENmedia)
Participants complete an individual evaluation form for the workshop, and teams are asked to state what further support they will or may need in order to implement their communications strategies.

Photo competition results (WRENmedia)
Reviewing the entries and judges' decision on the top photos in each category – to be awarded suitable small 'prizes'.

Next steps and way forward (Pascal)

Presentation of workshop certificates and close of workshop.
Pascal presents participants with certificate of attendance and closes the workshop.

Preparing Final Technical Reports
Pascal, Kevin and Bill facilitate a meeting for principal investigators on what the project Final Technical Reports should contain.

Annex 3: Workshop resources

Day 1 resources

Outcome stories:

Rice Market Monitoring In Vietnam

Motivation
The Vietnamese economy underwent a series of profound macroeconomic and institutional policy reforms after 1986 that put the country on the path to becoming a market economy. As this process of transition continued, Vietnam faced the challenge of formulating and implementing a growth strategy that was both economically and politically viable. Critical to this growth strategy was the role of agriculture and, within agriculture, the development of an efficient and flexible rice marketing system. The rice market was the most important subsector in Vietnam's agriculture and its development had serious implications for the rest of agriculture and the country's overall economy. The Rice Market Monitoring project, supported by ADB, identified market development as the main element of a strategy promoting the growth of the rural economy. The objective was to provide the Vietnamese government with more in-depth analysis of alternative rice policies.

Outcomes
IFPRI's research partnership with Vietnam from 1995 to 1997 illuminated the policy environment with new information that informed and influenced rice policy. Research results showed that Vietnam had the potential to be the largest rice exporter in the world if exports were not too heavily taxed, quotas were not too restrictive, and the exchange rate depreciated at a pace close to that of inflation. To help realize this potential, IFPRI suggested a set of policy recommendations that would contribute to higher national income, higher farmer incomes, and improved food security: 1) relax or eliminate restrictions on internal movement of rice and on rice exports; 2) reduce the role of state-owned enterprises in rice marketing; 3) maintain macroeconomic stability; 4) provide targeted food security assistance rather than distorting the rice price; and 5) increase investment in agricultural research.

- Conservative estimates of the benefit–cost ratios on the investment made in the IFPRI research were 56:1 when only the benefits to Vietnam were included and 91:1 when the returns to the rest of the world were included as well, according to an external evaluation of the project.
- Key decision makers in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development requested that IFPRI examine current rice policy in Vietnam and various policy alternatives, including relaxing internal movement restrictions and raising the rice export quota. These decision-makers then advocated for the study's policy recommendations when the results were released. IFPRI conducted 19 workshops and seminars in Vietnam, which helped to build the consensus required for policy change. The study filled a gap in research on Vietnam by providing a detailed understanding of the rice sector and basic information on a number of market aspects.
- Following the study's conclusion, the government of Vietnam requested IFPRI assistance in a number of different studies on topics including crop diversification, poverty mapping, livestock promotion, fruit and vegetable development, and food processing.

Burundi's women of war turn to rice

Women who fought in the civil war of the east African country of Burundi are getting unprecedented access to farm land and training to produce rice and are building better livelihoods for themselves, their families, and communities.

"These ex-combatant Burundi women are turning their own lives around. They just needed a helping hand to get started," said Joseph Bigirimana, liaison scientist and coordinator for the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in Burundi. "Now they are helping our country towards rice self-sufficiency and building a more stable future for all Burundians."

In 1993, women fought in Burundi's bloody internal battle, but when peace was installed by 2005, many of them were excluded from reintegration programs. This left them not only physically and mentally scarred but also unemployed, economically destitute, and socially excluded.

To assist a group of 398 women, CARE, Survivor Corps, and the Center for the Training and Development of Former Combatants provided psychosocial support to help them reintegrate. The Council on Integrated Development Burundi gave vocational training for economic development, and IRRI taught them how to produce rice.

"In 2009, we started working with 10 groups of ex-combatant women by getting each group 1 hectare of the best irrigated land in the country and showing them how to grow rice on it," said Bigirimana.

"In the first year, we paid for the cost of renting the land, seed, and fertilizers," he added. "From the profits they made in the first season, they were able to pay these costs themselves the following year."

During a group interview with the women involved in the project, they all said that the most important aspect of the project was that it gave them access to land, which they would not have had without IRRI, CARE, and the cooperation of the Burundian government.

IRRI, CARE, and the Burundian government have helped women contribute to a rice self-sufficient country.

Access to land and knowledge in rice farming gave women ex-combatants a chance to reintegrate into society.

Elisabeth Nibigira, one of the participants and a mother of four, added, "With the IRRI project, I now feel reintegrated into society. I do not feel afraid of people like I was during my combatant life, and other people do not see me like an excluded ex-combatant any more."

"When I was not growing rice," she added, "I used to eat rice only on feast days or when I received money for my labor. Now, with IRRI assistance, I produce rice myself and I can eat rice with my children whenever I need it."

The women were taught how to grow rice and test new rice varieties and farming technologies through a farmer field school. In a common field, representatives of the women's groups learned all aspects of rice production, from land preparation to rice harvesting and drying. Back in their own fields, these women taught their colleagues what they learned.

The women were very enthusiastic about the continuing development of their skills and their rice production. They want to mechanize rice production to improve the efficiency of their operation, increase profit, and reduce labor.

"The first thing we would like to have is the milling machine because then we will not have to pay for milling," said Nibigira. "Other farmers will come to us to mill their rice, which will provide us with income to feed our families. We could then produce rice bran for our cattle or for selling."

In collaboration with the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Burundi, IRRI is continuing the project based on its outstanding success, but is seeking funding to include more women in the program and support the current women involved to further develop their rice production skills and improve their access to technology. The pilot project was financially supported by the Howard Buffett Foundation.

Capacity enhancement for women

The participation of women compared with that of men in degree and nondegree training courses had been low in the past. In the beginning, IRRI training programs were male-dominated. Starting with only two female scholars in 1962–65, the number of women who received training from IRRI increased to more than 2,400—and counting—with a continuous effort to achieve gender balance in capacity building.

IRRI, through its Training Center, has encouraged the participation of women in its training courses and tailors some courses specifically for them. In recent years, IRRI has focused on developing women leaders on research for development through training. From 2002 to 2012, 200 women from 26 countries participated in leadership training courses for Asian and African women in agricultural research, development, and extension. From 2007 to 2012, half of IRRI scholars were women.

Aside from developing the leadership skills of Asian and African women in agriculture, the training course aims to make them effective agents of change in the agriculture sector and trainers of grassroots women on improved crop production, processing, and seed management. Women and men also participate in courses on all aspects of rice production—breeding, land preparation, crop and pest management, postharvest, and the latest technologies in farm management and rice farming from seed to market. Both male and female participants were involved in nondegree training courses to help improve their report-writing and presentation skills for effective technology dissemination.

Opportunities for women to participate in training courses on scientific research, scholarships for MS and PhD students, and postdoctoral fellowships are provided on a competitive basis to increase women's participation in rice science and research in the various themes of GRiSP. Short-term courses on mainstreaming gender in each GRiSP theme will also be provided to ensure that gender issues in research and development are addressed. Consideration of gender issues in GRiSP is expected to greatly enhance the efficiency and impact of research as well as reduce gender inequalities in access to technologies and capacity-enhancement programs.

IRRI is a gender-sensitive workplace, with women comprising 37% of all IRRI staff worldwide, 57% of all headquarters-based nationally recruited scientists, and 33% of IRRI's senior management.

Orange Sweet Potato provide vitamin A in Africa

2012 AUGUST

by IFPRI

tags: CIP, HarvestPlus, Mozambique, nutrition, orange sweet potato, Uganda, women

Orange sweet potato. Source: flickr (HarvestPlus)

Conventionally-bred varieties of orange sweet potato (OSP) that provide high amounts of vitamin A are being used to combat vitamin A deficiency in regions of Africa where sweet potato is a staple food. From 2007-09, pilot programs successfully disseminated OSP to more than 24,000 households in Uganda and Mozambique, and assessed the impact.

The project led to a 68 percent increase in the adoption of OSP in Mozambique and a 61 percent increase in Uganda. In both countries, there was substantial substitution of orange sweet potato for traditional white or sweet potato varieties that are low in vitamin A. This level of substitution was enough to ensure that the daily vitamin A requirements were met for many children and women.

A key factor in the project's success was the critical role played by women, not only as caregivers of young children, but also as producers and retailers of OSP. In project areas, 60 percent or more farmers were women. As a result of increased OSP consumption, Vitamin A intake for women and children doubled in Mozambique. In Uganda, vitamin A intake increased by two-thirds for children and nearly doubled for women. For the age of greatest concern, children aged six to 35 months, orange sweet potato contributed 78 percent of the total vitamin A intake in Mozambique and 53 percent in Uganda.

HarvestPlus is now scaling-up OSP to reach another 225,000 households by 2016. The International Potato Center (CIP) plans to scale-up OSP to reach more than 600,000 households in 10 countries by 2015, including 120,000 households in Mozambique.

from → Biofortification, Program Stories

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Gender Mainstreaming Through Farmer Participation Leads to Improved Livelihoods in Salt-Affected Areas

Photo: Simon Cook

HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Women demonstrated greater confidence in applying knowledge on new rice varieties and improved skills in nutrient management, which enhanced their recognition as farmers.
- ✓ Acknowledgement of the value of engaging beneficiaries in important processes and decisions.

Outcome Stories

High salt stress is a major cause of low productivity across large rice-producing inland and coastal areas. Salt stress is most severe during the dry season. With the flooding that they experience in the wet season limiting crop choice to rice, the millions of poor people living off these lands are perpetually food insecure. The challenge to research and development is how to produce more food by using land and water resources that are otherwise unusable because they are in salt-stressed areas.

A CGIAR Challenge Program on Water and Food (CPWF) project, led by the International Rice Research Institute, took up this special challenge.

The project involved 11 participating institutions, including seven National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems (NARES) in India, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Egypt, and Iran. Highly innovative project interventions included the integration of genetic improvement with environmentally and socially sustainable management strategies. Social acceptability of "interventions" was enhanced by a participatory research approach at all stages and at all levels, especially concentrating on the inclusion of women, which led to very encouraging outcomes.

The CPWF team carried out socioeconomic and biophysical studies to

Photo: IRRI

About CPWF Outcome Stories

The CPWF Outcome Stories document changes in knowledge, attitudes and practices that have emerged through CPWF-funded research. Outcomes occur when research outputs foster engagement processes that result in changes in practice or changes in behavior. These stories capture outcomes at a specific point in time; outcomes may have evolved since the completion of these projects.

characterize the target areas. It also compiled information on farmers' practices and coping strategies. It employed plant breeding tools to introduce salinity tolerance into high-yielding rice and non-rice crop varieties, that fit into rice-based farming systems in salt-affected areas. The CPWF team developed participatory validation of the newly bred salt-tolerant varieties in order to derive farmer-friendly crop and natural resource management options. It also helped to strengthen the capacities of the NARES partners to undertake innovative research and dissemination strategies.

The importance of farmer participation: from planting of varietal trials to decision making

Ensuring farmers' acceptance of technology requires their participation. Participation of female family members is especially important because resource-poor families living in stress-prone rice environments in eastern Uttar Pradesh, India, rely heavily on women family members in rice production and processing operations.

Women demonstrated improved confidence in applying new knowledge on new rice varieties and improved skills in nutrient management, which enhanced their recognition as farmers. This was a key benefit from their engagement in the process. Participatory research is critical in meeting the particular challenges of growing crops in saline areas, because conditions vary greatly from place to place. This requires insight and effort in local adaptation, which farmers are ideally suited to give. The inclusion of women as farmer-cooperators in focus group discussions and farmer-managed trials led to the recognition of their roles as farmers and food producers. This recognition in turn encouraged farmers to participate more actively in the activities.

Photo: IRRI

Perhaps the most important outcome of this CPWF undertaking was the demonstration of the value of engaging beneficiaries in important processes and decisions, especially those that affected them directly. For example, while in the past such trials were conducted on-station, the plant breeders now conducted trials in the farmers' salt-affected fields. In the past, plant breeders, crop physiologists, and agronomists followed a top-down approach to plant breeding. In this CPWF project, along with social scientists, they used participatory varietal selection and engaged farmers in selecting rice varieties, so that their feedback could be considered in future plant breeding activities. Increased cooperation and transdisciplinary work was an important factor and was recognized as such among the scientists. In the past, plant breeders were the main actors in rice varietal improvement activities, but working in a multidisciplinary manner with an emphasis on water productivity, required teamwork.

Scientists now not only considered women alongside men but also sought the opinion of women, particularly on post-harvest activities, as well as the cooking aspects of rice. The women were encouraged to share their own expectations of what they wanted to be included in the varietal trials. Their exposure to new knowledge, for example the existence of better farming methods and new seed varieties that can survive sodic soils, was a big improvement. Making them partners in the farmer-managed trials has helped to remove any existing barriers between the women and the scientists.

Conclusion

Salt-affected areas can be made to be agriculturally productive, but because of situational variability a diverse range of technologies is required. Technologies should be acceptable for local conditions and ensure the integration of local people's special needs and preferences. The inclusion of both male and female farmers in rice research and technology development can result in a better life for the disadvantaged families, especially the women, whose lives depend on rice grown in difficult environments.

"A farmer participatory approach concentrating on the inclusion of women led to encouraging outcomes. One key benefit was enhanced recognition of women as farmers. Women improved their confidence in applying their knowledge on new rice varieties and improved skills in nutrient management."

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Project Partners

International Rice Research Institute (IRRI)
Bangladesh Rice Research Institute
Central Rice Research Institute, India
Central Soil Salinity Research Institute, India
University of Agriculture and Technology, India
Cuu Long Delta Rice Research Institute, Vietnam
Rice Research Institute, Iran
Rice Research and Training Center, Egypt
International Center for Biosaline Agriculture
International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)
University of California at Davis.

Andes • Ganges • Limpopo • Mekong • Nile • Volta

About CPWF

The Challenge Program on Water and Food was launched in 2002. CPWF aims to increase the resilience of social and ecological systems through better water management for food production (crops, fisheries and livestock). CPWF currently works in six river basins globally: Andes, Ganges, Limpopo, Mekong, Nile and Volta.

CPWF is a member of the CGIAR Water, Land and Ecosystems Research Program. The program focuses on the three critical issues of water scarcity, land degradation and ecosystem services, as well as sustainable natural resource management. CGIAR is a global agriculture research partnership for a food secure future. Its science is carried out by the 15 research centers who are members of the CGIAR Consortium in collaboration with hundreds of partner organizations.

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Monitoring AFS Expected Outcomes

This section should include highlights on how the project and its results are contributing to AFS program outcomes. It is **not expected** that every AFS project will respond to **ALL** of these outcomes. Do not repeat information that is reported elsewhere.

*Note: References to quantitative and qualitative evidence of the outcomes should be included as annex. A strong claim of an outcome should be supported by evidence.

1. **New technologies and/or farming systems and practices.** How is the project leading to new and improved agricultural technologies and/or farming systems and practices that increase food production? (e.g. technologies and innovations; staple crops; crop-livestock interactions; agricultural water management; new seeds and plants)
2. **Dietary diversity & nutrition.** How is the project contributing to dietary diversity/balanced diets, particularly for women and children? (e.g. food safety practices and regulatory frameworks; food fortification; local nutritional needs)
3. **Engagement of Canadian researchers with Southern researcher organizations (for CIFSRF-funded projects only).** Is there increased use of Canadian knowledge and resources to address environmentally sustainable agricultural productivity and nutrition problems in developing countries?
4. **Research groups.** How is the project contributing to stronger research groups for improved food security policies and decision-making?
5. **Food distribution.** How is the project contributing to more equitable food distribution for food security? (e.g. more equitable access to quality food)
6. **Food processing and storage.** How is the project contributing to improved post-harvest food processing and storage techniques for food security?
7. **Risk mitigation.** How is the project contributing to better risk-mitigation for food security? (e.g. mechanisms that cope with the impacts of climate change, and other shocks such as food price volatility)
8. **Access to resources.** How is the project contributing to improved access to resources for food production and security? (e.g. land tenure, extension and credit, market access)
9. **Income generation.** How is the project contributing to improving vulnerable/poor people's ability to purchase more and better quality food, in particular for the benefit of women and children?
10. **Policy options.** How is the project influencing the development and implementation food security policies?
11. **Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).** Has the use of ICTs contributed to increase access to information and improved food security for the most vulnerable? (e.g. equitable use of technologies, such as radio, television, telephones, computers, and the Internet).
12. **Gender.** How is the project considering women's specific needs in the design of the research, participation of women in the research, and potential impact of research on women? How is the project: a) improving women's access to and control over income?; b) reducing women's drudgery or workload (time spent) in agriculture?; and/or c) improve women and children's access to adequate and diversified diets?
13. **Environment.** How is the project contributing to environmental sustainability? (e.g. Is the project affecting the environment? If so, are contributions environmentally sustainable?) How is the project testing for environmental sustainability?

Tool for tracking Gender Outcomes Indicators

Gender Outcome areas	Describe what actually happened? A strong claim of an outcome should be supported by specific evidence (quantitative et qualitative).
1. **Project Gender Strategy.** Describes activities that are carried out to deliver on gender objectives and implementation the project strategy. Is there gender expertise and /or evidence of different disciplines integrating gender in their activities	
2. **Gender Analysis Tools-** What are the key gender issues from the baseline studies? What tools were used for gender analysis?	
3. **Participation:** What evidence is there that different categories of women are participating in project activities and benefiting from participation? Are there some challenges and setbacks?	
4. **New technologies and/or farming systems and practices.** Are women testing and adapting new and improved agricultural technologies and/or farming systems and practices that increase food production?	
5. **Access to resources.** How is the project contributing to improved women's access to resources for food production and security? E.g. land tenure, extension and credit, market access.	
6. Income generation. How is the project contributing to improving women's access and control of income, and their ability to purchase more and better quality food, in particular for the benefit of women and children?	
7. Dietary diversity & nutrition. How is the project contributing to dietary diversity/balanced diets, particularly for women and children?	
8. Research groups. How is the project contributing to building capacity of female scientists and team members? What specific individual capacity has/is being built? i.e. Training of project staff on gender and gender analysis	
9. **Strategies.** What innovative and effective actions or strategies is the project using for empowering women and increasing their access to assets, and ensuring gender friendly technology delivery systems; and influencing behaviours, practices, policies and people?	
10. **M&E:** Is there a gender-responsive M&E system that articulates clear plans for systematically documenting gender dynamics and assessing impacts on interventions on men, women and other groups, and on intra-household gender dynamics?	
11. **Communication-Dissemination:** Are there opportunities for producing "Gender outcomes Stories from the Field"? or Gender Analysis/dynamics papers? 12. How is the project reaching (or will reach out) out /disseminating research results to women and men farmers and other key stakeholders?	
13. Unintended outcomes: Are there some unintended (positive or negative) outcomes of your project in terms of conditions, positions and relations for promoting gender equity?	
14. **Recommendations.** What needs to be improved in the remaining period of the project? How will these recommendations be implemented and Who will be responsible for implementing them?	

Day 3 resources

Policy briefs:

Policy Brief: Nutrition in Ethiopia

From: Secretary of Health, Ethiopia
To: Minister of Finance, Ethiopia

Introduction:
About half of all Ethiopians are undernourished.[i] Despite some food security issues in remote regions of Ethiopia, the primary underlying causes of such malnutrition are poor sanitation, inappropriate infant feeding care and practices, and poor access to health services. It is important that we address the needs of malnourished children in particular, since improved nutrition will mean greater progress in development for our country, in addition to greater economic returns and a more productive and healthier population. We must improve sanitation, primarily in rural areas, target children up to age two and pregnant mothers, and increase salt iodinization and vitamin A supplementation.

Nature and Magnitude of the Problem:
The prevalence of malnutrition, or more specifically undernutrition, has reached crisis levels in our great country of Ethiopia. As aforementioned, 46 percent of the Ethiopian population is undernourished. The malnutrition rate in Ethiopia is comparable to that of India, the home of one of the highest rates in the world.[ii] Nearly fifty percent of the under-five mortality rate in Ethiopia is related to malnutrition. [iii] This number has decreased over the past decade, but is still high enough to cause alarm. Two growth-related nutrition issues are also of great concern to the plight of Ethiopian children: stunting and wasting. Stunting is indicative of chronic, long-term malnutrition and is essentially a "failure to reach one's biological potential for growth."[iv] This affects 47 percent of children under age five, an alarming rate.[v] Wasting, or "significant recent or current weight loss,"[vi] affects 52 percent of children under age five.[vii] It is therefore quite clear that children are greatly, and detrimentally, impacted by this undernutrition crisis.

An important contributing factor to malnutrition is micronutrient deficiencies. Vitamin A "is extremely important to the proper functioning of the immune system and to a child's growth."[viii] Although supplement rates are at 52 percent, half of Ethiopia's children are still not receiving the proper amount of vitamin A.[ix] Iodine is also an important micronutrient, since insufficient intake may result in low cognitive abilities.[x] The iodization of salt, however, is a cost-effective solution. Efforts in this field show room for improvement, since only 28 percent of Ethiopian population consumes iodized salt.[xi]

Affected Populations:
As the prior statistics have shown, Ethiopian children are at highest risk for malnutrition. However, their mothers are also a risk group. The health of a mother is a large indicator for the health status of a child. A primary reason for malnutrition in children therefore has to do with their care. Improved care practices would likely reduce the high child under five mortality rate due to malnutrition.

It is clear that the rural areas of Ethiopia have a greater need for our attention than urban areas. Rural areas have considerably worse sanitation conditions than urban areas. Additionally, rural areas are more affected by drought and therefore more likely to be undernourished. However, this is not to say that the latter should be ignored in our scope for solving the malnutrition crisis. The fact that nearly half of the Ethiopian population is affected by undernutrition indicates a problem that transcends regional differences.

Risk Factors:
There are several contributing factors for why Ethiopian children die of malnutrition. The most obvious cause would be low dietary intake. This is the case for the drought-stricken regions of Ethiopia, particularly those located in the south.[xii] Low dietary intake also affects those living in poverty, and since more than half of our population is below the poverty line, the plight of the undernourished poor is in fact a plight of the majority of our people.[xiii]

Further compacting the issues surrounding malnutrition are poor sanitation conditions. A primary concern of malnutrition is that food may be contaminated, and thus bring illness into a household. A 1999 study conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO) found water and sanitation coverage to be inadequate, especially in rural areas. Water supply coverage for Ethiopia is rated at 26 percent and sanitation coverage at 15 percent. Implementation in urban areas has generally been successful, with 77 percent and 58 percent, respectively. However, such statistics for rural areas are dismal. Water supply coverage in these more remote regions ranks at a mere 13 percent. Sanitation coverage is even lower, at 6 percent.[xiv]

Social and Economic Consequences:
As our country emerges as one of the most populous in the continent of Africa,[xv] there is an untapped potential for economic growth. However, if so many of our children are dying before they can attend school and later become productive members of society, that potential will remain stagnant. Furthermore, since nearly half of the Ethiopian population is undernourished, the workforce is at greater risk for becoming ill, and thus less productive. This impacts individual Ethiopians, since the more days of work they miss due to illness, the less they will earn. A healthier, more nourished population will likely mean greater economic development and growth for Ethiopia.

Priority Action Steps:
There are several cost-effective ways to address the crisis of malnutrition. Improved sanitation would not only improve the nutritional status of the population, but also the overall health status. The most cost-effective program would include "the promotion of hygiene, the promotion of sanitation, and the construction of standposts."[xvi]

The most important population to target would be children aged from newborns to two years of age, as well as pregnant mothers. This is because "undernutrition's most damaging effect occurs during pregnancy and in the first two years of life, and the effects of this early damage on health, brain development, intelligence, educability, and productivity are largely irreversible."[xvii] It is of the utmost importance that we target this segment of the population.

Since only 28 percent of the population consumes iodized salt, a campaign to promote further iodization efforts may also have beneficial results. Increased immunization efforts accompanied by vitamin A supplement distribution would be necessary to increase the rate of those receiving the micronutrient in current campaigns.

Needed: A Fire in the Belly
There is clearly a strong need to address the issue of malnutrition, and I recommend that the following primary steps be taken. As aforementioned, the malnutrition problems seen in Ethiopia are similar to those seen in India. A model is a program that has been praised by the world community, which took place in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu. In targeting pregnant women and children in order to improve care for these populations, services would include "nutrition education, primary healthcare, supplementary on-site feeding for children who were not growing properly, vitamin A supplementation, periodic de-worming, [and] education of mothers for managing childhood diarrhea,"[xviii] an affliction which can have further detrimental effects on

nutritional status. The most important factor for improving the nutritional status of our people, however, will be the political will to make the necessary changes.

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Research and analysis from the Institute of Development Studies

ISSUE 01
SOCIAL PROTECTION
MAY 2006

Child Poverty and Cash Transfers

How effective are cash transfers in tackling child poverty in developing and transition countries and what can be done to maximise their benefit?

Recently, there has been an increasing emphasis on targeted cash transfers as a key instrument in reducing poverty, deprivation and vulnerability among children and their households. For example:

- In South Africa, a Child Support Grant introduced in 1998, has been relatively successful in reaching poor children.
- In transition countries, child and family allowances have proved to be effective in cushioning the impact of structural change on households with children, and have been reformed to act as a safety net.
- In Latin America, a new generation of targeted cash transfers has been introduced in a number of countries, with the aim of interrupting the 'vicious circle of poverty' by focusing investment in the human development of children, especially in education and health.

Cash transfers together with redistributive tax policies, have a strong record in reducing childhood poverty in northern countries and lessons from these experiences are contributing to an increasing policy interest in them.

The effectiveness of income transfers

Most policy interventions aimed at reducing poverty among children take the form of either a transfer or the direct provision of goods and services. Transfers to poor families are provided both in-kind and in-cash. Both have advantages and disadvantages. In-kind transfers can guarantee consumption of key goods and services and maximise political support for these programmes. However, they require a great deal of administration and, when offered on a large scale, can distort markets. Though cash transfers can be used for non-essential goods, they give recipients more flexibility, and are becoming increasingly common in developing and transition countries as a tool to tackle childhood poverty.

Three main types of cash transfers can be used to tackle childhood poverty: a **uniform benefit**, paid for every child in the household; an **income supplement**, paying a fraction of the difference between household income and the poverty line; and a **minimum guaranteed income**, which supplements income up to a given level. Though all three types of transfers have strengths and weaknesses, for benefits levels below the poverty line, an income supplement or a minimum guaranteed income transfer are likely to have a stronger impact on the poverty gap, than uniform benefits, unless these are set at a very generous level.

Generally, the more that a cash transfer is targeted at the poorest, the more likely it is to be effective in reducing severe poverty, although it will be easier to reduce overall numbers below the poverty line by focusing on those close to it. However, this needs to be weighed against the broader political support for uniform and universal benefits.

The importance of tackling childhood poverty

Childhood poverty requires urgent attention because:

- Children are disproportionately represented among the income-poor and many experience severe deprivation.
- Poverty and vulnerability impair both the quality and length of children's lives.
- Childhood poverty is a significant factor in persistent and chronic poverty, and in the inter-generational transmission of poverty; preventing poverty in childhood can therefore help prevent entrenchment of poverty.

Results of existing programmes

Because most cash transfer programmes that target families with children have not been operating for long in developing countries, there have been few evaluations of their impacts, and evidence of their long-term efficacy is not available. However, positive impacts include the following:

Child Poverty and Cash Transfers

> International organisations need to consider cash transfers targeted at children's human development as an important part of poverty reduction strategies.

- Child and family allowances in transition countries have protected many households with children from the adverse effects of structural change. One study estimates that without family allowances, child poverty in Hungary would have been 85 per cent higher, while in Poland it would have been a third higher.
- Mexico's Progresa programme, which provided a range of cash benefits to poor households, is estimated to have reduced the poverty gap by 36 per cent, to have reduced both child stunting and rates of adult and childhood illness in participating households, and increased school enrolments, particularly among girls and at secondary school.
- Brazil's child labour eradication programme (PETI), which provides cash supplements to households where former child workers attend school at least 85 per cent of the time, has achieved a significant reduction in the incidence of child labour and a rise in school enrolments and attainment.

Enhancing the impact of cash transfer programmes

The poverty reduction impacts of cash transfers to poor families may be enhanced in the following ways:

- Cash transfer programmes in developing countries should be considered important elements of an integrated child poverty eradication policy. It is too early to say whether programmes conditional on particular behaviour, such as children's school attendance, or non-involvement in child labour are more effective that those that simply provide cash transfers to families. However, programmes that are based on a multi-dimensional understanding of poverty and provide other services as well as transfers (e.g Chile Solidario) are more likely to be effective.
- Cash transfer programmes which improve children's education and health must be accompanied with an extension of opportunity, such as employment and mobility, if significant and sustained poverty reduction is to be achieved.
- Households play an important role in ensuring the effectiveness of cash transfers in child poverty reduction; cash transfer programmes need to be designed taking into account how households allocate resources among different members in response to specific social and economic conditions.
- All programmes discussed in the report exclude adolescents and children living in households without an adult guardian; however, such children may be among the most vulnerable to poverty. Ensuring children have rights and entitlements independently of their living arrangements requires urgent attention and the development of effective practices.
- To date, cash transfer programmes targeting child poverty have mostly been financed by loans or grants from international organisations. Though some poorer countries e.g. Bangladesh and Central Asian countries, finance cash transfers from national budgets, this is relatively rare. This implies the need for international organisations to consider medium-term support for cash transfers targeted at children's human development as an important part of poverty reduction strategies.

Further reading

Armando Barrientos and Jocelyn DeJong (2004) Child Poverty and Cash Transfers, *CHIP Report 4*, London: Childhood Poverty Research and Policy Centre
www.childhoodpoverty.org/index.php?action=publication

Credits

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Overseas Development Institute

Briefing Paper 37

April 2008

Rising food prices: A global crisis

Action needed now to avert poverty and hunger

Soaring food prices pose problems for three groups. First, the poor whose ability to buy food is undermined. Second, governments of low-income countries facing higher import bills, soaring costs for safety net programmes and political unrest. Third, aid agencies juggling increased demands for food, cash and technical advice. High food prices threaten the gains made since the 1960s and highlight the long-term need for investment in, and better management of, the global food supply.

This Paper examines the causes of rising food prices, expected trends, the likely impact, and possible policy responses.

The rising price of corn poses a threat to the world's poor.

Key points

- Food prices have been rising since 2000, spiked in early 2008, and may remain high for another ten years
- Prompt action is needed to protect the poorest and support low-income countries faced by surging import bills
- In the medium term, economic and agricultural growth can offset the damage, but this will require more determined efforts to boost food production

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What is happening and why?

Before recent price hikes, the real price of food had been falling since the 1950s. The 'green revolution' that began in the mid-1960s saw developing world farmers planting improved varieties of cereals, prompting extraordinary increases in yields, falling food prices and reductions in poverty.

But food prices have risen since the early 2000s, and particularly since 2006. The price of a tonne of wheat climbed from $105 in January 2000, to $167 in January 2006, to $481 in March 2008 (IMF Primary Commodity Prices, 2008). Forecasts for the next ten years predict continuing high prices because of structural changes in supply and demand.

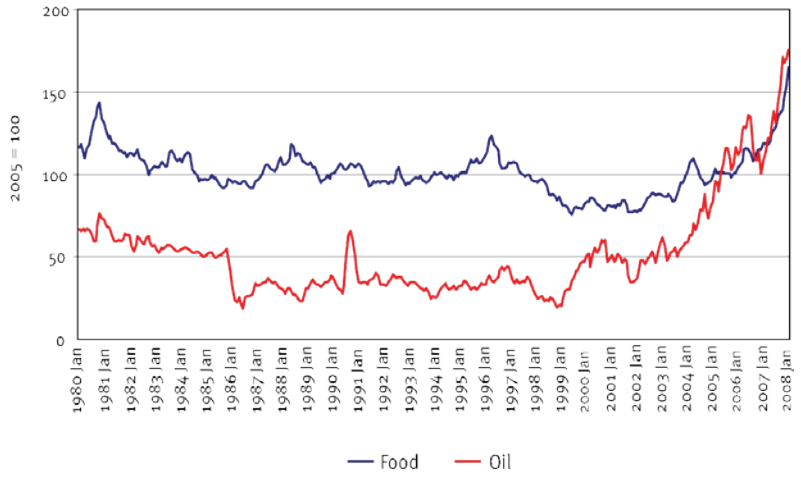
On the supply side, rising oil prices mean increased costs for fertilisers, machine operations and transport. As Figure 1 shows, oil prices have risen faster than food prices and the price of nitrogen fertilisers has risen with them. In the US the price index for nitrogen fertiliser stood at 118 in 2000 but reached 204 by 2006 (US Department of Agriculture, 2008). USDA expects unit costs of production of cereals to rise by up to 15% between 2006-7 and 2016-17.

Short-term supply shocks include poor harvests in some exporting countries – particularly Australia where drought has hit wheat production – at a time of dwindling world cereal stocks. Speculation in commodity prices by investors may have contributed to price rises, and the falling value of the dollar has not helped. Some exporting countries have imposed taxes, minimum prices, quotas and outright bans on exports of rice and wheat.

On the demand side, growing incomes in countries such as China and India mean rising demand for meat. OECD and FAO forecast that in non-OECD countries consumption of meat and dairy produce will rise by up to 2.4% a year between 2007 and 2016 (von Braun, 2007). Much of the additional meat, and some of the dairy, will be produced by feeding grains to livestock.

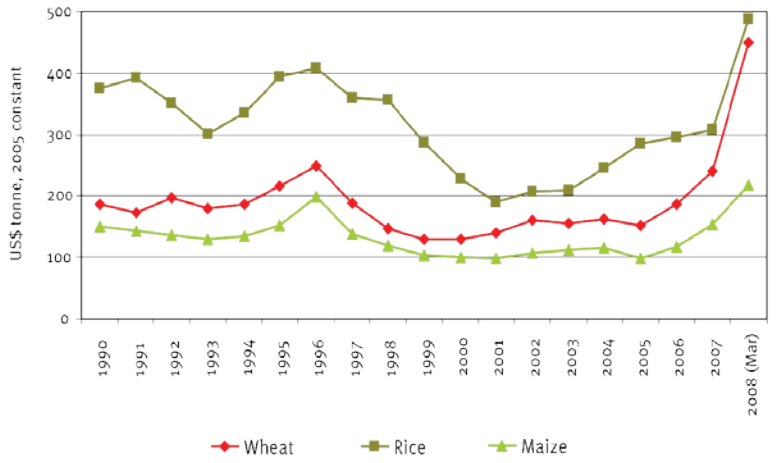
Once oil prices top $60 a barrel, biofuels become more competitive and grains may be diverted to biofuel production (Schmidhuber, 2006). With oil now costing over $100 per barrel – and the US and EU trying to reach biofuel

Figure 1: Food and oil price indices, 1980 to early 2008



Commodity Food Price Index, 2005 = 100, includes Cereal, Vegetable Oils, Meat, Seafood, Sugar, Bananas, and Oranges Price Indices Crude Oil (petroleum), Price index, 2005 = 100, simple average of three spot prices; Dated Brent, West Texas Intermediate, and the Dubai Fateh.
Source: IMF Commodity Price data, downloaded 12 March 2008 from http://www.imf.org/external/np/res/commod/index.asp.

Figure 2: Cereals prices 2000 to 2007, constant 2005 value



Source: IMF Commodity Price data, downloaded 12 March 2008 from http://www.imf.org/external/np/res/commod/index.asp. FAO report for Mar 2008. Prices deflated by the US GDP deflator.

targets – grains, sugar and palm oil are increasingly used to produce ethanol and biodiesel. Some 80 million tonnes of maize went to US ethanol refineries in 2007 (OECD-FAO, 2007), against total US maize exports averaging 47 million tonnes a year (2000 to 2005). No wonder maize prices rose in 2007, despite one of the largest maize harvests ever seen.

Rising cereal costs are alarming, as they provide the bulk of the diet for many of the poor in developing countries. Rice and wheat prices soared in late 2007 and early 2008, up 60% and 89% respectively over 2007 levels (see Figure 2).

Future trends

OECD, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and USDA predict higher cereal prices over the next 10 years than in the early 2000s, but lower prices than in late 2007. The current high prices are unlikely to last as farmers are expected to increase planting and yields in 2008. However, prices are unlikely to drop to former levels in the medium term. Compared to 2005 levels, the price of maize is likely to be higher by 40% in 2016-17, with wheat prices up by 20%, and rice by 14%.

Impact on the poor

Rising food prices affect the poor directly, as producers and consumers, and indirectly, through the impact on their economies. The greatest concern is the impact on their food consumption. While most of the world's poor live in rural areas, not all are farmers, and even some farmers buy staples. The poor generally spend large fractions of their budgets on food, so rising prices make them more likely to reduce their food consumption (see Box 1). This may not mean as large a fall in calorie intake, as households may spend more on cheaper, calorie-rich staples and less on foods rich in protein and vitamins, such as meat, fish, dairy, fruit and vegetables, reducing the quality of their diet.

The short-term impacts are alarming: incomes fall by more than 25%, and food consumption by almost 20%. Medium-term prospects remain bleak, with incomes and food consumption down by 11% and 8% respectively.

Impact on farming

Higher food prices could raise farmers' incomes if global price movements transmit to local markets, and if farmers can respond. However, transmission can be muted by policies on domestic prices and by transport costs. In inland Africa, for example, the effect of global price movements may be minor. In landlocked Malawi, it costs around $50–60 a tonne to ship maize from the port of Beira, plus at least $25 a tonne to ship maize from the Gulf of Mexico. When global maize prices were around $100 a tonne, the import parity price for Malawi was at least $175 a tonne, raising the value of domestically produced maize. As it costs around $100 to produce a tonne of maize in Malawi, it always made sense for the country to grow as much as possible. With world prices at over $200 a tonne, the incentives are even greater.

High transport costs that push up import parity prices also hold down export parity prices. With maize at $100 a tonne, this would have been around $25, but current price levels push it to $125, so Malawi could conceivably consider export production — although current high levels of maize prices are unlikely to be sustained.

Experience suggests that farmers may lack the credit and inputs needed to respond in the short term. But they could benefit in the medium and long term, as in the Asian green revolutions and in many African countries in the recent past.

Impact on low-income countries

Low-income countries face inflationary pressure and rising import bills – both of which undermine economic growth and development. FAO estimates that food import bills for developing countries rose by 25% in 2007 (Shapouri and Rosen, 2008).

Many receive food aid that is likely to be reduced just when it is most needed. As food aid is programmed by budget, not volume, rising prices depress supply. With the World Food Programme (WFP) needing another $500 million to sustain current operations, the likely outcome for these countries is that food availability will fall.

However, higher food prices are incentives to produce local food and could stimulate agriculture, cushioning the impact on the poor. In the coastal cities of West Africa, a shift to consumption of bread, rice and pasta based on imported grains at the expense of local yam, cocoyam, cassava, millet and sorghum could be reversed, giving a fillip to domestic farmers.

Outcomes, weighing costs to consumers against gains to farmers, are hard to predict but existing models shed some light (Box 2) on Cambodia. Effects vary, with farming households benefiting, and others losing out. Overall, the economy suffers and reduced consumer spending on other goods and services puts a brake on economic growth.

Policy recommendations

Immediate action is needed to alleviate the distress caused by the price spikes, such as transfers to the poor or general food subsidies. Resources are needed to support WFP and compensate poor countries for higher import bills. Improved coordination across the UN and donors, and greater alignment with national efforts and priorities will be critical. In the medium term, growth can boost incomes to compensate for high food prices, but the right policies are needed to help farmers produce more food.

Responding to the crisis

The main options are compensating transfers and control of food prices. Transfers in the form of cash or vouchers would need to reach those facing undernutrition. However, this means compensating the poor while the nearly poor, who pay the same prices, are left out. Schemes to raise incomes through public works, with workers receiving wages rather than hand-outs, are more feasible. Examples of innovative schemes include Latin American conditional cash transfers and the introduction of universal old age pensions in India and South Africa.

Price controls can mean setting prices, but can be hard to enforce and could remove incentives for farmers to produce more. Food price subsidies might be wasteful, as wealthier consumers would also benefit. And subsidising 'inferior' foods is less popular, politically, than subsidising favoured items.

Developing countries have tried to manage food price rises through subsidies, reducing tariffs on imported grains, and by limiting or taxing grain exports (FAO, 2008). This last could exacerbate the price spike and depress incentives to farmers to increase output.

Many low-income countries face the double shock of rising bills for oil and food imports, hindering growth and pushing up inflation. At the same time, efforts to protect the poor from rising food prices could mean heavy increases in the cost of social programmes.

Box 1: Do biofuels lead to higher food prices and hungry people?

In the early 2000s, 20 million tonnes of US maize went to ethanol plants. In 2007, 80 million tonnes were delivered – a figure expected to rise to 100 million by 2010, driven in large part by the Renewable Fuel Standard that requires 28 Billion litres of fuel in the US to come from alternative sources by 2012. Similar increases are being seen in Brazil, Canada, China and the EU. In South-East Asia, vast areas are shifting to oil palm, a key feedstock for biodiesel.

Demand for biofuels encourages the use of land for feedstock and it is no coincidence that feedstock prices are rising. Maize prices doubled between 2006 and 2008, while palm oil prices rose 2.5 times. IFPRI's IMPACT model predicts that maize prices will rise by 26% by 2020 under current plans for biofuels production, and by 72% with drastic expansion.

Percentage changes in world prices by 2020: Two scenarios

	Biofuel expansion (a)	Drastic biofuel expansion (b)
Cassava	11	27
Maize	26	72
Oilseeds	18	44
Sugar	11.5	27
Wheat	8.3	20

Notes: (a) Based on actual biofuel production plans/projections in relevant countries and regions; (b) Based on doubling actual biofuel production plans/projections in relevant countries and regions.
Source: IFPRI IMPACT projections (in constant prices) in von Braun 2007.

With current technology (and given US and EU subsidies and targets), it seems that biofuels will push up food prices. This could be offset if poor farmers in developing countries had the same incentives as farmers in North America and Europe, and if technical advances that would allow grasses and woody biomass to be converted to biofuel can be realised. Biofuels could then become an important source of income for poor farmers, but – for now – those who see biofuels as a threat to the hungry have a point.

Sources: OECD FAO (2007), Peskett et al. (2007), von Braun (2007), Schmidhuber (2006).

Box 2: Impact of rising food prices on households in Cambodia

A Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) model of the Cambodian economy has simulated the impacts of a 26% increase in rice prices in the medium term. Not surprisingly, a higher rice price stimulates a 13% increase in rice production and rice exports rise by more than 80%. Rice farmers benefit, but the rest of economy suffers. Resources shift from other farm activities to paddy fields, so livestock and fish production decline. Higher rice prices reduce household spending on other goods and services, depressing the economy. GDP falls by around 0.2%. Farming households are better off, with incomes for surplus producers rising by almost 4%; but other households see incomes fall by around 2%.

Source: Initial computations using a CGE for Cambodia.

Countries need compensatory financing to respond to the food price spike. There is a case for the IMF to provide more resources under the Compensatory Financing Facility to help low-income countries that import both oil and food. WFP has identified 30 countries at risk: Afghanistan; Angola; Benin; Burundi; Chad; DRC; Eritrea; Ethiopia; Gambia; Guinea; Guinea-Bissau; Haiti; Kenya; Madagascar; Malawi; Mauritania; Mozambique; Myanmar; Nepal; Niger; OPT; São Tomé and Príncipe; Senegal; Sierra Leone; Somalia; Tajikistan; Timor-Leste; Yemen; Zambia and Zimbabwe.

For donors, priorities include meeting the WFP call for at least $500 million to meet the higher costs of food aid. But there is also scope for more coordination across UN agencies, as part of the 'One-UN' system. In line with the Paris principles, it would help if every country at risk had a national plan that could be financed.

The medium-term response

Rising incomes from economic growth can compensate for increased food costs in the medium term. Two to four years of growth may be enough to offset real income losses and there is scope to expand food supply and mitigate price rises. Ensuring that small farmers can respond to higher prices is a familiar policy challenge now made all the more pressing . Public investments in infrastructure and agricultural research would pay dividends; as would support for institutions giving small farmers access to finance, inputs and information.

Uncertainty and controversy surround technical agricultural advances. Most agricultural research is by companies that may not prioritise boosting outputs of food grains. Biotechnology promises much, but has delivered relatively little for staple food production. That may change with higher prices for grains and it seems that marker-assisted selection is leading to rising grain yields. Higher prices may make countries more inclined to introduce genetically modified organisms. Furthermore, how much can output be raised given limited land and water, and anxieties over conservation and pollution?

If demand were restricted, food might become cheaper. Controlling food spending is administratively difficult and politically unattractive; but countries, including the UK, have had rationing in the past. In the medium to long term, rising food prices make population control policies more attractive: whether world population stabilises at eight, nine or ten billion matters that much more.

Responding in low-income countries

Countries should prepare for a world where food and oil imports cost far more than they have in the past. Countries now have an incentive to develop their unused agricultural potential, and investing in food production will pay dividends. Some countries with abundant land could offset higher oil prices through biofuel production, but this needs care if it is not to displace food crops and push food prices higher. Where land and water permit, biofuel production is an option if oil prices stay above $60 a barrel.

Global and donor responses

Aid agencies should provide more support to developing country efforts to boost social protection in the short term, and food production in the medium term. If less food aid is available, its use must be prioritised and efforts to close gaps between emergency relief and long-term development become more pressing.

Finally, rising food prices raise questions about global food systems. The conventional wisdom that markets produce efficient outcomes may be right in normal times, but wrong when those times are abnormal. Little consideration has been given to contingency plans to deal with abnormal events, as the run-down food stocks in China, the EU and the US demonstrate. Conventional wisdom needs revisiting and the world's rich nations may need to reinvest in strategic stocks to offset sudden shocks.

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GENDER AND RURAL EMPLOYMENT POLICY BRIEF #7 2010

Breaking the rural poverty cycle: Getting girls and boys out of work and into school

Instead of attending school, millions of girls and boys in rural areas worldwide are child labourers. They are everywhere, but often hidden, on farms, on fishing boats, in plantations, in mountain areas, herding livestock or toiling as domestic servants. Child labour perpetuates a cycle of poverty for the children involved, their families and communities. Without education, these rural boys and girls are likely to be the poor of tomorrow. Policies must address the root causes of child labour and promote decent work for adults in rural areas.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Worldwide 215 million children are child labourers, of whom 115 million are engaged in hazardous work.[1]
- A staggering 60% of child labourers aged between 5-17 years work in agriculture, in contrast to 7% in industry, 26% in services, and 7% in other sectors.[2] Agriculture is among the three most *dangerous sectors* to work in at any age, and even more dangerous for children.[3]
- Only 1 in 5 children are in paid employment – the majority are unpaid or family workers.[4]
- Rural children, particularly girls, tend to begin work at a very young age, sometimes between 5-7 years old.[5]
- Gender roles, age, birth order and cultural norms distinguish the type of work performed by girls and boys, the number of hours worked as well as who works and who gets an education.[6] Gender differences in child labour increase with age.
- Without considering household services, on average, boys make up 63% and girls 37% of child labour in agriculture in the age group 5-17 years.[7] The larger involvement of boys in agriculture often comes at the expense of a much larger involvement of girls in unpaid household services. On average, 92% of girl child labourers in the age group 5-14 years also perform household chores, as compared with 67% of boys.[8] In many societies, girls work more hours than boys when domestic chores are taken into account, but this work is often invisible or under-valued.[9]
- The number of boys aged 15-17 years engaged in hazardous work rose by 10.5 million from 2004 to 2008, while in the same period, it decreased for younger boys and for girls.[10]

WHY IS ACTION NEEDED?

Child labour is an enormous cost for the children themselves and for society, as it keeps children out of schools and hampers the healthy development of their mind and bodies. Many rural girls and boys plant and harvest crops, spray pesticides and tend livestock. They work on fishing boats or on shore cutting and smoking captured fish. The majority contribute to family undertakings. Some are trafficked. Some are bonded labourers working to pay off family debts. The high prevalence of child labour in rural areas, the under-regulation of the agriculture and domestic work sectors, the hazardous nature of some of their work, and its long term cost, make this an area deserving urgent attention.

A gender focus takes into account the specificities of girls' and boys' in rural areas. Girls often suffer discrimination in access to school and employment opportunities when they get older. Different strategies may be necessary to get girls out of work and into school than with boys. Failure to look at child labour through a 'gender lens' risks missing some forms, causes and consequences of child labour.

1. Pervasive poverty in rural areas and low visibility of child labour in agriculture

- Child labour is highly prevalent in situations of poverty, parental illiteracy and environments with cheap and unorganized labour. All these conditions are particularly characteristic of rural areas, where a high number of children are vulnerable to entering child labour and being trapped, as adults, in poverty.

FAO FIAT PANIS
IFAD Enabling poor rural people to overcome poverty
ILO

BOX 1 What is child labour?

A **child** is defined as any person under 18 years of age. **Child labour** is defined based on a child's age, hours and conditions of work, activities performed and the hazards involved. Child labour is work that interferes with compulsory schooling and damages health and personal development. Especially in the context of family farming and other rural family endeavours, it is important to recognize that some participation of children in non-hazardous activities can be positive as it contributes to the inter-generational transfer of skills and children's food security.

The **ILO Minimum Age for Employment Convention No. 138 (1973)** (ratified by 156 countries) sets the minimum age for children to work at 15 years of age in general (the convention allows for certain flexibilities in specific circumstances). For work considered hazardous, the age is 18.

The **ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182 (1999)** (ratified by 173 countries) defines worst forms of child labour as all forms of slavery, trafficking of children, forced recruitment for armed conflict, use of children in illicit activities, sexual exploitation, and hazardous work. Hazardous work should be listed nationally. It is work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

- Poverty is one of the main causes of child labour. In many rural areas, children work for their survival and to meet the need for cash, food, shelter and clothing. In this context, parents may depend on their children's labour, even when they know it is wrong.
- Child labour in agriculture is often invisible, as most children work as unpaid family workers in dispersed small-scale farms or rural enterprises – or is actively hidden by employers facilitated by the limited reach of labour inspectors in rural areas.
- Data available on girls' and boys' labour in agriculture, the occupations they are involved in, and the risks associated are limited. This makes child labour in agriculture even more invisible, difficult to prove, and address by policy makers.
- Most national surveys do not yet take into account domestic chores, failing to capture the 'double-burden' shouldered especially by girls in combining domestic work with other forms of child labour, or the 'triple-burden' when schooling is included. When a broader definition of work which includes non-economic activities is used, more girls work than boys.[12]

2. Limited access to quality education in rural areas

- Boys and girls miss out on schooling if they work full time, or if their labour is given precedence over education. Even if enrolled in school, their attendance and performance suffer if they work. Missing out on education harms the future prospects of boys and girls and affects the development of human capital.
- Rural areas often experience a lack of (quality) schools and teachers, limited pedagogical materials, poor school infrastructure, and irregular school attendance resulting in lower educational achievements. School curricula are often not relevant to the needs of agricultural communities.
- Girls tend to devote more time than boys to household chores, leaving even less time for school. Girls' burden is aggravated by poor living conditions and infrastructure, which translate into long distances to collect water, firewood and fuel, and to attend schools. Girls face further obstacles, such as traditional attitudes that do not value girls' education or the risk of abuse during long commutes, or from school staff. Globally, 57% of illiterate children are girls.[11]
- Most rural work is seasonal and often incompatible with school calendars. Seasonal migration disrupts schooling, and even if children attend school on their destination farm, it can be difficult to rejoin the formal education system upon return.
- Girls' education is particularly beneficial, as it decreases female fertility rates and infant, child and maternal mortality rates. Education helps protect against HIV and AIDS, increases women's labour force participation and earnings, improves their ability to organize in the workplace, and increases the likelihood, in the future, that children are sent to school.

3. Life-cycle impact

- Cultural and social norms, as well as age, affect the gender division of labour in agriculture. Children's responsibilities vary across regions and during their life-cycle.
- Child labour leaves little time for play and rest, which are both basic children's rights and necessary for the healthy growth and development of social and other life skills. Child labour is detrimental to long-term health, education and higher-level skills acquisition, and decreases the chances of decent employment in youth and adulthood. As adults, former child labourers are more likely to rely on their own children's labour to meet the household's basic expenses, perpetuating the vicious cycle of poverty, illiteracy and child labour.
- High rates of youth unemployment are disincentives to invest in education. A lack of non-agricultural work opportunities for women in rural areas is common in many parts of the world.
- Agriculture and rural societies are dynamic and are changing rapidly. Climate change and scarcity of water, energy and land affect food production processes, while population growth, globalization and urbanization affect demand and preferences for food. Rural communities need the ability to respond to these shocks and changes.

4. Hazards and risks in rural areas

Agriculture is a sector with a high incidence of work hazards and risks which can have a more severe impact on children's immature bodies and minds than on adults.[12] Rural work is physically demanding, often involving long periods of stooping, repetitive movements, and carrying heavy loads over long distances. Children often work in extreme temperatures, without appropriate protection and lack access to safe water. Hazards commonly experienced by boys and girls include:

- Musculoskeletal injuries from heavy work, cuts from sharp tools, falls while picking high-growing fruit or into water, accidents from working around farm vehicles and heavy machinery.
- Exposure to skin irritants contained in crops (for example tobacco) that can provoke allergies, rashes and poisoning. Vulnerability to water-borne

BOX 2 Supply and demand determinants of child labour

Supply factors	Demand factors
Need to supplement household income to meet basic needs	Cheap labour, as children are often unpaid or their wages are lower than adults'
Limited schools in rural areas, and commute to school considered dangerous for girls	Insufficient labour supply at peak times, particularly in agriculture (e.g. for weeding, harvesting)
Perceived irrelevance of education	Quotas or piecework based on family work units that put pressure on parents / guardians to involve children
Limited access to financial services and children's labour used to repay debts	Low productivity of small farms and rural enterprises operating at very small margins
The need to cope with shocks such as a failed harvests, death of livestock or the illness or loss of breadwinners	Requirement on some plantations that children work in order for them to live with their families
Children's participation in agriculture considered a way of life and necessary to pass on skills and knowledge; low awareness of the hazards of agricultural work	Perception that children's fingers are nimble and ideal for some agricultural tasks (flowers and horticulture)
Substitution of adults in domestic chores and labour when parents are working	Children, particularly girls, considered to be more docile workers

diseases when working barefoot in ponds and paddy fields. Exposure to high levels of organic dust from fields or livestock that can provoke allergic respiratory diseases (asthma).

- Exposure to pesticides and other chemicals that can damage brain functions, behaviour and mental health, reproductive systems and may cause cancer. While some children mix and apply these pesticides, most children suffer from environmental exposure to pesticides by working, living nearby or passing through sprayed fields. Lack of proper pesticide storage and disposal worsens the situation.

The division of tasks along gender lines means that boys' and girls' exposure to specific hazards can often be different. For instance, the hazards of handling poultry, a common task for girls in many societies, differ from herding livestock. Boys in pastoral communities may spend many months in remote areas looking after herds. Boys often work in capture fishing, where they are at risk of drowning, hypothermia, entanglement and crushing injuries. Girls are more commonly found working on-shore and suffer respiratory problems from smoke inhalation when drying fish, as well as cuts and burns.

WHAT ARE THE POLICY OPTIONS?

Eliminating child labour in rural areas requires a comprehensive and gender sensitive approach. It involves addressing its root causes (and first of all, poverty) and preventing girls' and boys' engagement in child labour. This requires collaboration with governments, social partners and other actors in agriculture and rural development, education, health and youth employment. Policy strategies should include the following six main areas of intervention:

1. Reduce rural poverty and improve rural livelihoods and youth employment

- Reduce poverty in rural areas through targeted agricultural and rural development policies that specifically integrate decent work concerns and address the interactions between adult and child employment. Set up partnerships between governments, workers' and employers' organizations, farmers and rural producers' organizations and communities to develop these policies[13] and to raise public awareness about linkages between poverty and child labour.
- Ensure that women and girls have the same access as boys and men to land, training, agriculture extension services, technologies and inputs, business development services and microfinance. Ensure that child-care facilities are accessible and at a safe distance from worksites.
- Target parents/guardians of child labourers or children at risk in programmes designed to generate rural incomes, including through skills and entrepreneurship training and access to microfinance.
- Promote youth employment for children above minimum legal age, together with health and safety training on proper use of equipment, tools and substances.
- Support safe migration of youth above the minimum age for employment, so they can obtain decent work and not fall victim to trafficking. Cooperation within governments (at various levels) and a good understanding of labour market realities and migration patterns are required, along with registered and monitored employment/recruitment agencies. Migration awareness raising campaigns are essential in rural areas, and also in destination countries.

2. Apply laws on child labour

- Ratify and implement ILO child labour Conventions (C. 138, C. 182), and other conventions regulating agricultural work, such as C. 184 (Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention), C. 188 (Work in Fishing Convention), C. 141 (Rural Workers' Organizations Convention), and C. 110 (Plantations Conventions), and review labour legislation so that it fully applies to agriculture, including small scale and family farms and other informal rural and agricultural undertakings.
- Draw up and periodically revise hazardous work lists that define jobs, activities and working conditions prohibited for children under age 18, considering girls' special vulnerabilities and also ensuring proper coverage of tasks and conditions in agriculture, including subsistence agriculture, family farms, livestock keeping and small-scale fisheries (as per Article 3 of C.138 and Article 4 of C. 182). Build the capacity of labour inspectors in monitoring and enforcing these laws in agriculture.
- Encourage employers to enforce socially responsible corporate policies and codes of conduct that respect core labour standards, including in sub-contracting arrangements. Motivate private and public institutions to establish long-term contracts with suppliers, respect minimum wages, and offer social protection to workers.

3. Improve access to quality education adapted to the needs of rural girls and boys

- Provide compulsory, affordable and quality schooling in rural areas and make schooling more relevant to local communities. Provide incentives for equal school enrolment of rural boys and girls, and their completion of post-primary education and/or vocational training.
- Provide incentives for children's attendance through school feeding programmes and food-for-schooling programmes (so all the family benefits from the take-home food rations given to children attending school), or cash transfers (as in the case of Cambodia where transfers conditional on families keeping teenage girls in school, increased enrolment rates by between 20% and 30%)[14].
- Raise awareness among children and families on the benefits of education, using different targeted messages for boys and girls. Increase the incentives to invest in girls' education, and expand awareness of the actual returns to schooling.
- Make schools girl-friendly. In Pakistan and Bangladesh, girl-only schools, or employing female teachers and having separate toilet facilities helped overcome culturally-rooted reluctance to send girls to school.[15] To free up time for girls' education, improve rural infrastructure such as water systems and roads to decrease the time-burden of domestic duties, including firewood and water collection.
- Provide education programmes for orphans and vulnerable children, who may be excluded or marginalized from public education. A combination of agricultural and life skills, such as in the Junior Farmer Field and Life School (JFFLS), enhances youth confidence and productive skills.
- Encourage and supply resources for early-childhood education, providing alternatives to bringing children to workplaces. Provide second-chance education for children withdrawn from child labour. Some children may benefit from bridging/transition education while, for older children, vocational and skills training (linked to market realities) may be most appropriate. Ensure vocational programmes are gender sensitive, and contribute to improve the productivity and profitability of youth's labour, and their ability to respond to changing markets.

BOX 3 Tackling child labour in agriculture at its roots: the integrated area-based approach

Eliminating child labour in a rural community requires addressing all forms of child labour jointly to avoid that as a result of interventions children merely shift sectors or locations while continuing to work. ILO's Integrated Area-Based (IAB) approach promotes a programme of interventions based on the involvement of local communities and dialogue and cooperation among government, employers' and workers' organizations. Stakeholders are supported in identifying the root causes of child labour and in promoting alternatives and change in supply chains.

Provide opportunities to achieve relevant certifications and services to help them find jobs or start their own business.

- Encourage dialogue between rural school teachers, the community and parents, so programmes and courses respond to the specific needs and constraints of rural communities (timing, harvest seasons, technical skills to be taught or trained), and parents can better understand the potential returns of sending their children to school instead of engaging them in child labour.

4. Reduce household and worker vulnerability

- Raise awareness of the hazards of agricultural work, building capacity of farmers, workers and rural communities to undertake risk assessments and identify safer production practices. Provide training in occupational health and safety to improve working conditions and increase capacity to make informed judgments as to when activities are safe enough for children above the minimum legal age. Support agricultural extension services in promoting safer use of chemicals and technology, and sensitize them on national child labour policy, gender equality and what can be done about child labour in the areas they serve.
- Promote social protection in rural areas such as old-age pensions or access to basic health services. Support micro-insurance programmes to smooth risks associated with crop failure, death of livestock, floods and droughts, as well as micro health insurance programmes to protect rural families from the loss of breadwinners.
- Develop equitable land tenure and inheritance laws to increase the likelihood that children are protected and attend school when a household head dies. Support programmes that diversify crops and income-generating activities to reduce vulnerability of rural families.

5. Mainstream child labour into agricultural and rural policies, programmes and research

- Factor child labour elimination into all agriculture and rural development planning. Raise awareness among Ministries of Agriculture and Labour and increase inter-ministerial cooperation on child labour. Examine how labour-saving technologies may affect girls and boys differently and the demand for their labour. Place child labour elimination in rural areas on the agenda of donor programmes.
- Collect data on the contributions of women in agriculture and other rural activities, disaggregated by age. Undertake research on key topics such as inequalities in the treatment of boys and girls in rural areas, abundance or scarcity of agricultural labour supply, and on the impact that improved energy sources, biofuels, solar cooking facilities and better access to water have on reducing girls' domestic labour.
- Set up long-term monitoring studies to assess the impact of programmes which remove underage boys and girls from rural work (to check if they entered school, training, or other forms of labour).

6. Promote social dialogue

- Promote the organization of employers' and workers' associations and cooperatives. Promote their involvement in scaling-up action against child labour. Support the outreach of workers' and employers' organizations to self-employed rural workers in small-scale and family farms and non-farm activities and informal, family and migrant workers. Support their sensitization and mobilization against child labour. Support collective bargaining throughout supply chains.
- Ensure that workers and multinational and national agri-companies work together in adopting policies prohibiting child labour. Where child labour does exist, encourage private companies and public institutions to work with suppliers to provide alternatives to child labour that are viable for both the business and the children.

Endnotes

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2 ILO. 2010. pp. 10. Geneva.

3 IPEC. 2006. *Tackling hazardous child labour in agriculture: Guidance on policy and practice.* p. 2. Geneva, ILO.

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6 Basu, K. and Tzannatos, Z. 2002. *"The global child labor problem: what do we know and what can we do?". World Bank Economic Review.* (2002) Vol. 17, No. 2, pp. 147-173.

7 ILO. 2010. p. 12. Geneva.

8 IPEC. 2009. Blanco Allais, F. *Assessing the gender gap: Evidence from SIMPOC surveys.* Geneva, ILO.

9 ILO. 2009. *Give girls a chance. Tackling child labour, a key to the future*, p. 12. Geneva.

10 IPEC. 2010. Diallo, Y., Hagemann, F., Etienne, A., Gurbuzer, Y., Mehran, F. *Global child labour developments: Measuring trends from 2004 to 2008.* Geneva, ILO.

11 UCW. 2010. *Joining forces against child labour: Interagency report for The Hague Global Child Labour Conference of 2010.* p 79. Geneva.

12 IPEC. 2006. *Tackling hazardous child labour in agriculture: Guidance on policy and practice.* Guidebook 3, Chapter 1, pp. 1-16 for more details on hazards. Geneva, ILO.

13 Such as different sections of government; agricultural extension services; trade unions; employers associations; farmers'/agricultural producers' organizations; agricultural research organizations; women's groups; vocational associations; youth representative organizations; and local, provincial and issue-based groups; as well as NGOs, UN agencies and donors.

14 Filmer, D. and Schady, N. 2008. *"Getting girls into school: evidence from a scholarship program in Cambodia"*, in *Economic Development and Cultural change*, Vol. 56, no. 2, pp. 581-617.

15 UCW. 2010. p. 114. Geneva.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

- International partnership for cooperation on child labour in agriculture (ILO, FAO, IFAD, IFPRI, IFAP, IUF): http://www.ilo.org/agriculture-partnership
- FAO-ILO joint website "Food, agriculture and decent work", page on child labour: http://www.fao-ilo.org/fao-ilo-child/ and IPEC webpage on child labour in agriculture: http://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/
- IPEC. *Training resource pack on the elimination of hazardous child labour in agriculture* (Geneva, ILO, 2005) available at: http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/viewProduct.do;jsessionid=?productId=1759
- IPEC. *Tackling hazardous child labour in agriculture: Guidance on policy and practice.* (Geneva, ILO, 2006): http://www.ilo.org/public/libdoc/ilo/2006/106B09_457_engl.pdf
- FAO. *Child labour prevention in agriculture. Junior Farmer Field and Life School Facilitator's guide* (Rome, FAO, 2010): http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i1897e/i1897e.pdf
- FAO-ILO. *Recommendations from the workshop on child labour in fisheries and aquaculture* (2010): http://www.fao-ilo.org/fao-ilo-child/workshop-2010/en/
- SARD and Child Labour policy brief (Rome, FAO, 2007): ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/010/ai117e/ai117e.pdf
- *Understanding Children's Work* (UCW), an inter-agency research cooperation project on child labour: http://www.ucw-project.org/
- More tools on child labour are available at: http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/editSearchProduct.do?type=normal http://www2.ilo.org/pls/apex/f?p=109:3:1396169550994795::NO::P3_SUBJECT:CHILDLABOUR http://www.fao.org/economic/esw/esw-home/esw-population-dynamics/children-youths/esw-child-labour/en/

Gender
PATHWAYS OUT OF POVERTY
Rural Employment

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Policy briefs – questions for analysis

1) Do a 20 second scan of the titles and subtitles in the brief.
- Do you get a clear idea of what the brief is about?
- Do you feel positive about reading it in more detail? Why/Why not?

2) Read the introduction/first paragraph of text.
- Does the introduction indicate to the reader that the rest of the document will give an answer to an important question/tells them something they want to know?

3) Does the brief contain examples of where change has been achieved, and the results of that change?

4) Does the brief support its statements with evidence (even if only alluding to cases/evidence, without giving full details)?

5) In terms of space/word count, does the brief emphasise the positives – the recommendations, solutions, examples of success etc. – or the negatives/problems?

6) Does the policy brief target policymakers in a particular country, region, or continent, to indicate that this issue is relevant to them and their constituency?

7) What methods does the brief use to make important parts stand out?

8) Writing style:
- Does it use long or short sentences (or both)?
- Does it use technical jargon/plain language?
- Does it sound authoritative?

9) Does it have a title – if so, is the title good/effective?

Overseas Development Institute

Background Note

May 2008

Policy briefs as a communication tool for development research

By Nicola Jones and Cora Walsh

Policy briefs are short documents that present the findings and recommendations of a research project to a non-specialist readership. They are often recommended as a key tool for communicating research findings to policy actors (Young and Quinn, 2007). However, there has been little systematic research in the development field about the communication needs of developing country policy-makers and how such research can be used to inform policy brief content and design. This background note presents recent research by the Research and Policy in Development (RAPID) Group at ODI and the Science and Development Network (SciDev.Net) on the research communication environment involving researchers, policy-makers and development practitioners from the North and South in science, technology and innovation.

We begin with an overview of the theoretical literature on bridging research and policy, with a focus on insights from scholars interested in the science–policy interface. Drawing on an international survey and country case studies, we then highlight the barriers to, and opportunities for, strengthening communication between researchers, knowledge brokers and policy-makers working in international development, and the key requisites of policy briefs to meet the challenges of this landscape.

Characterising the divide between the research and policy communities

Scholarship on the research–policy interface in recent years has done much to unpack the complexities of the uptake of research evidence into policy-making processes (Cash et al., 2003; Scott, 2006; Choi et al., 2007; Fairhead et al., 2006). There is now a growing focus on thematic advocacy coalitions that cut across government agencies and research institutes (Buse et al., 2005) as well as innovative knowledge translation initiatives such as multi-stakeholder research partnerships between researchers, NGOs and policy-makers (Jones and Villar, 2008) and the establishment of dedicated knowledge hubs within line ministries in some developing countries (Lavis, 2007). However, a number of key structural and professional tensions persist between researchers and policy-makers. These are presented below, with a particular emphasis on the natural science field.

Specialised research expertise vs democratised knowledge

Efforts to communicate research-based information for policy application underscore tensions between scientific knowledge as 'privileged' information and the perceived diluting effects that a democratised knowledge-base may introduce (Weingart, 1999). Some fear that the capacity of the current system of communication between researcher and policy communities is inadequate to rule out excessive dilution of scientific knowledge (Clark and Juma, 2002). Moreover, the pluralisation of knowledge in policy can, in fact, cause debate to stagnate rather than encourage it. Policy-makers, constrained by time and overwhelmed by various sources of information, are likely to make a snap decision by selecting the 'evidence' most appropriate to their political leanings (Edwards, 1999). The clear warning is that, without efforts to improve these communication channels, research may lose its 'purity' when used in the short timeframes of the political sphere.

Engagement vs objectivity

A divide between 'engaged' and 'objective' researchers is highlighted in the literature concerning science communication in developed countries in particular, and to a lesser degree in studies on developing countries.

Two broad categories of researchers emerge: researchers engaged in policy-making processes and those who separate themselves from policy. The divide often occurs between 'strictly objective' researchers, who believe that engaging in civic debate undermines objectivity, and 'citizen scientists', who believe researchers can – and at times should – help decision-makers incorporate sound scientific knowledge into policy (Higgins et al., 2006). Debate between these camps is said to render many researchers unwilling to engage in civic discourse: some are convinced by the argument for strict objectivity, while others recognise that it is safer, professionally, to focus solely on research and risky to advocate on behalf of anything, even science. However, more nuanced arguments suggest that when researchers recoil too far from the policy implications of research, they leave a 'vacuum' that is filled by politically motivated parties who offer their own interpretations, and without credible opposition, can mislead the public towards their own goals.

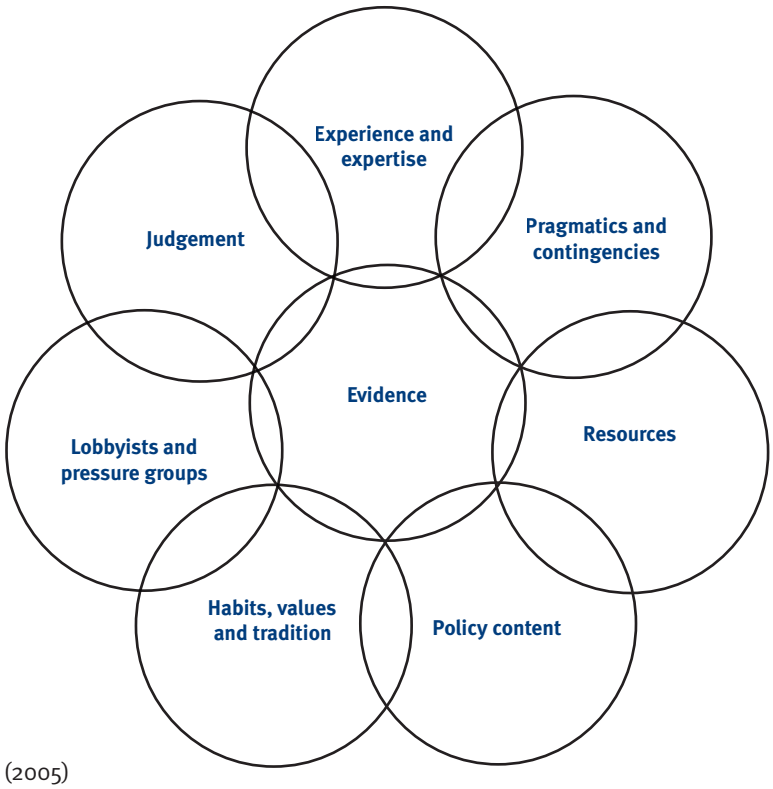
Researchers' vs policy-makers' incentive structures and timescales

Problems caused by the divergent timescales and incentive structures of researchers and policy-makers lie at the heart of communication issues at the research–policy interface. On the one hand, the time-consuming nature of 'pure' research, not bound by time constraints, is difficult to integrate with the policy demands of politicians who are often compelled to work under very tight deadlines to produce short-term, tangible policy results. On the other hand, policy-makers often struggle to stay apace of new scientific thinking, especially in terms of developing relevant policies and infrastructure to enable as well as regulate the implementation of scientific and technological advances (Clark and Juma, 2002).

Evidence vs contextual factors in policy decision-making

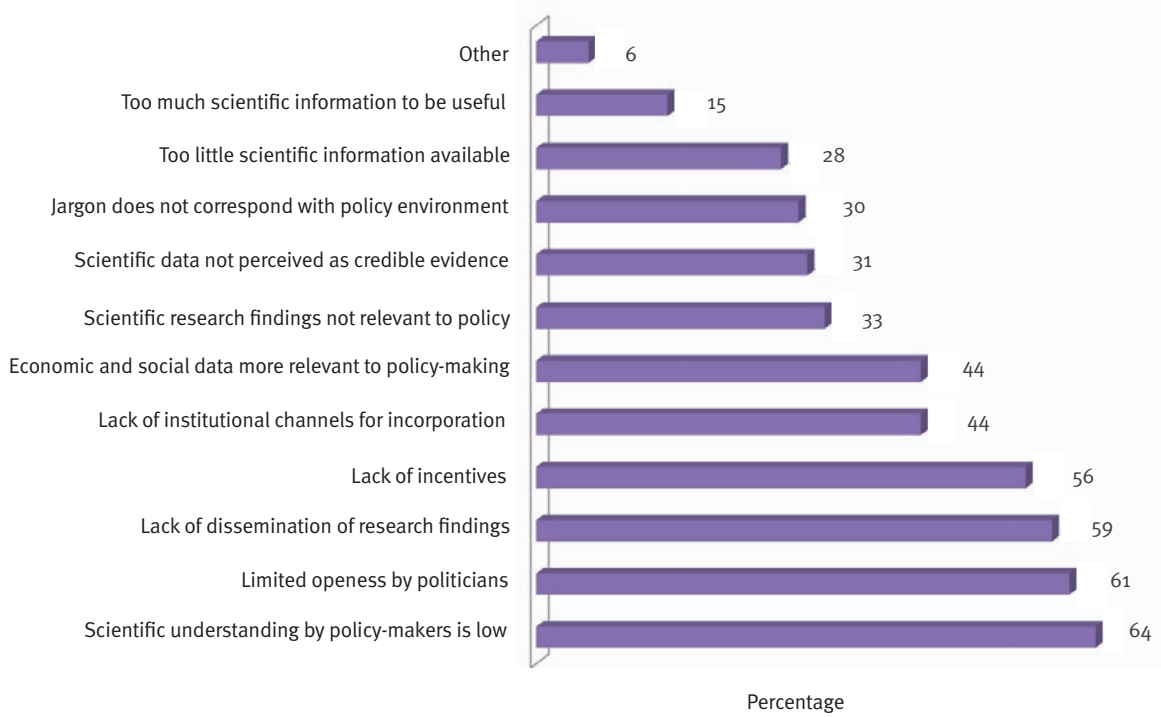
Research findings have been responsible for many improvements in quality of life. Better use of research evidence in development policy-making can save lives through more effective policies that respond to scientific and technological advances, use resources more efficiently and better meet citizens' needs (WHO, 2004). However, too often the linkages between research and policy-making are viewed as a linear process, in which research findings are critically analysed and the best option implemented into policy (Young and Court, 2004). In reality, the integration of evidence into policy decision-making is a complex process of multiple, frequently competing and / or intertwined sets of influences in which evidence plays just one of many roles (see Figure 1). In practice, research evidence is considered through the lens of policy-makers' experience, expertise and judgement, contextual pragmatics, available resources and

Figure 1: Factors influencing policy-making



Adapted from Davies (2005)

Figure 2: Obstacles to the uptake of scientific information in development policy-making



the policy context, along with the habits, values and traditions of policy-makers, and the influence of lobbyists and pressure groups (Davies, 2005). Increasing the usage of evidence in policy-making therefore requires a communication approach that is informed by an understanding and engagement with these competing influences.

Research methodology

This background note is based upon the findings of a 2007 ODI/SciDev.Net international study on the research–policy interface in the field of science, technology and innovation. The study involved a systematic literature review, expert interviews, seven developing country case studies (China, Cambodia, India, Ghana, Zambia, Nicaragua and Bolivia) and an international survey with researchers, policy-makers and intermediary organisations. Research questions focused on how research information is accessed for development policy-making (particularly in developing countries), what types of communication of research evidence are most useful / effective for policy actors, and the ways in which an intermediary organisation can facilitate the communication process between researcher and policy-making communities.

This note draws primarily on the survey findings,[1] as well as more in-depth qualitative work undertaken with an expert panel[2] and key informant interviews in Brazil and India.[3]

Study findings

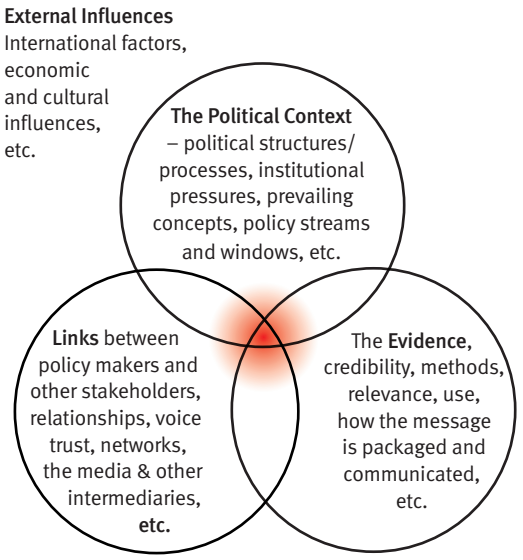
Despite the emphasis in the literature on the polarisation between researcher and policy-maker communities, the 2007 ODI/SciDev.Net study found that greater opportunities for interaction, discussion and deliberation between researchers and policy-makers would significantly improve the uptake of research findings in policy decision-making. The survey findings underscored the large unmet need for greater communication of scientific and technological evidence for policy-makers. Some 50% of policy-makers and 65% of researchers felt that there is insufficient dissemination of research findings for policy uptake (59% of respondents overall, see Figure 2). Policy briefs were identified as a key tool for addressing this gap, with 79% of respondents from both developed and developing countries ranking policy briefs as valuable communications tools along with opinion articles written by experts, news items and discussion fora. Similarly, more in-depth interviews with sub-national developing country policy-makers confirmed that they not only read policy briefs, but often actively seek them out to inform their decision-making processes. As one Indian sub-national level policy-maker emphasised: 'I often read policy briefs for both my official and non-official needs. I cannot think of going forward without consulting policy briefs. It expands my knowledge as I get an opportunity to understand what is happening around me'.

Table 1: Key ingredients of effective policy briefs

Evidence	**Persuasive argument**	• Clear purpose • Cohesive argument • Quality of evidence • Transparency of evidence underpinning policy recommendations (e.g. a single study, a synthesis of available evidence, etc.)
	Authority	• Messenger (individual or organisation) has credibility in eyes of policy-maker
Policy context	**Audience context specificity**	• Addresses specific context › national and sub-national • Addresses needs of target audience › social vs economic policy
	Actionable recommendations	• Information linked to specific policy processes • Clear and feasible recommendations on policy steps to be taken
Engagement	**Presentation of evidence-informed opinions**	• Presentation of author's own views about policy implications of research findings • But clear identification of argument components that are opinion-based
	Clear language/writing style	• Easily understood by educated, non-specialist
	Appearance/design	• Visually engaging • Presentation of information through charts, graphs, photos

To be effective, our research findings emphasised the importance of a number of key ingredients. These are in line with the RAPID framework on bridging research and policy (Figure 3), which emphasises: 1) the importance of embedding an understanding of the political context within the design and communication of research, 2) the necessity of providing quality evidence and twinning this with the communication of key findings through a credible messenger, and 3) the value of fostering linkages and active engagement between researchers and policy-makers to ensure that research products are part of an ongoing dialogue. A summary is provided in Table 1.

Figure 3: The RAPID Framework: Context, evidence and links



Evidence

Developing a persuasive argument

Our key informants stressed the need for the purpose of a policy brief to be expressed clearly and early in the text. A statement of purpose should convey the essence of the brief, act as an enticement to readers and provide an overview of the contents for busy research users. Much like a newspaper article, this statement of purpose should both 'hook' the reader and provide a concise statement of what the policy brief will tell the reader.

As scientific evidence represents just one of many competing influences on policy-making decisions, policy briefs also need to persuade the reader of the importance of the evidence and recommendations. Policy brief reviewers in developing countries emphasised the high volume of information with which they are presented. Given this plethora of information and time constraints, a policy brief should persuade a reader that the evidence presented is important and that the recommended policy actions are necessary. To do this, effective policy briefs should develop a persuasive line of argument that maintains the scientific credibility of the information, while highlighting its relevance and urgency for policy issues. This entails distilling the complexity and nuances of research findings into clear and concise messages that the audience can easily digest and remember. The argument must also take into consideration the competing externalities that will influence decision-making, such as donor priorities, historical-political sensitivities, cultural values and timing of elections among others.

Transparency of the source of the evidence behind policy recommendations is essential to promote broader access to new scientific knowledge. Are the recommendations derived from a single study, a

Box 1: Views of developing country policy-makers

'Policy briefs provide valuable information in an understandable format...when I read policy briefs I look for the quality of the information, adequate tables and figures, and connection of the evidence to policy processes.' (Sub-national level policy maker, Brazil)

'Briefs should be inspiring. They should be practical, realistic and relevant to the local contexts.' (President of local-level government body, Kerala State, India)

'When I read policy briefs I look for concise information that takes into account the policy process, and provides information relevant to the problems at hand.' (Sub-national level policy-maker, Brazil)

review and synthesis of existing information, or the culmination of a programme of work? This transparency can be aided by providing a short annotated list of the most important sources and publication on the topic for further reading.

Credibility of the messenger

End-users of policy briefs emphasised that they do pay attention to who is producing the policy brief and that this influences their acceptance of the evidence and argument presented. Legitimacy stems not only from the quality of the evidence base, but also from the author of the information and / or the organisation publishing the brief.

Survey respondents identified professional scientific and international organisations as the most legitimate potential mediators between researcher and policy-maker communities. However, mediating at the science–policy interface is not necessarily part of the mandate of such organisations. This suggests that there are many undefined roles to be filled in this area by other possible knowledge brokers such as: policy advisors, donors and web-based organisations. When acting as a knowledge broker and producing policy briefs, organisations should consider partnering with authoritative research institutes so as to augment their credibility.

Context

Tailoring findings to political context

Presenting results so that they are applicable to the specific national and sub-national contexts in which policy-makers operate emerged as an important challenge. Policy-makers do not represent a homogenous group of actors, but rather have different needs, priorities and uses for information based on their position by sector, level of government, and role in policy-making. A policy brief should, therefore, be written to address the needs of the target audience as well as in accordance with the particular point in the policy cycle that one aims to influence, whether it be agenda setting, policy formulation, implementation or evaluation.

Patterns of evidence use differ by audience segment, including country, sector, role in policy-making (e.g. legislator, minister, policy engaged NGO), level of government, etc. For example, non-science related ministries report employing scientific information primarily in the stages of policy evaluation (64%) and implementation (59%). By contrast, science-related ministries use scientific information primarily for policy conceptualisation (88%), and formulation (85%), suggesting that non-science policy-makers use scientific information to legitimate and evaluate policy decisions, whereas science-related ministries rely more heavily on scientific information to formulate policy. There is also strong demand for more regionally and locally specific policy briefs: over 50% of developing country based policy-makers prefer regionally specific information over globally applicable information. Having this information translated into local languages is also important if readership and engagement with new research is to be enhanced.

Tailoring findings to audience interests

The purpose of a policy brief should be linked to the target audience. As shown above, the ODI/SciDev.Net survey found that the informational needs of science-ministry officials differ from those of non-science ministries. A policy brief should therefore be written to address the specific purpose for which its target audience uses information, whether it be to formulate or validate policies. As a policy-maker from Kerala State, India, explained:

Box 2: Country Case Study Examples

In India and Cambodia, the uptake of scientific information into policy is also closely linked to its resonance with broader national development priorities. For example, in India the framing of biotechnology research findings in pro-poor discourse (improved crop yields as a means to reduce rural poverty) has contributed to widespread policy implementation. In Cambodia as in other post-conflict societies, research messages presented as part of broader socio-economic rehabilitation efforts are more likely to receive policy support. In both cases, demonstrating the complementarity of research evidence with social and economic data is often highly effective.

'Primarily, I look for applicability within my working framework. Usually, there are a hundred policy briefs on a single subject but the majority are irrelevant to local contexts and situations.'

This suggests that there may then be a need for separate tailored versions of policy briefs for different policy actors, not only according to the level of the political arena (international, national, sub-national and local) but also depending on the policy sector in which they work, and whether or not they are civil servants or elected officials. In this vein, persuading the reader to take a particular course of action based on research evidence can be enhanced by highlighting the benefits that are likely to accrue by following a particular course of action. Country case studies in the ODI/SciDev.Net study showed, for instance, that linking research evidence to socio-economic benefits in particular can be especially persuasive, due to overarching attention to poverty reduction and economic growth.

Presenting actionable recommendations

Given the time pressures on policy-makers to deliver policies with rapid and visible impacts, recommendations must be actionable and clearly connected to specific decision-making junctures in the policy-making process. Evidence-based recommendations must provide the necessary information to differentiate between various policy options. Moreover, policy brief authors also need to take into consideration the intersection between new knowledge and complex power relations that underpin policy processes. The presentation of research evidence that challenges prevailing understandings has to tread a fine line between opening up new policy horizons while avoiding being too confrontational and alienating readers. For example, in Ghana, key informant researchers explained that they are wary of presenting evidence that is framed within a political viewpoint at odds with the politics of those in power, as their work may be disregarded. This reinforces the importance of policy briefs framing research evidence in a way that is sensitive to the political context if the messages are to be accepted and potentially acted upon.

Engagement

Not shying away from opinion and value judgements

One of the most striking findings of the study was the fact that, while policy-makers value research evidence, they do not want to be simply presented with research findings. Instead, 80% said that they value researchers' opinions about the policy implications of their findings. Interestingly, while those in both the North and South preferred researchers to express their opinions, the demand for opinion, value judgments and advice on policy actions was particularly high in the South, both at the national and sub-national levels.

Presenting messages in clear language

There was a strong consensus among study participants that briefs need to be written in clear, jargon-free language, and pitched towards educated non-specialists in the topic. This is because many policy-makers are generalists and do not come from research or even strong educational backgrounds: 64% of ODI/SciDev.Net survey respondents were of the view that low levels of scientific understanding by policy-makers constituted a significant obstacle to the uptake of scientific information (Figure 2 above). Moreover, a significant number of policy-makers emphasised that much research evidence is unnecessarily verbose and dense.

Engaging audiences visually

To make a significant impact on an audience, policy briefs must not only be conceptually engaging, but also visually appealing. Policy-makers have limited time to read: the ODI/SciDev.Net survey findings indicated that most policy-makers spend just 30 to 60 minutes reading information on a particular issue. Policy briefs must, therefore, draw readers' attention and present information in a way that is easily remembered. Over 80% of respondents in the same survey found graphs or explanatory diagrams helpful, while a systematic review of policy briefs found that those that were visually stimulating were consistently rated more highly.

Conclusions

Policy briefs, if carefully designed, can be a powerful tool for communicating research findings to development policy audiences. However, the effectiveness of any tool depends upon appropriate usage. Producers of policy briefs aiming to increase uptake of scientific and technological research in development policy need to focus on, and actively address, the communication tensions at the research-policy boundary. Policy-makers operate in a complex environment of competing concerns. The provision of research information alone is not, therefore, sufficient to influence the policy agenda. The value of a policy brief needs to be viewed not only in terms of presenting quality evidence, but also in translating new knowledge into context-relevant messages and guidance for policy-makers. Most importantly,

however, even with a well-crafted policy brief in hand, the research communication process has not ended but is only beginning.

To foster uptake and implementation, face-to-face and / or electronic discussion and deliberation with policy-makers about the policy brief evidence and policy guidance is critical. What is needed is active mediation and translation among knowledge producers, knowledge brokers and end users, as well as an integrated communications approach that takes into consideration individual, organisational and systemic levels. It is critical to foster close collaboration between researchers and policy-makers from the outset, rather than disseminating research results at the end of a project, to reach consensus on the key questions to be addressed and to promote understanding of research methodologies as well as ownership of findings.

Constructing an appropriate platform from which to communicate is also key, especially if research findings challenge current policy approaches. Informed by insights from literature on advocacy and user engagement, there is a growing realisation of the efficacy of promoting broad engagement and participation on an issue, and using public engagement (e.g. global advocacy campaigns, community radio) as a platform from which to approach policy-makers and advocate for more accountable decision-making (Hovland, 2004). This approach was also strongly endorsed by over 90% of ODI/SciDev.Net survey respondents who called for more efforts to build the public's capacity to engage in research-policy debates. Improved research communication is therefore critical, not only between researcher and policy-maker communities, but also among the broader public. Lastly, efforts to strengthen researchers' communication and knowledge brokering skills need to be complemented by efforts to strengthen the institutional capacity of policy agencies to take up research. This includes enhancing individual capacities and skills, as well as developing institutional channels, procedures and incentive structures to promote evidence-informed policy processes.

This Background Note was written by Cora Walsh and Nicola Jones and is based on work conducted in the RAPID programme at ODI, commissioned by SciDev.Net and funded by DFID. For more information contact Nicola Jones (n.jones@odi.org.uk) or visit www.odi.org.uk/rapid. More information on science and policy can also be found at www.scidev.net

Endnotes and further resources

Endnotes

1 The international online survey had a total of 617 responses, sampling policy-makers (18.3%), intermediary communicators (34.7%) and researchers (46.7%). Most respondents (63.9%) were from developing countries. The survey results were compiled and analysed using largely descriptive statistics, disaggregating responses by sub-groups of respondents (policy-makers, intermediaries, and researchers), as well as by region. Results were then compared across these categories to discover significant patterns and differences. Large differences between groups and variables were then tested for significance using the Chi-square test.

2 An initial policy brief review panel was convened involving participants from the North and South, academia, a think tank, the NGO sector and a communication specialist. Panel participants reviewed 16 sample policy briefs across four thematic areas (Health, Technology, Environment, and Agriculture) according to set of criteria decided upon by the panel: clarity of purpose; persuasive argument with actionable recommendations; clear source of evidence; clear language / writing style; appearance / design; and authority.

3 Two case studies were coordinated by ODI and conducted by CGEE in Brazil, and PRAXIS in India to further investigate the use of policy briefs by developing country policy-makers at national and sub-national levels. Policy-makers were asked to review three example policy briefs according to the criteria employed by the international panel, and to discuss the relative importance of each criterion in affecting the usage / effectiveness of a policy brief.

Suggested further resouces

Translating evidence for development policy:

Cash, David W., William C. Clark, Frank Alcock, Nancy M. Dickson, Noelle Eckley, David H. Guston, Jill Jager and Ronald B. Mitchell (2003) Knowledge systems for sustainable development. PNAS. (https://rapid.odinet.org.uk/rip/rap0056/rap0056shared/Process/Inception%20study/literature/Knowledge%20systems%20for%20sustainable%20development.pdf).

Clark, W. and Juma, C. (2002) Mobilizing Science and Technology for Sustainable Development. Forum on Science and Technology for Sustainability. (http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/sustsci/ists/docs/ists_cfia_rpt_final.pdf).

Court, J., Hovland, I., and Young, J. (2005) Bridging Research and Policy in Development: Evidence and the Change Process. Warwickshire, UK: ITDG.

Mediating between scientists and policymakers:

Choi, B. C. K., Pang, T., Lin, V., Puska, P., Sherman, G., Goddard, M., Ackland, M.J., Sainsbury, P., Stachenko, S., and Morrison, H. (2005) Can scientists and policy makers work together ? Journal of Epidemiology and community health 59: 632-637.

Higgins, P. A. T., Chan, K. M. A. and Porder, S. (2006) Bridge over a philosophical divide. Evidence and Policy 2(2): 249-255.

Communication toolkits:

Hovland, I. (2005) Successful Communication: A Toolkit for Researchers and Civil Society Organisations. London: ODI. (http://www.odi.org.uk/publications/rapid/tools2.pdf).

Influencing policy:

Majone, Giandomenico (1989) Evidence, argument and persuasion in the policy process. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Shaxson, L. (2007) Practical tools for evidence based policy making: developing lines of argument. Presentation at: Impact & Insight Workshop. UK: Kings College London. 25 Oct. 2007. (http://www.slideshare.net/ODI_Webmaster/lines-of-argument-presentation-at-insights-to-impact-meeting/).

WHO (2004) World Report on Knowledge for Better Health: Strengthening Health Systems. WHO: Geneva. (http://www.who.int/rpc/meetings/world_report_on_knowledge_for_better_health.pdf).

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Buse, K., Mays, N. and Walt, G. (2005) Making Health Policy. Maidenhead, England: Open University Press.

Choi, B.C.,K. (2007) Can scientists and policy makers work together? Journal of Epidemiology and community health, 2005 59 (8).

Davies, P. (2005) Presentation: Impact to Insight Series. London: ODI.

Edwards A. (1999) Scientific expertise and policy-making: the intermediary role of the public sphere. Science and Public Policy, 26(3): 163-170. (https://ep.eur.nl/bitstream/1765/887/1/BSK077.pdf).

Higgins, P. A. T., Chan, K. M. A. and Porder, S. (2006) Bridge over a philosophical divide. Evidence and Policy 2(2).

Jones, N. with Eliana Villar (2008) 'Situating Children in International Development Policy'. In Journal of Evidence and Policy. Vol 4., No. 1. pp 53-73.

Jones, N., Walsh, C. and Young, J. (2007) Policy Briefs for Communicating Science, Technological and Innovation Findings: What Constitutes Best Practice? Unpublished mimeo. London: ODI.

Jones, H. and Jones, N. (2007) Meeting Science/Technology Information Needs in the Policy Community of Developing Countries: Country Studies. Unpublished mimeo London: ODI.

Penn State University (2002) Preparing a policy issue brief. (http://www.courses.psu.edu/hpa/hpa301_fre1/IBInstructions_fa02.PDF).

Princeton University (2007) Thoughts on writing a policy paper. Writing Centre Web Resource Guide. (http://stokeslib.princeton.edu/writingelements.htm).

Walsh, C. and Jones, N. (2007) ODI/SciDev.Net International Survey on the Science-Development Policy Interface. Unpublished mimeo London: ODI.

Young, J. and Court, J. (2004) Bridging Research and Policy in International Development: An Analytical and Practical Framework. RAPID Briefing Paper 1, London: ODI.

Young, E. and Quinn, L. (2008) (http://www.vancouver.wsu.edu/fac/tissot/cl/esrp444/Writing%20Policy%20Briefs.pdf). Accessed on 3 February. 2008.

odi Overseas Development Institute, 111 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7JD, Tel: +44 (0)20 7922 0300, Fax: +44 (0)20 7 922 0399, Email: publications@odi.org.uk. ISSN 1756-7610.

POLICY BRIEF TEMPLATE

No more than 2-4 pages, 1500 words

Preparation

- Audience research –who am I writing for and why
- Decide on key message and approach
- Do a SWOT analysis – what are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats surrounding the research issue.

Executive Summary

- A one or two sentence overview of the brief that entices readers to go further

Introduction

- Answer the question **why** is the topic important, **why** should people care
- Answer the question **what** were the goals of the research and overall findings
- Create curiosity about the rest of the brief

Approaches and Results

- Summarize facts, issues and context
- Reduce detail to only what reader needs to know
- Provide concrete facts or examples to support assertions

Conclusion

- Base conclusions on results
- Aim for concrete conclusions and strong assertions.

Implications and Recommendations

- State clearly what could or should happen next.

Day 4 resources

CIFSRF Audience mapping and messaging

Audience	Key messages	Objectives
Canadian Policy Makers, Research and Development Community (Canadian parliamentarians and senators, Senior Managers in DFADT; Senior Managers, Presidents, Vice Presidents and Directors of Canadian Universities, Research Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations)	"Through CIFSRF Canada is playing a leadership role in food security research, , and there are far-reaching social and economic impacts of this research."	Highlight CIFSRF´s purpose and its direct impact on people's lives in developing countries (e.g. improved nutrition from millet-based products). Emphasis should be on Canada's leadership role in global food security research, and the far-reaching social and economic impacts of this research. Some of the research results could also be transferable to Canadian agriculture (e.g. vaccine research, mitigating post-harvest loss in soft fruit). The global nature of food security issues will need to be emphasized in order to demonstrate the value of such research to Canadians as well as to citizens of developing countries.
International Development Community- Development agencies and donors (DFATD Field Missions on Agriculture and Food Security IFAD, DFID, World Bank, FAO, AusAID, SIDA, Rockefeller Foundation, Ford Foundation, BMGF, GIZ, NORAD, EU, etc), and large agricultural development programmes ; AGRA, ATA, Grow Africa, Feed the Future	"Effective solutions to food security problems are being generated by CIFSRF projects. These solutions have the potential to be scaled up in use to improve the situation in the communities you work with, and your organisations could have a role in scaling up successes." AND: this research is linked to, and informs the research and development programming you are doing: it will add value to your work	Focus on tangible, practical information on how research results can effectively be applied. Show case successful CIFSRF projects that have potential to generate impacts at scale Promote wide scale adoption and scaling up of research results, and influence decision-making processes. Showcase linkages between CIFSRF research findings and existing research/ programs/ policies – and how CIFSRF adds value
Policy Makers in developing countries (Regional Organisations and economic commissions such as (Africa Union-NEPAD; COMESA, East African Community, ECOWAS, SADC) and National Governments (Ministry of Agriculture; Ministries of Science and Technology; Ministries of Finance and	"High-impact research results and specific solutions to food security problems are being generated by multidisciplinary research teams; opportunities for adjusting policy to promote food security may arise from this work."	Inform and engage policymakers, encourage the application to create or change policy and the design of key development programs at municipal, regional, or national level. Stress the potential for scale-up, recommendations, and policy or program development options

Economic Planning) in CIFSRF countries		including costs if available. In particular, CIDA can build on CIFSRF project results to promote appropriate policy change both at high-level and on the ground. Stress the importance and impact of the research for development – i.e. what is the breakthrough and how will it improve people's lives?
Research Community (National, regional and international Agricultural research organisations Universities, think tanks, and academic institutions with a research focus on agriculture, food security and nutrition, natural and social scientists working on related research topics.) FARA, ASARECA, CORAF, CCARDESA; FANRPAN, CGIAR; Academies of Science, Canadian Universities; Ag and Agri-Food Canada, civil society actors working on ag and food security issues; and how they (and their agendas) can engage constructively with the conference and the research issues that are discussed	"Specific solutions to food security problems are being generated by researchers; that research contributes to international debates and the body of scientific knowledge."	Share advances in methodologies, concepts and results of applied research Communicate specific findings and scientific knowledge that will contribute to a more food secure world. Emphasize high quality research. Some of the research results could also be transferable to Canadian agriculture (e.g. vaccine research, nanotechnology for reducing post-harvest loss). Ensure rapid dissemination of new results to other researchers.
Private Sector (Large and medium private sector actors (agri-businesses, financial services, private R&D, etc.) Master Card Foundation; Equity Bank; Coops Canada Yep, great if we can get some private sector actors: I think we'll need to choose carefully and get good advice on who	"Effective solutions to food security problems are being generated by researchers; you could use these results to develop new technologies/services at scale, find new, low cost business opportunities that would contribute to food security."	Encourage the private sector to develop technologies and services that can bring a change in people´s lives (e.g. promotion of bio-packaging to increase shelf life of soft fruit). Communicate the need for public-private partnerships, for innovation, and for the development of adapted technologies to increase food security. Emphasize business opportunities for private companies to increase their visibility, markets, and social responsibility.

Day 5 resources

Future Agricultures Consortium

Communications Outreach Plan

September 2013 – March 2014

Introduction

Future Agricultures Consortium is a multidisciplinary and independent learning alliance of academic researchers and practitioners involved in African agriculture. FAC aims to encourage dialogue and the sharing of good practice by policy makers and opinion formers in Africa on the role of agriculture in broad based growth. Recently, FAC has introduced four new regional hubs to coordinate research and policy engagement activities regionally. Future Agricultures' communication strategy has been updated to reflect the most efficient ways of reaching and informing policy makers both regionally and internationally by providing them with high quality and timely research- based evidence they need to make decisions.

Future Agricultures' overall communication strategy seeks to address the following:

- The goals and principles embodied in Future Agricultures communication
- entities and audiences Future Agricultures is seeking to inform and influence
- The communications channels and tools used to engage those entities and audiences

State of play

Over the past six years Future Agricultures has put in place a vibrant communications strategy encompassing traditional and online platforms. FAC has an active website which is the main repository of all outputs, and an equally active blog featuring viewpoints on varied themes in agricultural policy in Africa. Social media tools include Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Mixcloud, Slideshare which we use to draw attention of the audience to important events and new materials on the website.

Future Agricultures' publications include working papers, policy briefs, journal articles and special editions. All FAC publications are peer reviewed and available in open access format via our website and partner online platforms like Eldis and DFID's R4D. All policy briefs are translated into French and distributed in print form in various agricultural fora and to policy makers appropriately.

This revised strategy presents a roadmap for communicating Future Agricultures' goals and objectives in light of its new devolved regional hubs in Europe, East, West and Southern Africa as well as outreach activities for the next six months.

Objectives

Programme public awareness

- generate awareness of its existence especially within the newly created regional hubs;
- build our presence via outreach/engagement throughout our research processes;
- create alliances with key regional partners to continue to build our presence;
- become recognised as a distinctive, reliable, and independent voice on agriculture policy research in Africa;
- exert influence by producing timely, relevant and authoritative contributions.

Policy objectives

- Promote dialogue around African agricultural policy environment and New Alliance agenda
- Position Future Agricultures as a 'go-to' resource for knowledge, learning and evidence to support agricultural policy reforms
- Enhance Future Agricultures' participation in policy debates and networks.
- Support Future Agricultures' engagement with the CAADP process.

Overarching approach

To help prioritise our work and ensure that our marketing and communication activities serve the programme objectives over the next six months, we have categorised activities into four main groups:

1. Regional public awareness campaign
2. New Alliance communications
3. Regional policy engagement and research dissemination
4. CAADP networking and engagement

Regional Public Awareness campaign

The immediate priority is to create awareness within the regions that Future Agricultures has established hubs and forge links with regional stakeholders for research and dissemination partnerships. Each regional hub will conduct a campaign to identify and engage the key stakeholders in the region--to ensure that;

(1) they are aware of our activities
(2) they get access to our research findings and programme-based learning to use as evidence for policy reforms
(3) we are kept aware of their policy engagement activities, proposals, etc.
(4) we synchronise activities and synergise influencing strategies

How we will do this:

- A stakeholder analysis of regional stakeholders
- Develop regional mailing lists and send targeted newsletters introducing the new regional hubs, research focus, key contacts.
- Each regional hub will host one workshop on any of the key themes of Future Agricultures in the period of August-September 2013 that will introduce Future Agricultures' work to the regional stakeholders and form the basis of future engagements.
- Create regional hubs web pages within the Future Agricultures main website highlighting regional activities and upcoming events.

New Alliance Communication

Future Agricultures is providing analysis and evidence on the political economy of agricultural policy to inform New Alliance activities at country and regional level. Some expected deliverables include new policy briefs from selected work streams. Priority will focus on publishing and publicising these briefs and organising regional policy dialogues/learning events around the New Alliance themes.

How we will do this:

- Publication of 10 new policy briefs on the Future Agricultures New Alliance themes
- Conduct a series of online and offline publicity around the new policy briefs through our international, regional and national networks.
- The Regional Hub Coordinators will convene a set of *Regional Policy Dialogues on the New Alliance Agenda* around the themes and outputs developed in the second half of 2013 (Jul-

Dec 2013 to discuss New Alliance challenges from a policy process perspective. These may be co-hosted with other policy research organisations including FANRPAN, ReSAKKS and others. The Future Agricultures CAADP Coordinator will be involved in all three events and will feedback results to the CAADP Secretariat. The Future Agricultures communications team will support communication and outreach activities for these events.

New Alliance regional policy dialogues

1. **London Policy Dialogue**: Future Agricultures will co-host a London-based event in March 2013 in partnership with ODI to share findings and policy lessons emerging from the priority work areas and themes. This will involve some key participants from the Regional Policy Dialogues, DFID officials, members of the relevant Future Agricultures research teams and other interested development professionals. Efforts will be made to involve representatives from other G-8 countries and the African Union Commission.

2. **East and Central Africa Hub (Nairobi) –** will host a **seed scaling** workshop in partnership with Integrated Seed Sector Development partners at Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation and Royal Tropical Institute, as well as AGRA, USAID, others), February 2014.

3. Southern Africa Hub (South Africa) will organise a **Land investment** policy workshop (with NEPAD, AU, FAO) in February 2014.

4. West Africa Hub will organise a workshop on **the changing patterns of growth and investment in African agriculture** in February 2014.

CAADP Networking and Policy Dialogue

CAADP continues to be an important agenda for Future Agricultures. The bulk of our CAADP work is grounded on networking activities undertaken by the CAADP Coordinator.

- Future Agricultures CAADP Coordinator will attend key CAADP meetings to highlight Future Agricultures' CAADP work and strengthen partnership with CAADP secretariat.
- Publish 5 remaining CAADP focused policy briefs (translated into French).
- Give more prominence to CAADP activities on the website
- CAADP focused newsletter sent to CAADP focal points each time a new policy brief is published.

Stakeholders

We can't do everything, nor should we. Prioritisation is vital. Similarly, our priority stakeholders--and the messages, methods used to reach them—should be unique geographically. Some stakeholders we seek to influence directly through our policy engagements while others act as multipliers of our communication messages and materials. The primary categories of stakeholders and the strategies we will use to engage with them are detailed below.

Policymakers

As the 'producers' of national-level policies and regulations, ministries, agencies, executive branch officials and lawmakers are principal players in the policy reforms needed to facilitate agricultural production. Without their buy-in, key policy reforms can be delayed or fail to be implemented effectively. Whilst they can be highly influential in policy-making, it is a known fact that personal and political interests influence the policy making process. Future Agricultures will not engage directly in policy reform processes, our role is to stimulate and facilitate dialogue in multi-stakeholder forums and via other channels. We engage policy-makers via research evidence on what reforms are needed and that specific proposals may or may not stimulate agricultural production.

How we will do this:

- presentations, workshops, seminars, conferences, policy dialogue events and forums. This requires the involvement of Future Agricultures researchers to present relevant pieces of research that specific proposals may or may not be suitable for agricultural reforms
- individual meetings with key officials by regional coordinators, Future Agricultures researchers with support from communications team.
- direct mailings, e-newsletter
- contact by/through collaborating partners
- media monitoring to identify champions

Civil Society Organisations

Our role in the political agricultural policy processes is to act as facilitators to indigenous groups. CSOs are our allies in implementing this strategy and in mobilising support for policy reforms. Research institutes, universities and CSOs working with farmer organisations can complement our own research in identifying policy and regulatory bottlenecks and participating in public-private dialogue forums. Sustained engagement with CSOs will help build support for agricultural policy reforms. CSOs are the most diverse among a disparate group of stakeholders; identifying them and reaching them can be challenging. Networking and peer-to-peer communication via key multipliers is critical for our engagement with them.

International NGOs/Research Institutes

International NGOs working on agricultural related issues complement Future Agricultures' research and as well act as multipliers because of their extensive networks and communications channels. International NGOs like Oxfam are promising multipliers for broadening awareness and interest in Future Agricultures' activities through joint events especially in campaigns of mutual interest such as land rights. Research institutes such as IDS, ODI, IIED, the CGIAR centres provide research and leading edge thinking to address agricultural policy and are good multipliers. However, we need to look beyond the international research institutes and also work with prominent thinkers at regional and country level, particularly at government-affiliated institutes who often have access to key decision-makers and can act as policy champions. We will engage research centres to (1) encourage them to act as multipliers and (2) include them in policy dialogue events, forums.

How we will do this:

Within the next six months, each regional hub will conduct a comprehensive analysis of CSOs and research institutes working within the region. We will seek to partner with them to stimulate and contribute to policy dialogues around agricultural policy processes. We will target them through:

- Individual, face-to-face meetings
- distribution of all Future Agricultures policy briefs to identified CSOs
- Direct mailings, e-newsletter
- Website
- Social media, e.g. Facebook, Twitter

Media

Like other stakeholders, the media are of principal interest to us as *multipliers.* The media are a vital group for broadening awareness about our work. The media plays key role-- catalysing dialogue around key policy reform issues. Anchoring our messages to the media in popular topics such as food security, price stability and economic growth/development can be helpful. We might also highlight 'hooks' for political stories such as the relevance of our research and programme-level findings to individual governments' main sector and development programmes.

How we will do this:

- News releases sent with launch of events, release of special journal articles
- Media competition for African Journalists around major events.
- Pro-active media relations to pitch story ideas around Future Agricultures thematic areas, increase coverage
- Monitor key print and Internet sources; to stay abreast of trending media interests and stay alert to critical reports; key media coverage of Future Agricultures will be added to a new page on the website—Media. This will help us keep track of our media coverage.
- Include media in policy dialogue events, forums
- E-newsletter
- Social media

Donors

The new focus on a multi-donor strategy makes this group very vital to our communications strategy both as potential funders but also as multipliers. The focus will be so much on attracting donors based in the regional/country offices to fund Future Agricultures' research and core activities but also leverage their support on policy influencing and facilitation. Communicating evidence of impact will also be a central part of the donor strategy.

How we will do this:

- Meetings, presentations to major donors country officers; provide donor packs with core marketing materials. This role is largely expected to be undertaken by hub coordinators with support from communications team.
- Direct mailing, e-newsletters, quarterly/annual reports as required by certain donors
- Website and links to donor, programme sites
- Send ready-to-post 'blurbs' for posting on donor websites that are funding different segments of Future Agricultures e.g ESRC for the BRICS project, ADC for LACA etc
- Involve donor and programme representatives in seminars, conferences, policy dialogues, events.
- Feed with information for use in:
    - their own communications— internal and external
    - engagement with programme partners, policy-makers

Activities and Tools Matrix

The following tables list the targets along with the basic activities and tools to reach them. Future Agricultures already has many contacts in the main relevant sectors, through research contracts, advisory positions and former students and colleagues.

Interaction will need to be

- direct (meetings, advice) and indirect (e.g. through the internet and through media)
- active (publications, events) and reactive (e.g. responding to government or Parliamentary inquiries and media 'events')

Primary Stakeholders

Audience	Examples	Effort	Activities, topics and objectives
Policy Makers	• Permanent Secretaries for Agriculture • Policy Divisions within Permanent Secretaries for Agriculture • Ministry of Agriculture, Finance, Planning • Policy officials in the office of the President/Prime Minister • Members of Parliament (especially rural areas and Minister for Agriculture and Finance)	30%	Activities • Send a full series of Future Agricultures *Policy Briefs* (with Index and presentation folder) with additional Future Agricultures promotional material and invitation to engage further with Future Agricultures • Compile list of communications contacts and key resources for follow-up Topics • Current theory on policies and agriculture • Analysis of the implications of non-state involvement for agriculture programming • How FAC can further support and promote policy dialogue on this issue Objective • Encourage policy makers to dialogue with non-state agriculture actors for policy development
Scientists and Researchers	• African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education • The African Academy of Sciences The International Foundation for Science • United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) • The Southeast Asia Network for Agroforestry Education (SEANAFE) • Forest, Trees and People programme of FAO (FTPP) • The International Education Society (IES) • Asia Pacific Agroforestry Network (APAN) • Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) • International Partnership for Forestry Education (IPFE)	15%	Activities • Send a select series of FAC *Policy Briefs* (with Index and presentation folder) with additional FAC promotional material and invitation to engage further with the FAC • Compile list of communications contacts and key resources for follow-up • Supply report findings for newsletters or other publications • Create a listserv of FAC members/researchers (including those who have contributed to FAC's past publications) and communicate this draft Outreach Plan for feedback and endorsement • Compile list of communications contacts and key resources for follow-up • Invite issue-based submissions (politics and agriculture) from target group for publication on the web-site and as possible future workshop material • Draft a presentation template, press release, etc. to be used for partner presentations on this issue

	• Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) • AICAD (African Institute for Capacity Development) • CIRAD (Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement)		Topics • Current theory on politics and agriculture • Analysis of the implications of non-state involvement for agriculture programming • How the FAC can further support and promote policy dialogue on this issue Objective • Encourage researchers and scientists to look further at real-world examples of politics and pro-poor agriculture working together
Donors/Strategic partners	• Rockefeller Foundation / Agricultural Sciences • USAID • Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation • Dfid • SIDA • GTZ • World Bank • UNDP • FAO • IFAD • WFP • Ford Foundation	15%	Activities • Send a donor pack with select series of FAC *Policy Briefs* and invitation to engage further with the FAC • Compile list of communications contacts and key resources for follow-up Topics • Current theory on politics and agriculture • Analysis of the implications of non-state involvement for agriculture programming • How the FAC is supporting and promoting policy dialogue on this issue Objective • Attract funding for FAC • Encourage donors to examine options for working closer with state and non-state actors on agriculture programming
Journals, Libraries, Bibliographic Resources	• "Policymakers' Libraries" • African Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics (AfJARE) • African Journal of Agricultural Research • The African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development • East African Agricultural And Forestry Journal • Journal of Rural Studies • The African Crop Science Journal • etc.	5%	Activities • Update this group with current coordinates and profile for FAC • Compile list of communications contacts and key resources for follow-up Topics • Current theory on politics and agriculture • Analysis of the implications of non-state involvement for agriculture programming • How the FAC is supporting and promoting policy dialogue on this issue Objective • Encourage journals to publish the report and to liaise regularly with FAC on current theory and case studies
Policy & Research Networks	• The Kenya Agriculture Organic Network (KOAN) • Michigan State University Agricultural Economics • Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Ana • International Food Policy Research Institute • FOODNET • Egerton University/Tegemeo Institute of Agriculture • ECAPAPA • The Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network	10%	Activities • Compile list of communications contacts and key resources for follow-up • Invite comments specific to politics, policy and agriculture from networks for posting on FAC website • Invite networks to collaborate periodically on a theme by submitting research, reports, reviews, etc. increasing the value of the FAC website Topics

			• Current theory on politics and agriculture • Analysis of the implications of non-state involvement for agriculture programming • How the FAC is supporting and promoting policy dialogue on this issue Objective • Encourage networks to publish the report and to liaise regularly with FAC on current theory and case studies
CSOs, NGOs, especially agriculture and farming organisations	• AfricaBio • African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF) • Comite Permanent Inter-etats de Lutte contre la Secheresse au Sahel (CILSS) • FARMAfrica • Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) • HarvestHelp • The Initiative for Development and Equity in African Agriculture (IDEAA) • International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) • • Practical Action • Sasakawa Africa Association	5%	Activities • Send a select series of new FAC *Policy Briefs* with additional FAC promotional material and invitation to engage further with the FAC • Compile list of communications contacts and key resources for follow-up • Supply report findings for newsletters or other publications • Invite NGOs to collaborate periodically on a theme by submitting research, reports, reviews, etc. increasing the value of the FAC website Topics • Current theory on politics and agriculture • Analysis of the implications of non-state involvement for agriculture programming • How the FAC is supporting and promoting policy dialogue on this issue Objective • Encourage NGOs to use the report and to liaise regularly with FAC on current theory and case studies

Sheet 1

Developing a Communications Strategy

Regardless of the objectives of a project, defining a communication strategy shows attention to planning, an understanding of the situation, an ability to carry out the work, and clear identification of the goal.

The ability to communicate is essential to the success of any undertaking and an important factor in the achievement of its objectives. We have entered an age of knowledge, and the key to accessing and harnessing that knowledge lies in the ability to communicate.

When the undertaking is a research project that has achieved good results, it becomes imperative to disseminate those results — otherwise the work will have been in vain. But, how do we communicate those results? How can we convert the data into knowledge? Data that are not shared or are shared with only a few people are not very valuable. A successful communications strategy will enhance the value of your research considerably.

Defining the strategy

Communication does not just happen. It must be organized, developed, and built. The first step in the process is to define a communications strategy.

A good communications strategy allows you to exercise better control over your work and to frame the issues in a perspective other than research. A communications strategy removes doubt, emphasizes planning, and involves all the project participants in raising the visibility of the research.

Defining the communications strategy is a task that is best carried out as a group. In addition to pooling expertise, a group approach has the even more important advantage of building on interactions between the participants.

Even a small-scale communications strategy will facilitate your work. After all, a small-scale plan is better than no plan at all and you may be able to develop and perfect it as you go along.

A collective process

There is much to be gained by making the development of the communications strategy a collective process. For a small-scale communications strategy, only part of the research group may be needed, but, when possible, participation of all members of the research team should be enlisted, in addition to one or more communication resource people, if they are available.

The pooling of skills and competencies is essential: although the researchers are familiar with the content of the project, they rarely have the qualifications needed to develop an appropriate communications strategy. This is where an expert in communication can make a valuable contribution.

The strategy can be developed in several stages:

- A preliminary outline is prepared by the research team and close collaborators.
- The outline is submitted to various partners for comments and revisions. These partners can be consulted individually, in groups, or in a brainstorming session that includes anyone you think could make a contribution.
- The team meets to finalize the strategy. The input of a communications expert is highly desirable at this stage.
- Once the strategy has been established, it must be communicated to the partners and groups you want to reach. This will make it easier to integrate them into the process of developing the various tools intended for their use.

Questions to consider

The idea is not to complicate your life. Regardless of your skills in the area of communication, take a simple approach when preparing the communications strategy:

- What research elements need to be made known?
- What are your objectives?
- What groups or partners would be interested in this knowledge?
- What are the needs of these partners? What elements of your knowledge are most interesting to them?
- What communication tools do you want to use for these various target groups?
- What is your timeframe?
- What financial and human resources are available to you?

Updating the strategy

Once the communications strategy has been defined and communicated, it must be implemented. The best — although perhaps not the easiest — way to ensure that the strategy is developing according to plan is to hold regular team meetings to get updates on the situation. Are we following our plan? What is left to do? Who does what? What are the deadlines?

These team meetings on communication are a good way to keep everyone up to date on needs and to keep the dossier active.

The suitability of the strategy is also continually verified during meetings in the field, where you have to be able not only to explain the strategy to others, but also to adapt it to local needs. The same applies to the tools.

Target groups and audiences

The target audiences are the groups or individuals at the local, national, or international level with whom you are seeking to develop a synergy and to share information. They can be local communities, state agents, funding agencies, or researchers.

Because each target group has specific characteristics and is faced with different problems or situations, a specific communication strategy is needed for each. For example:

- **For the direct beneficiaries and partners in the research**, a strategy is needed to ensure that the research results are perpetuated, that they serve as a model and that their impact in the field is extended.
- **For political decision-makers**, a strategy is needed to ensure that participatory development is better understood, adopted in other projects, and adapted to their needs.
- **For the development community, researchers, stakeholders, and funding agencies**, a strategy must be aimed at gaining visibility in the field, sharing the project results, and developing exchanges on initiatives carried out with the target populations.

The importance of defining your target groups cannot be overstated. Knowledge, beliefs, and customs often vary widely from one group to another and the ways in which knowledge is acquired are not the same in each community. Even within a given target group, it's important to learn how to segment. For example, within a group of villagers, you may want to reach the leaders and the women in particular, because you believe this is the best way to influence the behaviour of the population as a whole.

PHOTO: Jacques Gauthier

Children of Goué attendring at theater, Burkina Faso.

No matter what group you are addressing, the aim is always to promote the results of your research and the processes by which you arrived at those results and to make sure that the different target groups are aware of them.

We can divide our target groups into internal "clients" and external "clients."

Internal clients

By internal clients, we mean groups that are directly involved in the fieldwork and, by extension, researchers working on other natural resource management projects with links to IDRC. For example:

- Local communities, who are the direct beneficiaries of the projects.
- The local network of organizations or individuals with whom the project team is working in the field or who are conducting similar work in the region: state agents, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), other research centres, embassy services, etc. You share and exchange information with these individuals or organizations on a regular basis.
- Other IDRC researchers working in natural resource management. As researchers, we should welcome the exchange of information with other researchers working on the same problems. Communication between researchers will create a dynamic that will benefit all partners.

External clients

By external clients, we mean groups or individuals with whom the project is not in direct contact during its

fieldwork, but with whom you would like to share the knowledge acquired.

- At the local, national and regional level, inform decision-makers and other stakeholders about the research results and methods, so that they will understand them and, perhaps, adapt them in the implementation of new development programs or within existing programs.
- At the international level, establish links, inform international researchers and development agencies about the results of your research and the methods used to arrive at those results. Our aim is to promote the exchange of ideas to foster greater cohesion among stakeholders.

An ABC of communication

For communication to occur, there must be

A source of information — In this case, the source of information is you, with all your strengths and weaknesses, your knowledge and skills. It includes your research and the elements that make up that research. And your partners, with whom you exchange information.

One or more objectives — These objectives will vary depending on the target audience.

A message for each target audience — The message is the formulation of an idea. It includes data that have been processed and adapted to make sure they can be understood by your target audiences and it takes into account the information needs of the various groups you wish to reach. What information do you want to transmit? What needs to be known and understood? What behaviours are you researching? Considering these factors will help you compose the message.

Transmission channel — The channel is both the medium that you use to transmit your information and the understanding that you expect to achieve in those who receive the message.

A receiver — The receiver is the destination of your message. The receiver interprets the message according to his or her own perspective, knowledge, and logic. A good message takes this into account. To whom do you want to transmit your information? What groups, people, associations, projects, departments might be interested in the methods and outcomes of your research?

Feedback — Communication is not a one-way process: we send a message to someone and that person reacts to the message received. It is important to test the effect of the message and the communication tool before finalizing it. Then you can make adjustments based on the receiver's feedback.

Put someone in charge of communication

Each research team should clearly identify someone to be in charge of communication. Within an organization, the director of communication services, who reports to the president or secretary-general, is responsible for overseeing the application of the communication plan and ensuring that everyone carries out their duties according to that plan.

Admittedly, research teams rarely have an internal information service. So, who should be in charge? In view of the crucial importance of communications, this responsibility should go to the person with the best understanding of the project, that is, the principal researcher, or his or her assistant. Alternatively, the project team can choose someone on the team who is at ease with or interested in communications concepts. Although the latter approach may be more difficult to achieve, it can prove to be the best solution. Regardless of the solution, managing the communication component takes time.

Generally, the person assigned to head communications should work in partnership with the actors in the field, such as the person in charge of education or facilitation. They should keep themselves informed of any information-related needs or opportunities.

Although one person should be in charge of the communication component as a whole, someone should also be responsible for each element of the communication plan and for the production of each tool (this can be the same person). For example, the person responsible for the production of a leaflet would see to the content, write the copy or supervise the copywriting, select and oversee the graphic designer, edit the work, and ensure that it is completed on time.

Local languages

Regardless of the tool that you decide to produce, use the language or languages spoken by the groups you intend to reach. Although English may dominate on the Internet, this is not the case in villages!

NOTES

Communication Strategy Template

Objectives

- List your communications objectives

Audience	**Key messages**	**Activities and tools**	**Timeline**	**Responsibility**	**Resources and budget**
Identify those audiences with whom you need to communicate to achieve your project goals (be specific e.g, permanent secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture)	Identify the key message you would like to communicate to this audience	Identify the tools and activities that are most appropriate to communicating the key messages to your target audience (Ensure that you tailor your tools and activities to the level of time and human and financial resources available)	Indicate a timeline by which you would do a particular activity.	Indicate the person from within the project team who will take the lead in a particular activity.	Indicate the resources needed to complete your activities

1. Who is best placed to communicate with each of the identified target audiences and what are the appropriate communications pathways?	• Who is best placed to communicate with each of your target audiences? Who has the skills, knowledge, contacts, legitimacy, networks? • How do your target audiences access information and who/what influences them? • What kind of communications outputs/activities will be most effective in reaching your targets? i.e. publications, web, media, public affairs, events etc.. • Which of these communication pathways can IDRC help you access or strengthen and improve?
2. Timescale – What are the best times to communicate, coming up throughout 2013/14?	• When will be the best time to influence policy/practice? • What external events or processes are you already aware of that you can 'piggy back' to showcase your research?

	• Are there any particular opportunities to collaborate with others? • How can you track the external environment to help with planning?
3. Resources for research communication – what might we need, people, time, materials etc?	• Do you already have a sense of the activities you plan to undertake to achieve your objectives for the target audiences outlined above? • What major resource implications might there be in terms of people, time, materials? • Will you have to make any hard choices between planned activities due to resource limitations? How will you prioritise?

Annex 4: Evaluation form and further support

Communicating Research for Impact and Influence - Roodevallei Hotel, Pretoria, South Africa – 11th -15th November 2013

Dear participant,

Your opinion is important for us to evaluate this event and plan future ones. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions and give us your comments. Thank you.

1) Please rate the following aspects of the workshop organisation.

	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor
Invitation/bookings management				
Information about workshop				
Hotel and meals				
Workshop venue (meeting rooms)				
Transport				

Comments and ways for improvement

_____

_____

_____

2) Please rate the sessions you participated in during the workshop, in particular with a view to their relevance for your work.

	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor
Setting the scene				
Writing outcome stories				
Input from FANRPAN				
Using images and photography				
Writing policy briefs				
Writing communication strategies				

Comments and ways for improvement

_____

_____

_____

3) What did you learn at the workshop that will make the most difference in your work?

_____

_____

_____

4) Are there any changes that you will propose for your project/project team, based on what you learned at this workshop?

_____

_____

_____

5) What aspect of the workshop did you like the most?

_____

_____

_____

6) What aspect of the workshop did you like the least?

_____

_____

_____

7. Please give us any other feedback you consider important for us to take into account when planning such workshops in the future.

_____

_____

_____

Communicating Research for Impact and Influence - Roodevallei Hotel, Pretoria, South Africa – 11th -15th November 2013

Project Name:_____

Please tell us what further support you think you will or might need to implement your planned communication activities until the end of the project?

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