

**THE PESP QUESTIONNAIRE :**

**A REPORT ON THE OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES OF PROJECTS**

**SPONSORED BY THE**

**POPULATION, EDUCATION AND SOCIETY PROGRAM**

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**INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH CENTRE**

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following report is based on data collected from a survey completed by 77 leaders of projects supported by the Population, Education and Society Program (PESP)<sup>1</sup> over the last two decades. The survey's overall intent was to update and clarify the outputs and outcomes of projects sponsored by PESP. Outputs refer to the tangible results of a research study, including printed materials, seminars, workshops and media coverage. Outcomes refer to the less tangible effects of the project, in this report specifically referring to the impact of project activities on specialized training, policy making and the population being studied. The survey also sought to determine the importance of networks for research in LDCs and, finally, asked for any suggestions as to how research results may be more effectively disseminated.

Slightly more than 20% of the surveys were returned. Regarding outcomes, it was discovered that each respondent published an average of four documents relating to a project, usually after the submission of a final report, of which the Centre is unaware. In nearly all cases, project-related documents are distributed to researchers, but in the majority of those cases, such materials are also sent to policy-makers and professionals or practitioners in the field. Most post-project conferences organized by the researchers had policy-makers or professionals in attendance. In other words, research promoted by PESP is usually assumed by the participating researchers to be of both practical and policy importance. Nor is that significance limited to local contexts : of those researchers who had articles printed in journals or who participated in seminars, the majority of the results were presented to an international audience. Two-thirds of all respondents were satisfied with the dissemination of the project results. The ones who were not usually expressed frustration in reaching the relevant audience(s).

Sixty projects helped to train a total of 696 researchers. Thirty seven projects helped 148 students obtain undergraduate and graduate degrees. Research capacity was also significantly enhanced by devising/improving upon theoretical/methodological principles and instructional materials. Over 80% of all project leaders expressed satisfaction with the training outcomes of their project. However only 54% of those researchers who had expected that the project would be of significance for policy making were satisfied with the outcome. Despite this, 68% experienced increased requests for policy advice from relevant parties once a project had ended. Networks have been a constructive experience for those who had been members : over 80% of those who were involved in a network continue to maintain professional contact with other network members. Forty two percent of those who responded were able to demonstrate that the research activities had a direct and immediate impact on the population(s) being studied. Close to 60% also felt that their research activities enhanced the state of knowledge in their area of professional interest.

The report's findings demonstrate the need for IDRC to follow-up more systematically on project activities. The information would not only be useful for the Center, i.e., as a means of showing how the Center has helped to better meet the needs of the urban and rural poor in the developing world, but by expressing an interest in outputs and outcomes, it would also help to ensure that researchers would give it the attention it deserves.

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<sup>1</sup>. Two separate programs, Education and Population Development, existed until 1988, when they were combined into the Population, Education and Society Program.

## II. INTRODUCTION : The PESP Project Leader Questionnaire

The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) was established by the Parliament of Canada to "initiate, encourage, support and conduct research into the problems of the developing regions of the world" for the purpose of "better meeting peoples' essential needs, particularly those of the rural and urban poor of the developing world." As a means of carrying out those objectives, IDRC is empowered "to enlist the talents of ... social scientists in Canada and other countries, to assist the developing regions to build up the research capabilities, the innovative skills and the institutions required to solve their problems; to encourage generally the co-ordination of international development research; and, to foster co-operation in research on development problems between the developed and developing regions."

Within the Centre, the Social Sciences Division's task is "to help societies gain, through research, deeper understanding of the process of development and its effect on people and institutions." The Population, Education and Society Program (PESP) is concerned with the impact of demographic, socioeconomic, cultural and educational variables and processes on the development process. It sets out to accomplish this through the enhancement of indigenous research capacity in the developing world and the dissemination and utilization of supported research. The dissemination to, and the utilization of results in, relevant communities (academic or otherwise) is an area of concern since it is assumed that the outputs of Centre-supported research should contribute to the social and economic advancement of developing countries.

### A. Design and Purpose of the Questionnaire

The information included in this report is based on an analysis of responses to a questionnaire sent to research leaders whose projects had been supported by either the Population or Education programmes in the Social Sciences Division, who had successfully completed a project (i.e., who had received a final payment from the Treasury Office) and whose whereabouts were assumed to be still known. A project leader's responsibilities include devising and implementing the research and disseminating the results. As a result, it is assumed that he or she would be the most familiar with a project's (tangible or otherwise) impact.

The PESP questionnaire is loosely based on a similar document devised by the Science, Technology and Policy Program. The questionnaire went through a number of drafts and was reviewed by Program Officers within the Social Sciences Division. Preliminary copies were sent out to a few project leaders to ensure that the questions were soliciting the appropriate information.

The survey was delivered in English, Spanish or French, depending on the first language of the research leader. Each questionnaire was prepared to include one page (Section A) that listed information specific to the project (containing the project title, the name and address of the recipient institution, a summary of the project's objectives, date funds committed, the completion date and the IDRC file number.<sup>2</sup>) The survey asked all respondents to verify that the information was correct. Section B provided a list of project-related documents that are in the Archival Unit of the Centre's library<sup>3</sup>. Respondents were requested to confirm that the information was accurate and were also asked to provide information regarding the distribution of those documents. (See Section IV, Dissemination Strategies.) In some cases, when a researcher's project had been formally closed but the Center had not received a final narrative report, the questionnaire included an additional section, one that asked researchers to list any final reports that had been completed.

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<sup>2</sup>. This information was provided by the EDP division.

<sup>3</sup>. This information was provided by the Information Sciences Division.

Quantitative and qualitative data were solicited in the form of closed and open ended questions. Closed ended questions sought to determine the level and kind of dissemination activities, the level of satisfaction with the dissemination of research products, and the nature of the projects' impact on policy making, training and networks. Other questions asked researchers to provide copies and/or information of documents not listed in IDRC's library. In addition, the questionnaire invited researchers to elaborate on their dissemination and utilization activities and to provide any suggestions on how dissemination strategies can be improved. Finally, they were asked to demonstrate how the project contributed to the state of knowledge in their specific field of study and how it may have worked to improve the material (or other) conditions of the population being studied.

The aim of the questionnaire was not to evaluate IDRC's performance in the fields of population and education. Instead, its intent was to examine the outputs and outcomes of PESP supported projects. Outputs are the tangible results of a research study, including final reports, books, journal articles, conferences or seminars and media coverage. Outputs also include how material developed in a project was used to improve course and text materials intended for post-secondary instruction. Outcomes are the less tangible effects of the project, including the research's impact on specialized training, the academic community, policy making and the subject audience (i.e. the audience being studied).

### B. The Sample

Three hundred and fifty six questionnaires were sent out in August of 1989. (See Table 1.) A reminder letter was sent out in early November. If a project leader was not available at the listed address, we asked that the questionnaire be forwarded to the correct address, if known. Failing that, we asked that someone else who had substantial experience with the project answer as best as he/she could.

**Table 1**                                      **Sample of Respondents**

Region	No. of Surveys Sent Out (% of Total)	% of Surveys Per Region Returned (No.)	% of Surveys Returned Over Total Sent Out
LARO	194(54%)	21% (41)	11.5%
ASRO	59(17%)	27% (16)	5%
WARO	40(11%)	15% (6)	2%
EARO	26 (7%)	19% (5)	1.5%
SARO	20 (6%)	20% (4)	1.5%
MERO	17(5%)	24% (4)	1.5%
TOTAL	356	22% (77)*	

\*Total includes one response which did not specify region(s).

At the time of the cut-off date (January 31, 1990) some 77<sup>4</sup> completed responses had been received signifying a 22% response rate to the questionnaire. Most of those who returned completed surveys came from the LARO region, reflecting the (relatively) high number of projects PESP has supported in that region. When analyzing the data, therefore, it must be kept in mind that the responses most prominently reflect the experiences of Latin American researchers. Although the response rate was not as high as desired, the quality of responses was usually more than adequate, with the majority of respondents offering specific examples of outputs and outcomes and also offering helpful advice regarding dissemination strategies.

<sup>4</sup>. Although I received 77 completed forms, it must be noted that not all sections were completed by those who responded. As a result, the number of responses in each section varies.

## II. DATA PRESENTATION

### A. OUTPUTS

#### 1. Bibliographic Updates

In addition to the documents already listed in the Centre's bibliographic data base, the survey asked recipients to supply information regarding (and if possible, provide) additional publications that were related to the project. The response indicated that some 277 additional books, articles or reports were published - i.e., 277 project-related documents that are not in the Centre's archival collection.<sup>5</sup> The vast majority of these documents were publications that had been printed subsequent to the submission of a Final Report to the Centre.<sup>6</sup> On average, therefore, each respondent has produced four project-related documents of which the Centre was unaware. This demonstrates the need to devise a strategy whereby a bibliographic follow-up to Centre-supported projects is pursued.

#### 2. Dissemination Strategies<sup>7</sup>

##### a. Distribution of archival documents

The questionnaire sought to discover where the documents already listed in IDRC's archival unit had been distributed. (See Table 2.) Distribution was divided into two categories : individuals and institutions.

**Table 2. A. Distribution of IDRC Archival Documents  
To whom were copies distributed?**

Type of Individual Audience	No. of Documents Sent to Individuals*	% Over Total No. of Documents (n=234)
Researchers	216	92
Policy Makers	148	63
Students	99	42
General Public	59	25
Practitioners	154	66
Other	22	9

\* Respondents were asked to circle all appropriate categories.

<sup>5</sup> Previous to the survey, I helped to update PESP's bibliographic outputs. Searching in file rooms, the Center's archival section, regional offices, and other areas, I added a total of some 694 documents (not including 14 audio-visual materials) to the library's BIBLIO data base system. Another 77 documents, already noted as project related in the library, had their archival status changed.

<sup>6</sup> Although a few project leaders did send the documents with the survey, most documents were simply referred to in the survey. Further effort would therefore be needed retrieve these documents.

<sup>7</sup> All tabulations are presented globally; however a regional breakdown is possible for any of the tabulations presented in this paper.

**Table 2. B. Distribution of IDRC Archival Documents  
To what institutions were copies distributed?**

Type of Institution	No. of Documents Sent to Institutions*	% of Total No. of Documents (n=230)
Universities	192	83
Research Inst.	165	72
Gov't. Depts.	134	58
Private Firms	23	10
NGOs	102	44
Other	18	8
Don't Know	3	1

\* Respondents were asked to circle all appropriate categories.

The distribution strategy shows that, for the most part, research documents were intended for peers, although it is noteworthy that close to 60% of all documents were distributed to government offices and close to 70% to policy-makers, demonstrating that many of the documents were assumed, by their authors or editors, to be relevant for that audience. In addition, the fact that close to 70% of the documents were also distributed to practitioners or professionals in the field, possibly means that the research was considered to be of some practical benefit to the latter's concerns.

**b. Distribution of journals (in which articles appeared) :**

For the 124 journal articles listed by the respondents (regardless of whether the articles were already in the Centre's archival unit), the questionnaire asked respondents to state the type of audience for which the journal was primarily intended. (See Table 3.) The responses appear to indicate that the effects of IDRC's support of research are not confined to local/regional issues.

**Table 3. Distribution of journals  
(in which IDRC related projects appeared)**

Geographic Scope of Journal	No. of Articles In Each Type of Journal	% of Total Number of Articles (n=124)
Local	2	2
National	45	36
Regional	25	20
International	52	42

**c. Level of satisfaction with dissemination of research results and availability of publishing mechanisms within the recipient institution.**

Approximately 65% of all respondents (49 of 77) replied that they were satisfied with the dissemination of their research products, 30% (23) expressed dissatisfaction, while 5% (4) said that they were both satisfied and dissatisfied. Those satisfied with the dissemination of their printed products did not necessarily have their materials widely dispersed. It is clear from the commentary provided by the researchers that the level of satisfaction was based on the degree to which the documents, in the researcher's view, were distributed to the relevant user group. Thus, in some cases, dissemination was judged to be a success, even though only a few copies of reports were made, because the relevant individual(s) received and utilized the recommendations of the report, while others who did have a fairly wide dissemination program in place were still dissatisfied because the documents were not judged to be reaching the relevant audience in the correct format. One could also conclude, from the commentary provided, that the level of satisfaction also increased as products were disseminated in a variety of formats reaching a wide audience (i.e., different types of audiences and not necessarily a large audience).

There is a sizeable range of responses to the question of whether researchers have adequate internal publication resources. Latin America, South East Asia and the Middle East (i.e., LARO, ASRO and MERO) appear to have a more developed publication system than the other areas : 64% (25 of 39) of Latin American respondents and 81% (13 of 16) of South East Asian respondents have access to publication mechanisms within their research institution, while all respondents (4) from the Middle East enjoyed the same feature. On the other hand, approximately 73% (7 of 11) of African respondents did not have this feature available to them, while 2 of the 3 SARO respondents experienced the same limitation. 77% (20 of 26) of those researchers without an internal publication mechanism cited budgetary constraints as the reason. Others cited political and managerial restraints.

The following table compares researchers with and without the internal means to publish their research materials. It appears to show that a positive relationship exists between the researcher's level of satisfaction with dissemination and the availability of internal publication mechanisms : those who were satisfied were more likely to have access to such a feature, while those who were not were less likely to have access to internal publication services.

**Table 4.** **Level of Satisfaction with  
Dissemination of Project Results**

	Those with Internal Publication Mechanisms (n=49)	Those Without Internal Publication Mechanisms (n=26)
Satisfied with Dissemination	69% (34)	50% (13)
Dissatisfied	22% (11)	46% (12)
Both	7% (3)*	4% (1)

\* One response was unclear, so was not entered into the final tabulation.



#### d. Conferences, seminars and workshops

A vast majority, of project leaders (86%) had their research results presented in at least one seminar. Table 5 provides a breakdown of the geographic scope of the 150 conferences mentioned by respondents and the type(s) of audience in attendance.

**Table 5. A. Conferences, workshops and seminars  
Type of symposia**

Geographic Scope	No. of Conferences	% of Total No. of Conferences (n=150)
Local	17	11
National	42	28
Regional	44	29
Global	47	31
Total	150	

**Table 5. B. Conferences, workshops and seminars  
Type of audience**

Audience	No. of Conferences with Each Audience Type In Attendance*	% of Total No. of Conferences (n=146)
Researchers	137	94
Policy maker	61	42
Students	34	23
General Public	10	7
Practitioners	74	51
Other	1	1

Number of seminars with published proceedings : 38 of 115 (for a 33% average).

\* Respondents were asked to circle any appropriate category.

As will be observed in the last section (re: dissemination advice), most of the researchers surveyed consider conferences to be a most effective means of communicating research results to a wider, yet still relevant, audience. Again, the majority of the results were deemed appropriate for cross-national consideration at regional and international seminars. The fact that over 90% of all conferences had other researchers in attendance shows that this venue is probably a most effective form of dissemination for their peers - it is able to capture a relevant audience with the opportunity for immediate feedback and discussion. Finally, the figures for practitioners and policy-makers demonstrate that many of the results were to a sizeable percentage of policy makers/practitioners in the audience.

### e. Mass Media Coverage

49% of all respondents stated that their project had experienced some form of media coverage. Table 6 shows the number of projects that experienced newspaper, magazine, radio or television coverage.

**Table 6** **Mass Media Coverage**

Type of Media Coverage	No. of Projects*	% of Projects Covered by Each Mass Media Category (n=37)
Newspapers	31	84
Magazines	21	57
Radio	14	38
Television	12	32

\*Respondents were asked to circle all appropriate categories.

That nearly 50% of all respondents had their activities covered by the mass media is a surprisingly high number. Although the survey did not ascertain how widespread media coverage actually was (it was felt that most researchers would not have easy access to that information), it is noteworthy that so many projects were considered to be of interest to the general public.

## B. Outcomes

### 1. Building research capacity through training

At IDRC, the goal of improving research capacity is an extremely important one - not only to provide solutions to pressing development issues, but also to establish a stable learning/research environment in the developing world. In order to clarify how PESP's support has contributed to building research capacity, the survey sought to establish how many projects directly concerned themselves with the training of researchers, the number of students who used the research in the project as a means towards the completion of undergraduate/graduate degrees, and how the project may have contributed to increased research capabilities in any other way - for example, whether it led to new or improved course or research materials.

Table 7. A. looks at the extent to which training activities were regarded by the researchers as an objective of their project. The second table shows the degree to which the research project did lead to training activities, regardless of expectations.

**Table 7. A.** **Training : Expectations**

Original Status of Training	% of Projects (n=76) *
Sole Objective	7% (5)
One Objective (Among Others)	51% (39)
Limited Interest	29% (22)
No Interest	13% (10)

**Table 7. B. Training : Activities**

Actual Accomplishments	% of Projects (n=74) *
Greater than Expected	38% (28)
As Expected	42% (31)
Less than Expected	8% (6)
Not at All	12% (9)

\* Respondents were asked to circle one appropriate category.

Further analysis reveals that of the 87% (66 of 76) of respondents who stated that their project was (at least marginally) concerned with training, 74% (56 of 76) thought that their expectations had been met or else surpassed. This suggests that PESP-sponsored projects were successful in providing appropriate skills for researchers in the developing world.

A total of 696 researchers/students underwent some form of training in 60 projects. Eleven (18%) projects helped to train 472 people, while 49 projects trained an additional 224 persons, comprising some 32% of the relevant projects.<sup>8</sup>

When asked to specify the various skills developed, 16% (10 of 61) of the respondents stated that the trainees had developed abilities in data processing, 39% (24) in the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, 20% (12) in interviewing, 10% (6) in the formulation of questionnaires or surveys, 8% (5) in improving reporting skills and 7% (4) in field work.

Thirty seven of 76 projects included researchers who used their experience in the project towards the completion of a post-secondary degree. Some 148 undergraduate and graduate degrees were completed due at least partially to the opportunities afforded by PESP. 37% (55) of all these researchers used their research work as a means of attaining their B.A.(or equivalent) degrees, 43% (64) used it to finish their Master's degree and 20% (29) completed their PhD.s.

Of the 57 universities listed by respondents (in regards to where the degrees were completed), 36 universities were within the developing world and 21 universities in the developed world.

Contributions to building research capacity were also demonstrated in ways other than formal training opportunities : 83% (46 of 55) of the project leaders mentioned that research capacity was enhanced either through the improvement of instructional/research materials for students, researchers or practitioners or by devising or improving theoretical and methodological principles.

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<sup>8</sup>. The vast numbers of people trained in the eleven projects mentioned above may be due to different interpretations of the term "training" in the questionnaire (the term was not defined questionnaire).

## 2. Policy Development/Implementation

The influence of IDRC supported activities on policy making comprises one aspect of project utilization, an issue of increasing salience to the Centre. Policy development is the process by which governments (usually) and non-government organizations make ongoing strategic and practical plans regarding a specific issue. It is a process of decision-making that takes place at different levels (local, national, regional or global) within either the public or private sector.

Information regarding the impact of projects on policy was gathered by asking respondents the place policy development had in the original objectives, whether those objectives were translated into actual recommendations, the response of policy-makers/practitioners to those suggestions and the extent to which project activities led to an increased demand for further policy advice.

Seventy one respondents, out of 75, felt that their project was, at least marginally, concerned with influencing policy making. The original objectives notwithstanding, 72% were satisfied with the policy recommendations that resulted from the project, but only 54% (38 of 71 respondents) were satisfied with the extent to which those recommendations had been utilized by policy-makers.

When asked to provide further details as to how those recommendations were acted upon, 48 researchers elaborated. Of those, 25 (52%) stated that the policy recommendations were acted upon nationally by government ministers, civil servants, NGO planners, or international organizations such as the International Labour Organization. Twelve (25%) of the researchers claimed that their recommendations were of more local significance, offering local populations or professionals the opportunity to incorporate the research findings in their daily lives or work. Of the 11 who explained why policy recommendations were not practically implemented, reasons cited most often were financial constraints on the policy maker, and reluctance to implement programs perceived by responsible officials as running counter to their own priorities.

Table 8 demonstrates that 60% of the researchers experienced an increased demand for policy advice that exceeded or met original expectations.

**Table 8** **Input on Policy Development**

Increased Policy Advice As A Result of Project	% of Projects (n=71)
Greater than Expected	38% (27)
As Expected	32% (23)
Less than Expected	20% (14)
Not at All	10% ( 7)

Further analysis reveals that of the 95% (71 of 75) of respondents who stated that their project was (at least marginally) concerned with influencing policy making, 68% (48 of 71) experienced increased demand for policy advice as a result of the project's activities. (In the case of four projects initially uninterested in policy making, two still experienced greater demand for policy advice.) Even though only 54% of the respondents were satisfied with how policy recommendations were actually implemented, 70% received an increase in demand for policy advice.

Details concerning such an advisory role were so project specific as to defy any general categorizations. Some examples include a greater commitment on the part of local universities in implementing women's studies in the curriculum, increased interest on the part of a community in pre-school education, advice for NGOs interested in establishing programs using research recommendations, increased policy advice for other countries' labour ministries, and using a researcher's resources to develop a government's communications policy. Those who expressed dissatisfaction with long-term policy making consequences, in addition to the two reasons previously cited, also cited poor dissemination strategies for their research findings.

### 3. Collegial Exchange : Networks

The survey also attempted to establish the extent to which research networks ought to be, and actually are, utilised by PESP-supported research projects. Of those who were involved in a network during the course of an IDRC funded project, the survey sought to determine the nature of the network's funding source, how it was useful, significant advantages and disadvantages of belonging to the network, whether research links have continued beyond the life of the project and, if so, how those links are financed.

When asked to compare the funding of single research projects with the funding of network projects, an overwhelming majority (96% or 70 of 73 respondents) rated network funding as being of importance (of those, 59% rated it as being of great importance). There is little difference in opinions towards the importance of networks for LDC researchers between those who had been involved in a network project and those who had not : of those (50%) who had been involved in networks, none rated networks as being of little or no importance, while only two researchers who had not been involved in a network regarded networks to be of negligible importance.

Of the 37 project leaders who had used network resources during their research activities, over 60% took advantage of structured research networks (with formal coordination, regular meetings, etc.) funded by IDRC. Another 25% were involved in a network funded by another source, while 34% of the researchers were also involved in informal networks, i.e., ones without specific funding mechanisms and primarily devoted to information exchange among researchers.<sup>9</sup>

All researchers who had been involved in a network stated that it held significant advantages for their research work. When asked to provide details, twenty seven elaborated. Roughly equal numbers stated that its greatest advantage lay in providing theoretical/methodological insights for the researcher, enhancing communication with peers in identical or related fields, or providing a stable research environment, one in which networks were formally established and the exchange of information routinized through the increased availability of relevant facilities and materials.

A minority of network participants (19%) also felt that there were significant disadvantages in belonging to the network. Representing only 7 projects, they complained of personnel problems, in which other network members were criticized for being either too critical or lazy. They also complained of bureaucratic bungling on the part of the sponsoring agency of the network (which in one case was IDRC) with one noting that too often the research pursued only satisfied the "lowest common denominator"; for example, by only retaining those parts of the questionnaire which were regarded as non-controversial, the network team ended up with a research tool of limited utility.

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<sup>9</sup>. Some respondents answered to more than one category when asked about the type of network that they had worked with. Three projects were funded by IDRC and other organizations, while two projects, in addition to being funded by an organization other than IDRC, were participating in informal contacts with other researchers. Finally, in one case, the researcher claims to have received funding from IDRC and other agencies, and also pursued informal networks with other researchers.

The relative success of networks in supporting research capabilities in LDCs is shown when researchers have continued links with peers in a network since the termination of IDRC funding. Approximately 80% of the relevant respondents (28 of 36) stated that they have continued their contacts after the original funding by IDRC came to an end. Links were not maintained for reasons of insufficient funding or when researchers began pursuing different career directions. Of those who had maintained links with other researchers (totalling thirty researchers), 5 of the researchers were supported by additional IDRC funding, 11 by other external (NGO) funding, 2 by national funding (i.e., in the form of grants from their respective national governments), and 12 used their own institution's funds.

Table 9 shows how networks have been used during the course of a project.

How Networks Have Been Useful	No. of Projects	% Over Total No. of Projects (n=77)	% of Total That Took Part in Networks (n=36)*
Resulted in Co-Authored Papers	16	21	44
Facilitated Information Exchange	31	40	86
Provided Valuable Contacts	25	32	69
Resulted in New Directions in Research	25	32	69
Other	3	4	8

\* One less respondent, of the 37 who had used a network, answered how the network was useful. Researchers were asked to circle all appropriate categories.

#### **4. Impacts**

The survey concluded with two open-ended questions. The first asked the researcher to write what he/she believed to have been the impact of the project, directly or indirectly, on the population being studied. The second question was interested in determining how the project's findings/methodologies affected research in the relevant field of study. Although it is rather difficult to glean any common characteristics from questions such as these, some may be of interest to PESP.

##### **a. Impact of the research on the population being studied**

Of 65 respondents, 27 (or 42%)<sup>10</sup> were able to demonstrate that their findings had a direct impact on the population being studied. For example, one project served to provide women with a greater sense of economic and social self-reliance by devising specific health and work programs while another, by implementing participatory research techniques, involved entire communities in pre-school education. Others were responsible for raising the standards of instruction in classrooms, benefitting both students and teachers.

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<sup>10</sup>. 34% of the responses were inadequate in providing any helpful information : either researchers did not know what the project's impact had been, or it had no impact or the researchers made claims, regarding the project's impact, that were either too general and unsubstantiated in nature (such as simply stating that yes, indeed, the project did make an important contribution, without providing any specifics).

21 (or 32%)<sup>11</sup> of researchers stated that the impact on the population being studied was more indirect. Their significance could be better categorized as having an indirect affect (potential or actual) on policy-making. That is, the results of the project were not so much intended for immediate application to the subject population as they were meant for the use of government (or other) policy-makers, who would then, depending on their priorities, be responsible for implementing the findings of the research. For example, the findings of one project helped to press the government to pursue a specific fertility program. Others used their findings to recommend new curricular activities for Ministries of Education to implement. Other effects were more discernible at the NGO level, where research was able to confirm, for outside aid agencies, the significance of their work for marginalized peoples.

#### **b. Impact of research activities on an academic community or peer group**

37 of 65 respondents stated that their research activities contributed to the development of the state of knowledge/methodology in their specific area of research.<sup>12</sup> Examples included citations by other writers, being listed in national bibliographies, the design of research activities in other countries (using the findings/methodologies first devised by the researcher), recognition in the form of national or international grants and awards, and recognition by peers in other fields of the contribution of the research towards the state of knowledge in their particular area of research.

18 researchers noted that their contribution to the field lay in providing new theoretical or methodological findings for the purposes of instruction in post-secondary (usually graduate level) institutions.<sup>13</sup> Thus a number of projects cited research results as making a contribution to the curricular design of researchers' courses, contributing towards the implementation of collaborative courses with other departments, and as a methodological/information tool for the use of graduate students in their thesis preparations.

### **V. Dissemination Suggestions**

Besides updating outcomes and outputs of PESP sponsored projects, the survey also asked respondents if they had any opinions as to how research results of their projects could be more widely disseminated to the social science community in LDCs. The majority of respondents thought research results could be more effectively disseminated either through increasing publication activities or by holding more seminars, workshops or conferences. Regarding the former, not many specified how or who should be responsible for publishing those documents, i.e., whether they felt that institutions such as IDRC should publish and distribute relevant documents, or whether IDRC ought to support the establishment of in-house publication facilities for the recipient institutions. As far as what kind of documents to publish, suggestions ranged from project reports to summaries of project activities to "state of the art" synthetic reviews to supporting the formation of regional journals. Seminars were also popular with researchers : most felt that they are an excellent way of establishing long-term networks, of promoting peer review of research findings, and of providing a mechanism whereby practitioners and policy-makers could actively contribute to the research project.

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<sup>11</sup>. Some researchers demonstrated that their project had a direct and indirect impact on the population being studied.

<sup>12</sup>. 28% (18) of the respondents either did not know the extent of the impact of their findings on research in their field of study, or else made claims that were too general/unsubstantiated for the purposes of this survey.

<sup>13</sup>. Some researchers stated that their work, within a project, held implications for peers and graduate students.

Other recommendations included making fuller use of established networks, dispersing relevant documents to libraries or documentation centres and establishing a higher profile in the mass media. Suggestions on what IDRC could do to improve dissemination results included providing training in administration and publishing, assisting in editing, supporting appropriate international or regional publishing houses or journals, offering translation services, and producing synthetic, state of the knowledge publications. Some rather unique proposals included setting up a program for poorer, cash starved countries in which researchers would be able to receive documents gratis, with the support of an NGO aid agency. Another suggested that the issue of dissemination ought to be included in the terms of a contract between IDRC and the researcher, thereby ensuring that some attention be paid to the dissemination of the printed materials resulting from a project. One project leader also emphasized that it is crucial to develop a broad-based communications strategy, particularly in the social sciences, where research work almost always includes a variety of audiences who can only be reached by developing strategies to meet their particular needs and priorities.

### CONCLUSION

The findings of this report indicate that, at least among the 22% of the project leaders who responded, PESp has made a useful contribution to the state of research in LDCs. Many sponsored researchers, for example, have had their research designs and results incorporated in the work of their peers. Interest has not been confined to a local or national level : there appears to be considerable value placed in the work of PESp-supported research by others who may not be particularly interested in the specific local conditions of the research, but who do find it, for methodological or theoretical reasons, to be worthwhile. More concretely, a substantial number of students received valuable training as a result of the experience they gained from working on the research project. Networks have also been very effective; a high percentage of researchers involved in networks continue to maintain professional contact after the experience of a collaborative effort.

The projects also showed an impact beyond strict research concerns. The researcher, more often than not, expected that the project's activities be of relevance for policy-makers, professionals and practitioners. While those expectations (in the case of policy-makers) were met only half of the time, two-thirds of the researchers did experience an increase in demand for policy advice from external parties. The projects, besides dealing with specific issues and contributing to research capacity in LDCs, have also helped to integrate the research community within these societies' policy making mechanisms.

As for this exercise, the data presented shows that IDRC needs to focus more attention on the outputs and outcomes of supported projects. The large number of project-related documents, unknown to the Center, produced after a project's normal conclusion, demonstrates the validity of this contention. A systematic follow up mechanism, fully integrated into IDRC's programs, would not only keep the Center abreast of developments relating to projects (thereby further demonstrating its usefulness). It would also facilitate the research process in the developing world by supporting researchers' efforts to implement their results in a manner that would benefit relevant populations.



## VI. Appendix

### List of Projects Covered in Questionnaire

- 3-P-71-0059 Changing Fertility (Bogota)
- 3-P-72-0060 Value of Children to Parents (Asia) - Phase I<sup>14</sup>
- 3-P-73-0142 Value of Children to Parents (Asia) - Phase II
- 3-P-75-0047 Value of Children (Singapore)
- 3-P-75-0071 Value of Children (Turkey) - National Survey
- 3-P-75-0087 Value of Children (Korea)
- 3-P-76-0112 Value of Children (Asia) - Phase III - Comparative Study
- 3-P-76-0133 Delivery System for Mass Primary Education (Malaysia) - Phase I
- 3-P-77-0093 Tracer Studies (Chile) - Phase II
- 3-P-77-0138 Household/Demographic Behaviour (Asia)
- 3-P-78-0003 Threshold Studies in Preschool and Primary School Achievement  
(Latin America)
- 3-P-78-0119 Culture and Fertility (Southeast Asia) - Phase II
- 3-P-78-0123 Studies in Preschool and Primary School Interaction  
(Latin America)
- 3-P-79-0129 Learning Disabilities in Early Education (India)
- 3-P-80-0031 Preschool Education (Thailand)
- 3-P-80-0034 Teaching Arithmetic to Illiterates (Mali)
- 3-P-80-0038 Experimental In-Service Teacher Training (Chile) - Phase I
- 3-P-80-0074 School and Community in Latin America  
(Colombia, Bolivia, Venezuela) - Phase I
- 3-P-80-0080 Rural Employment (Central America) - Phase II
- 3-P-80-0123 Chagas Disease (Brazil)
- 3-P-80-0148 Higher Education and Economic Development (Chile)

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<sup>14</sup>. With the exception of 3-P-75-0071, all Value of Children Projects were dealt with in one questionnaire.

- 3-P-80-0151 Experimental Communication of Research Results (Chile)
- 3-P-80-0152 Universities and the Training of Intellectuals (Chile)
- 3-P-80-0153 Training and the Informal Sector (Chile)
- 3-P-80-0160 Delivery System for Mass Primary Education (Malaysia) - Phase I
- 3-P-80-0213 Regional Development and Indigenous Social Structure (Chile)
- 3-P-81-0004 Reproductive Behaviour in Low Income Families (Brazil)
- 3-P-81-0030 Correlates of Child Mortality and Mortality-Fertility Relationships (Egypt)
- 3-P-81-0032 Classroom Environment and Student Achievement (Thailand)
- 3-P-81-0036 Socio-Cultural Dimensions of Fertility and Mortality (Bolivia)
- 3-P-81-0050 Internal Migrations (Haiti)
- 3-P-81-0054 Effectiveness of Primary Education (Tanzania)
- 3-P-81-0066 TV Participation and Development (Colombia)
- 3-P-81-0075 Ethnicity and Adult Education (Latin America)
- 3-P-81-0083 Comprehensive Preschool Education (Turkey)
- 3-P-81-0098 Socio-Demographic Impact of Basic Services Program (Pakistan)
- 3-P-81-0125 Women's Participation in Community Organizations (Peru)
- 3-P-81-0163 Fertility and Family Structure (Bangladesh)
- 3-P-81-0168 Child-to-Child Training Program (Colombia)
- 3-P-81-0189 The Cost of Children (Thailand)
- 3-P-81-0201 Migration and Housing in Medium Cities (Nigeria)
- 3-P-81-0213 Refugee Education (Thailand)
- 3-P-81-0236 Informal Employment in Lome (Togo)
- 3-P-81-0241 Provincial Education Planning (Thailand)
- 3-P-82-0017 Demographic Research (Zaire) - Phase I
- 3-P-82-0049 Universities and the Role of Intellectuals in Society (Chile)

- 3-P-82-0066 Knowledge Transmission in Peasant Communities (Brazil)
- 3-P-82-0074 Teaching and Learning Biology (Kenya)
- 3-P-82-0115 Education, Society and Marginal Groups (Chile) - Phase I
- 3-P-82-0125 Television Content and Development Alternatives (Peru)
- 3-P-82-0142 Rural Impact of Migration (Sierra Leone)
- 3-P-82-0146 Integrated Family Planning (Bangladesh)
- 3-P-82-0167 Evaluation of a Teacher Training Institute (Liberia)
- 3-P-82-0177 Communication Institutions and Policies (Chile)
- 3-P-82-0201 Pilot Course on Television (Chile) - Phase I
- 3-P-82-0211 The Impact of Urbanization on Participation by Low-Income Women (Brazil)
- 3-P-82-0238 Women's Attitudes to Education and Careers (Kenya)
- 3-P-82-1004 Fertility and Family Planning (Tunisia)
- 3-P-83-0009 International Contract Labour (Indonesia)
- 3-P-83-0045 Family Planning Performance Evaluation (Indonesia)
- 3-P-83-0067 Technology, Employment, Education and Development (East Africa)
- 3-P-83-0092 Teacher Workshops: The World of the Child (Argentina)
- 3-P-83-0139 Impact of Population and Community Development Program (Thailand)
- 3-P-83-0161 Oro Education Study (Papua New Guinea)
- 3-P-83-0273 Cost and Contributions of Higher Education (Thailand)
- 3-P-83-0333 Pilot Course on Television (Chile) - Phase II
- 3-P-83-0337 Popular Culture and the Popular Press (Chile)
- 3-P-83-0340 Education and Work: The Role of Technical Education in Argentina
- 3-P-83-1009 Schooling, Cognition and Work : Outcomes of Primary Education in Kenya
- 3-P-84-0161 Teaching Reading in Bilingual Classrooms (Paraguay)
- 3-P-84-0165 School and Community (Bolivia) - Phase III

- 3-P-84-0204 Management of Obligatory Primary Education (Indonesia)
- 3-P-84-0251 Child Labour and the School in Rural Chile
- 3-P-84-0282 Teaching Development Studies (Lesotho)
- 3-P-84-0303 Effects of Adult Literacy (Kenya)
- 3-P-84-0325 Sedentation of Nomads (Mali)
- 3-P-84-1004 Cooperative Educational Research (Chile and Canada)
- 3-P-85-0070 Education for Television (Chile)
- 3-P-85-0088 Teachers As Development Agents (Thailand)
- 3-P-86-0075 Innovations in Higher Education (Chile and Argentina)
- 3-P-86-0146 Indian Peasant Games and Pre-School Curricula in the Andean Region (Colombia)
- 3-P-86-0218 Alternative Education for High School Graduates (Dominican Republic) Phase I



