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Bringing you information about DFID-funded research

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DFID's Research Strategy in a Changing World

Head of Research Chris Whitty looks at changes since the DFID Research Strategy was launched last year

In the year since the Research Strategy was launched a number of major changes have reinforced the importance of several aspects of it. Work on climate change, a major theme of our strategy, has suggested that this is more severe and maybe quicker in onset even than that assumed at the stage that the Strategy was launched. The economic downturn has increased the importance of understanding growth. The Growth Centre has already been established, and a Climate Change Centre is at an advanced stage of planning. The need for new technologies and better methods of delivering them has been met with a number of significant developments, including the launch of a new anti-malarial drug for children, artemether-lumefantrine.

DFID has recognised the central importance of incorporating the large amount of research coming out from both our own work and that of others and is integrating its research and policy teams to make best use of this. We have been joined by eminent senior research fellows drawn from several universities across a range of disciplines who are helping DFID systematically to use best evidence wherever it exists. An expansion of our research into new technologies, new methods of delivery, conflict and fragile states, better agriculture, and transport will all feed into the mission of DFID to help the poorest.

We are now the largest bilateral funder of research in international development, recognising the central importance of research if we are to win the battle against poverty. DFID intends to be at the forefront in the synthesis, integration and communication of research findings. This aims to help those in developing countries, including policymakers, make the best decisions based on the best contemporary evidence.

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New Projects

Review of policy to support better research communication in DFID-funded research

The objectives of this review are to assess the effectiveness of DFID's policy (of minimum spend of 10% on communications in RPCs) in making research more appropriate for different audiences; more accessible; and taken up in policy and practice; to capture the achievements of the policy in both getting research taken up, and building capacity amongst researchers and those intermediaries playing a role in uptake; to propose a framework for assessing the cost effectiveness of information services within research, including outlining M+E indicators that are useful in capturing the different spheres of research uptake and capacity building; and to unearth evidence of enhanced individual and institutional capabilities to communicate research, and to offer insights into which parts of the research communication cycle are best and worst understood and systematically undertaken.

[More projects](#)

New Research Documents

SEACAP 11. Training curricula, course descriptions and agendas

The objective of the SEACAP 11 Training Programme is to strengthen and develop sustainable knowledge, skills and awareness of staff on Rural Road Maintenance in rural areas of Vietnam, especially in Communes. The Training Programmes include training courses for District trainers (S3 courses) conducted in provincial centres, and Demand-led courses (D1-D5 courses) for Commune transport staff, conducted in district centres. These documents are a brief introduction to the curricula, and descriptions and agendas for each course.

id21 insights 76. Making health markets work for poor people

This issue of *id21 insights* was produced in collaboration with the Future Health Systems Research Programme. It includes brief articles on Improving provider performance, The benefits of health insurance, Retail pharmacy chains, Life-long burden, Vision entrepreneurs, and The impact of ICTs on health care.

The Implications of Horizontal and Vertical Inequalities for Tax and Expenditure Policies

F. Stewart, G. Brown and A. Cobham, CRISE Working Paper No.65, 2009, 46 pages

This paper identifies fiscal policies, specifically tax and expenditure policies, that would contribute to reducing horizontal (or group) inequalities (HIs). It reviews how to identify relevant groups and how best to measure inequalities between them – both in income and in other dimensions. It notes the lack of adequate socioeconomic data broken down according to ethno-cultural categories in many countries, and suggests ways in which existing data may be used instead.

Migration and the Financial Crisis: How will the economic downturn affect migrants?

J. Sward and R. Skeldon, Briefing Paper No. 17, DRC on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty, 2009, 4 pages

Migration is increasingly seen as having potential benefits for development, as well as significant risks and costs. So how will the current economic downturn impact on migration's potential contribution to development? This briefing looks at how past economic crises have affected migration, and considers the likely implications of the current financial crisis for the migration-development nexus. The prospect of rising unemployment among migrants, a possible decrease in migrant remittances, a rise in return

migration, and the further stigmatisation of migrant communities all threaten migration's potential to aid development efforts.

Rude Accountability in the Unreformed State: Informal pressures on frontline bureaucrats in Bangladesh

N. Hossain, IDS Working Paper No.319, 2009, 37 pages

'Rude' forms of accountability are central to how poor people negotiate their entitlements on the frontline of service delivery in Bangladesh. This paper documents the unorganised, informal pressures that poor citizens exert on officials in a context where effective formal systems for accountability are absent, and the state remains unreformed in key respects. It explores the impact of 'rude accountability' on services, and argues that strong social and local political pressures go some way towards supplying a rough responsiveness to demands for service.

Who Governs Kabul? Explaining urban politics in a post-war capital city

D. Esser, Crisis States Research Centre Working Paper No. 43 (Series 2), 2009, 30 pages

Amid intensifying international interconnectedness and simultaneous assertions that cities are positioned to supersede national governance, capital cities constitute collision points between political control and exclusion, wealth and poverty, as well as tradition and modernity. The ever-growing importance of cities as centres of political and economic power and as resources in developing countries is also increasingly prompting contenders to concentrate both peaceful and violent political campaigns in spaces of urban primacy.

Participatory Governance and the Challenge of Assumed Representation in Brazil

P. Houtzager and A. Gurza Lavalle, Research Summary 35, IDS Working Paper 321, 2009, 2 pages

The participatory governance structures that have emerged alongside more conventional institutions of representative democracy in Brazil and elsewhere encompass not only direct citizen participation but also participation by collective civil society actors, claiming to represent their respective 'publics'. In contrast to political parties and labour unions, most of these collective actors do not operate formal electoral mechanisms, nor are they membership based. How can they claim legitimately to exercise representative functions vis-a-vis the state? Empirical research in São Paulo suggests that new concepts of representation are emerging within participatory governance structures.

Regulatory Strategies of Product Development Partnerships: Some perspectives

C. Hentschel, J. Mörhle and J. Banerji, *Health Partnerships Review* 2008, 4 pages

This paper discusses the issue of gaining regulatory approval (to ensure safety and efficacy) for new drugs developed by public-private product development partnerships (PDPs). The Medicines for Malaria Venture and some other PDPs submit their drugs for approval in countries whose regulatory authorities meet standards such as those of the International Conference on Harmonization, even if these countries are not the main ones where the drug will be used. This paper considers complementary or alternative approaches.

Tobacco – more than 'just' a health issue

W. Leppan, Presentation at UICC's World Cancer Congress in Geneva, Switzerland, August 2008

This presentation outlines the work of Research For International Tobacco Control (RITC) and the international development aspects of tobacco control.

Reminder Systems and Late Patient Tracers in the Diagnosis and Management of Tuberculosis

Q. Liu, K. Abba M.M. Alejandria V.M. Balanag, R.P. Berba, M.A.D. Lansang. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2008, Issue 4. Art. No.: CD006594, 2008

This review aimed to assess the effects of reminder systems and late patient tracers on patients' adherence to medical advice (such as attending clinic appointments for taking anti-tuberculosis drugs)

and on clinical outcomes (such as cure of tuberculosis) in the following situations: treatment for active tuberculosis; tests for diagnosis of tuberculosis; and treatment to prevent tuberculosis in high-risk individuals. Overall, the results showed better outcomes among those patients for whom reminders or late patient tracers were used.

The Education Millennium Development Goal Beyond 2015: Prospects for quality and learners
A. M. Barrett, EdQual Working Paper No.16, 2009, 22 pages

A new quality Millennium Learning Goal (MLG) is being proposed to replace the existing MDG, to extend beyond the 2015 deadline. This working paper critiques the new proposal from the perspective of education quality. The paper warns that an MLG would have to be formulated with caution and include more expansive forms of indicator than are currently being suggested, as well as having associated process targets.

Improving Institutions for Pro-Poor Growth. An inter-disciplinary research programme exploring how growth can be made pro-poor

This factsheet considers why institutions matter and describes the research being conducted under the IPPG programme, and lists the people and partners involved.

Adverse Incorporation and Social Inclusion

S. Hickey, CPRC Research Summary No.7, 2008, 8 pages

Despite some advances, the notions of 'adverse incorporation' and 'social exclusion' (AISE) remain somewhat marginal to the mainstream of poverty analysis, and framing poverty debates in these ways remains a contested activity. This summary outlines some of the key insights that can emerge when the optic of AISE research is used to explore chronic poverty, before briefly suggesting what this might mean for thinking and acting around chronic poverty.

Catastrophic Health Care Payment: How protected are the users of public hospitals?

Barun Kanjilal, Swadhin Mondal, Moumita Mukherjee, Debjani Barman and Arnab Mondal, Institute of Health Management Research (Jaipur), Research Brief No.4, 2008, 4 pages

Every year an estimated 25 million households - more than 100 million people - are plunged into poverty when they or their relatives become ill and they must struggle to pay for health-care services. One conservative estimate shows that a quarter of hospitalised Indians slip below the poverty line due to hospital expenses. This research brief presents some recent evidence on the incidence of catastrophic financial shocks experienced by the users of public vis à vis private hospitals in West Bengal, where the public sector plays a dominant role in providing inpatient care.

Mental Health Policy Development and Implementation in Zambia: A situation analysis

J. Mwanza, A. Sikwese, M. Banda, J. Mayeya, C. Lund, P. Bird, N. Drew, E. Faydi, M. Funk, A. Green, M. Omar, and A.J. Flisher, The Mental Health and Poverty Project, 2008, 176 pages

This study examined mental health policy development and implementation in Zambia, with a view to identifying the key barriers to mental health policy development and implementation, and steps that could be taken to strengthen the mental health system in the country. The document includes key findings and a list of 13 key recommendations.

CCAA knowledge sharing framework

M. O'Neill, International Development Research Centre, 2007, 13 pages

Given the practical orientation of CCAA's mission and goal – supporting climate change adaptation among the most vulnerable peoples in Africa - the emphasis will be on active engagement in knowledge generation and sharing processes, in support of active use of knowledge. This knowledge sharing framework sets out the broad parameter and scope of activities to ensure CCAA-generated knowledge is effectively managed and shared with user groups that can best apply it to the benefit of Africa's most vulnerable, the program's main beneficiaries.

Technology Choices in Water Supply and Sanitation: Report on collaborative research, learning and networking between Ethiopia, Sudan and Kenya

Mansoor Ali, Ella Sprung and Jojoh Faal, RiPPLE, 2008, 93 pages

For practitioners, technological choice plays a huge role in designing water supply and sanitation (WSS) systems. Often considered in isolation, this study looks at factors that surround technological choice. This is by no means an exhaustive list of factors, but rather an attempt to start looking more closely at what factors should be considered when making technological choices, and how.

What Impact Do Global Health Initiatives Have on Human Resources for Antiretroviral Treatment Roll-out? A qualitative policy analysis of implementation processes in Zambia

J. Hanefeld and M. Musheke, *Human Resources for Health* (2009) 7:8

Since the beginning of the 21st century, development assistance for HIV/AIDS has increasingly been provided through Global Health Initiatives. Zambia, like many of the countries heavily affected by HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa, also faces a shortage of human resources for health. The country receives significant amounts of funding from GHIs for the large-scale provision of antiretroviral treatment through the public and private sector. This paper examines the impact of GHIs on human resources for ART roll-out in Zambia, at national level, in one province and two districts.

The 2007 Elections, Post-Conflict Recovery and Coalition Government in Kenya

R. G. Romero, M. S. Kimenyi and S. Dercon, iig Briefing Paper, 2008, 7 pages

What issues divided Kenyans so badly in the 2007 elections, and how can the reconciliation and reconstruction of the country be best achieved? Some insights into these questions can be gained from the two nationally representative surveys that the Centre for the Study of African Economies (CSAE) conducted just before and after the 2007 elections. This briefing gives a summary of the key findings drawn from these surveys.

Profiling Urban Poverty in a Chinese City: A case study of Nanjing

Shenjing He, C. Webster, Fulong Wu, and Yuting Liu, *Applied Spatial Analysis and Policy*, Volume 1, Number 3, 2008, 22 pages

We report on a large-scale household survey conducted in Nanjing in 2005, and which forms a preliminary study for a major ESRC/DFID funded investigation into urban poverty and property rights changes in China. To capture an initial portrait of the urban poor, the Nanjing study focuses on the most essential elements of their daily lives, i.e. demographic characteristics, access to social entitlements, housing conditions, neighbourhood interactions and social networks. It is the first study to comprehensively examine the morphology of urban poverty at the city scale.

Deaths in the Family: AIDS, demography and poverty in Africa

I. M. Timaeus, Inaugural lecture delivered to the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, 26 February 2008, 30 pages

This lecture reviews research from the last 20 years aimed at improving understanding of the demographic impact of the AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa (how many people are dying of AIDS in Africa and who they are), and considers more recent research on the socioeconomic impact of the AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa, in particular the impact on poverty and on the development process.

Good Manufacturing Practice in the Pharmaceutical Industry

P. Brhlikova, I. Harper and A.M. Pollock, Working Paper 3, prepared for the workshop 'Tracing Pharmaceuticals in South Asia', 2-3 July 2007, University of Edinburgh, 35 pages

The aim of this study is to map regulation, production, distribution and consumption of pharmaceuticals in two South Asian countries (India and Nepal) and to understand the contexts of pharmaceuticals use in South Asia. The paper is concerned with the role of regulation and its enforcement in India and Nepal with respect to one specific regulatory requirement: Good Manufacturing Practice (the guidelines which govern the production, distribution and supply of a drug).

Conceptualising and Measuring Children's Time Use: A technical review for Young Lives

P. Vogler, V. Morrow and M. Woodhead, *Young Lives*, 2009, 28 pages

This paper reviews interdisciplinary research on children's time use. We sketch the broad historical and socio-cultural context for time-use studies, recognising that how childhood has been variously understood affects the valuation of children's activities, roles and relationships and the ways they are experienced. It will become clear that differing views about children's 'proper' time use have coincided with powerful assumptions about children's roles throughout history, and the 'value' of children's time.

The Economic Development of Ethnic Minorities in Vietnam

R. Baulch, *Ethnic Minority Underdevelopment in Vietnam Policy Brief*, 2008, 9 pages

Why have ethnic minority peoples failed to share equally in the benefits of Vietnam's recent rapid economic growth, despite the plethora of government programmes designed to assist them. This review of the numerous ethnic minority policies and programmes operating in Vietnam focused on how these policies operate in three selected provinces and districts. This brief summarises the three papers prepared during the project: evolution of living standards over time; size and decomposition of the ethnic gap; and policy implications are outlined.

Better Practices for Foreign Aid

H. Vause, 2008

A brief outline of the objectives of the 'Aid salary discrepancies and development workers' performance' project and the progress made in the first six months regarding establishing the project team and framework.

Access to Conventional Schooling for Children and Young People Affected by HIV and AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa: A cross-national review of recent research evidence

P. Pridmore, *SOFIE Opening Up Access Series No.1*, 2008, 33 pages

This paper examines the evidence on access to conventional schooling for children and young people affected by HIV and AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa and makes recommendations for the further development of the SOFIE Project. The findings reveal the highly complex and context-specific nature of the educational impact and the need for educational reform to move away from the 'one size fits all' view of conventional schooling and to think creatively, 'out of the box' to develop alternative, more open and flexible, models of educational delivery and support.

Youth, AIDS and Rural Livelihoods in Southern Africa

L. van Blerk, N. Ansell, E. Robson, F. Hadju, and L. Chipeta, *Geography Compass* 2 (3) 709–727, 2008

AIDS, in interaction with other factors, is impacting on the livelihood activities, opportunities and choices of young people in Southern Africa. This article explores these linkages firstly by reviewing what is known about the impacts of AIDS on young people, before looking more specifically at how this impinges on their future ability to secure livelihoods. The article suggests that the sustainable livelihoods approach can be useful for understanding the complexity of the issues surrounding the impacts of AIDS on young people's livelihoods and calls for further research to explore how their access to future sustainable livelihoods in rural southern Africa might be supported.

The Role of Empowerment Ideology in the Mobilisation of a Marginalised Group: A case study of a sex workers' collective

A. Shukla, F. Cornish, and C. Campbell, paper presented at XXXIII All India Sociological Conference, Dharwad, India, November 29 - December 1 2007, 10 pages

The presentation outlines the context of HIV prevention in India; an approach to community mobilisation; the case study (VAMP/SANGRAM working with sex workers in seven districts around Maharashtra and the north Karnataka border); the research methods; and VAMP's ideology (with

regard to the staff's attitudes and behaviour, members' confidence and critical thinking, and guidance for decisions and actions).

Small-Scale Bioenergy Initiatives: Brief description and preliminary lessons on livelihood impacts from case studies in Asia, Latin America and Africa

Practical Action Consulting, report prepared for PISCES and FAO, January 2009, 141 pages

This report presents a summary of fifteen case studies selected from 12 countries in six regions of Latin America, Africa and Asia. The focus of the study was on the impacts that different types of local level bioenergy initiatives can have on rural livelihoods in different contexts in the developing world. Livelihoods are understood as the enhancement of the full range of natural, financial, human, social and physical capitals on a sustainable ongoing basis. The report concludes with preliminary lessons and recommendations for further work.

An Asianist's perspective on the Africa Power and Politics Programme

J. Manor, APPP Discussion Paper No.4, 2008, 32 pages

This paper assumes that insights from the study of Asia may suggest lines of enquiry about politics and power in Africa. While there is certainly no Asian 'model', Asian and especially Indian experience is relevant in a number of respects. It suggests a need for caution in attempting to improve accountabilities or 'get things done' by reviving old institutions, and points to the feasibility of mobilising constructive social resources with responsive project designs; the desirability of balance between assertiveness and accommodation in political leadership; and the importance of senior politicians as agents of change.

Strengthening Professionalism for the Public Good: Implications for professional education

M. McLean, M. Walker, A. Dison and R. Peppin-Vaughan, Working Paper No.3, Developing Discourses: Higher Education and Poverty Reduction in South Africa, 2008, 15 pages

'Developing Discourses' explores how university-located professional education might contribute to South Africa's transformation priorities, in particular poverty reduction, which we conceptualize as the expansion of human capabilities. This paper builds on the idea that 'pro-poor professionalism' can be identified as a set of professional functional capabilities, encouraged by a range of curriculum and pedagogic indicators, which would educate professionals to function in the interests of the poor.

The Global Financial Crisis, Developing Countries and Policy Responses

N. McCulloch, A. Schmidt, and A Sumner, IDS In Focus Policy Briefing 7.1, 2009, 2 pages

How will the global financial crisis affect developing countries and what should policy responses be? To address the development dimensions of the current crisis, IDS undertook a set of rapid research projects. This brief summarises the conclusions from those projects.

Handbook on Community-led Total Sanitation

K. Kar and R. Chambers, IDS and Plan UK, 2008, 51 pages, English and French

This handbook contains comprehensive information on CLTS, its pre-triggering, triggering and post-triggering stages, as well as examples and case studies from around the world. It has been developed from experiences with Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) since December 1999 in Bangladesh, India, Cambodia, Indonesia, Mongolia, Nepal, China and Pakistan in Asia; in Uganda, Zambia, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Kenya and Sierra Leone in Africa; in Bolivia in South America; in Yemen in the Middle East; and in other countries.

Central Peruvian Amazon: A test case for Desakota development in the Amazon

G. Hyman and S. Fujisaka, Final Report Desakota, Part II G4, Case Study, 2008, 9 pages

Globalization of the world economy has changed the outlook for resource use. Have these changes led to a new type of rural development, one driven by new forces reaching into previously isolated rural areas? Has the Amazon experienced Desakota-style rural development as seen in parts of Asia – that is, blurred distinctions between rural and urban, mixed economies and land use, space-time

reduction in interactions with other places? How has recent rural development affected ecosystem services and poverty alleviation? This report discusses these questions using the central Peruvian Amazon in the area surrounding the city of Pucallpa as a case study.

Implementation and promotion of an IPM strategy for control of eggplant fruit and shoot borer in South Asia

S.N. Alam, M.I. Hossain, F.M.A. Rouf, R. C. Jhala, M.G. Patel, L. K. Rath, A. Sengupta, K. Baral, A.N. Shylesha, S. Satpathy, T.M. Shivalingaswamy, A. Cork, and N.S. Talekar, AVRDC Technical Bulletin No. 36, 88 pages

This is the final technical report of the Implementation and Promotion of an Integrated Pest Management Strategy for the Control of Eggplant Fruit and Shoot Borer (*Leucinodes orbonalis*) in Indo-Gangetic Plains of South Asia project. The project was launched to develop a sustainable integrated pest management (IPM) strategy that is simple, economical, and effective in reducing EFSD damage with minimal use of chemical pesticides. This bulletin summarises activities and results obtained at four regions in Bangladesh and six states in India during the second phase of the project.

The Cost-effectiveness of Improving Malaria Home Management: Shopkeeper training in rural Kenya

C.A. Goodman, W.M. Mutemi, E.K. Baya, A. Willetts and V. Marsh, *Health Policy and Planning* 2006 21(4), 14 pages

Home management is a very common approach to the treatment of illnesses such as malaria, acute respiratory infections, tuberculosis, diarrhoea and sexually transmitted infections, frequently through over-the-counter purchase of drugs from shops. Inappropriate drugs and doses are often obtained, but interventions to improve treatment quality are rare. This paper describes an educational programme for general shopkeepers and communities in Kilifi District, rural Kenya that was associated with major improvements in the use of over-the-counter anti-malarial drugs for childhood fevers.

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Recent News Stories

Launch of the International Growth Centre

It is estimated that over the last 15 years, growth has accounted for more than 80% of poverty reduction around the world, and lifted 500 million people out of poverty. The Centre will make available to Southern governments a network of some of the world's finest economists - up to 70 researchers working across ten thematic areas. It will provide a collection of services which includes policy advice; conducting world class research; and translating academic research into 'on the ground' policy at the request of southern governments. Around £8.6m over three years will be ring-fenced for research across the ten themes.

Reforming institutions for agricultural research

DFID is not the only organisation which has re-organised itself to better manage research. In December 2008, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) decided to change its governance structure and way of doing business to better serve a world that is changing fast in financial, social, climatic and environmental terms. DFID Research funds the CG centres £20m annually, and staff played a key role in its reform.

Strengthening Health Research in Africa

In February 2009 the Health Research Capacity Strengthening (HRCS) initiative was launched. HRCS aims to strengthen the capacity of key academic research and health policymaking institutions in Kenya and Malawi to generate new scientific knowledge. It is funded in collaboration with the Wellcome Trust and Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The initiative gives £10 million each to two national organisations to make awards according to their national research and training priorities. In Kenya the grants will be awarded by a new non-governmental organisation, the Consortium for National Health Research. In Malawi, activities will be undertaken within the existing National Research Council of Malawi.

'The challenge for DFID research lies in the breadth of its ambition'

Maggie Gill is the first of the Senior Research Fellows to join DFID. She is currently Chief Scientific Adviser for Rural Affairs and the Environment in the Scottish Government, and took up her part-time position in April. The challenges for global agriculture are immense, in terms of the need to double food production by 2050 during a period of expected increase in the incidence of drought, floods, and temperature extremes. The expertise Maggie brings to DFID will help us address these challenges.

Strengthening research communication

DFID's research portal www.research4development.info continued to attract new users - 40,000 every month. A revamped Communications Corner on R4D aims to build up a Community of Practice around research communications amongst DFID-funded researchers, and others. A weekly **CommsCorner blog** aims to inform and inspire with good ideas from around the world, and a monthly **Podium Post** allows researchers to share their challenges and approaches to research uptake.

Contributions invited to the consultation on the European Report on Development

September will see the launch of the *European Report on Development*, which aims to work alongside the well established World Bank and UN development reports. Researchers who would like to contribute to the consultation on the first report, *Development in a context of fragility: Focus on Africa*, can join the discussion at a number of conferences during the coming months. The report is being produced by the Robert Schuman Centre of the European University Institute on behalf of the European Commission and draws on the experience of African as well as European researchers.

Video stories help healthworkers learn about the stigma of HIV/AIDS

A project by Kenya's Ministry of Health and Centre for Disease Control and Prevention researched, designed and implemented a communication strategy to promote the uptake of TB and HIV cross-testing amongst those with TB or HIV and their extended families. Using material from Makutano Junction, the training set out to reduce healthworker stigma of HIV, improving their own health, their confidence at work and their ability to communicate with and understand patients when promoting cross-testing for TB and HIV; and encourage awareness of the benefits of cross-testing and treatment adherence in the families of those with TB and/or HIV.

Study shows bioenergy benefits for rural poor

Bioenergy, when produced on a small-scale in local communities, can play a significant role in rural development in poor countries, according to a new report jointly published by FAO and DFID. The study, 'Small Scale Bioenergy Initiatives: Brief Description and Preliminary Lessons on Livelihood Impacts from Case Studies in Latin America, Asia and Africa', covers 15 different 'start-up' bioenergy projects from 12 countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia involving a diverse array of technologies.

Why don't carers of young children use free government healthcare in Uganda?

Since 2001 government health facilities in Uganda have been free. Yet a study by researchers from Makerere University School of Public Health (Uganda) and the Karolinska Institutet (Sweden) has shown that around two-thirds of people caring for the under-fives use drug shops and private clinics as the first source of treatment for children with fever, rather than the free government healthcare. Private

providers often have unqualified staff and use poor quality medicines, so are unlikely to provide effective treatment against malaria. So why do carers choose them over the free public healthcare?

Chinese herbal medicines set to inspire new tuberculosis drugs

Pilot screening of traditional herbal medicines by researchers from the Chinese Academy of Sciences has identified natural product extracts with potential to attack the tuberculosis microbes. The scientists plan to work with the DFID-funded TB Alliance to identify more potential anti-TB agents from natural sources, including microbes and traditional Chinese medicines.

Communicating research isn't rocket science...

A re-vamped and re-invigorated Communications Corner is launched on R4D this week. Its purpose is threefold. First, to **showcase** different kinds of research communication activities which take place within DFID-funded research. Second, to **signpost** different communication services and resources which we either fund, or know about that can help put research into use. Third, to **support** researchers to share what they have learned about getting research communicated and used, in order to build up the science of this new and exciting part of the research cycle.

The impact of the global financial crisis on developing countries

The Institute of Development Studies (IDS) has produced a series of two-page policy briefs, published as *IDS In Focus Policy Briefing 7*, which explore the impact of the financial crisis on developing countries. The work, funded by DFID, also explores what lessons can be learned from previous financial crises and how the crisis is viewed in different G20 countries.

Better Science Reporting: Training for West African Journalists

A DFID-funded training course for West African Journalists held at IITA in Ibadan, Nigeria earlier this month seems to be already bearing fruit. A pre- and post-course questionnaire was used by WRENmedia to ask participants to evaluate their own skills in science journalism. Results showed that both print and radio journalists believe they have achieved a significant improvement in skills as a result of the training, registering a doubling in how they view their skills base in most cases. Participants were buoyed up with new-found enthusiasm and look forward to putting their new methods into practice.

Reporting on climate change

Don't give in to sensationalism, make sure you distinguish between individual weather events and climate change, learn how to convey risk and avoid false balance. These are some of the practical tips in a new guide from SciDev.Net for journalists reporting on climate change. 'Climate change: How to report the story of the century' was written by James Fahn (global director for environmental programmes at Internews, which operates the Earth Journalism Network). It discusses how to research the science of climate change; the need to communicate the uncertainty; how to sell the story and make it both appealing and accurate; and how to give a local focus to this global issue.

£18 million boost for discovery of new oral treatment for TB

The discovery of new oral treatments for tuberculosis (TB) which could save millions of lives in developing countries will receive an £18 million boost from DFID. The funding will support the discovery of new life-saving treatments that will shorten treatment duration and be effective against both drug-susceptible and drug-resistant strains of TB, and strategic initiatives to streamline and potentially revolutionise the process by which new TB treatments are developed.

More funding from DFID for the Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV)

The Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV) will receive an additional £19 million from 2010 from DFID to continue its ground-breaking research against malaria. The new funding announced is in addition to the £10 million already contributed to MMV. MMV is a non-profit, public-private partnership established in 2000 to accelerate the development of new drugs to treat and prevent malaria.

Responses to avian influenza in Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia

The STEPS Centre (Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability Centre, funded by the ESRC) have just published four new papers on responses to avian influenza in Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia. The papers discuss the politics of policy processes surrounding the responses of these countries to highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI).

New report on xenophobic violence in South Africa

In May 2008 anti-foreigner violence in South Africa quickly spread among townships and settlements across the country. In two weeks Some 62 people died, over 600 were wounded, and many women were raped. At least 100,000 people were displaced and property worth of millions of rand was looted, destroyed or seized by local residents and leaders. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Forced Migration Studies Programme (FMSP) at Wits University in Johannesburg have just published a DFID-funded study into the factors behind the xenophobic violence.

The role of higher education in development

A new spotlight from SciDev.Net, 'What role for higher education in development?', examines higher education's role in achieving development goals with a series of articles and commentaries written by experts. These set the context of the debate, examine the roles of aid agencies, outline the opportunities and hurdles facing policymakers on the ground, and highlight case studies showing how external support can generate tangible results.

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About R4D – DFID's research portfolio on your desktop

R4D contains a searchable database of more than 5,000 project records and the details of more than 21,000 outputs from research funded by DFID's Central Research Department during the last 10 years. It also includes research activities prior to 2005 in Rural Livelihoods, Health, Social Sciences, Education, and Infrastructure and Urban Development. Every month we add new projects, documents, and outputs.

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