



May 2009

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Building Capacity for Better Governance and Social Policy Research – Africa

A DFID Call for Expressions of Interest in establishing the
African Social Science Research Consortium

DFID wishes to appoint a service provider to develop and facilitate Phase 1 of a programme to build capacity and improve the quality of Africa's political and social science research. The programme will focus on three main levels of capacity building: *individual, organisational and institutional*.

Deadline for receipt of submissions is 18 June, 2009. Phase 1 is predicted to last five years with the possibility of an extension of up to 30 months.

The contractor will be expected to deliver five key outcomes:

- Strengthened social and political science research capacity in key Sub-Saharan African universities, think tanks, and research centres.
- Increased production of regionally significant and relevant governance and social policy research by the end of Phase One.
- Establishment of national and regional university networks able to work independently to design and deliver improved higher degree modules.
- Establishment of an effective and sustainable organisation created through consortium work and development initiatives, dedicated to raising the capacity and quality of social and political science research in selected countries.
- Increased demand for high-quality and relevant governance and social research from government and research institutes.

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New Research Documents

SEACAP Experience in Transport Research in the GMS with Lessons for New Initiatives on Gender and Transport (DF91)

D. Salter, M. Shone, A.A. Sakulku, and R. Petts, Paper prepared for 'Regional research design workshop for gender, poverty and mobility analysis of road transportation development in GMS', Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), 1–3 April 2009, 30 pages

The development of better rural access and transport should lead to poverty reduction, job creation and access to socio-economic opportunities. Rural people should also benefit from involvement in the construction and the maintenance of the rural transport infrastructure. However, not all benefits are currently equally realised by women and men. This paper describes the SEACAP approach and project outputs with a gender dimension, and it makes recommendations for further research into advancing gender equity in rural access and transport.

Providing Free Maternal Healthcare: Ten lessons from an evaluation of the national delivery exemption policy in Ghana

S. Witter, S. Adjei, M. Armar-Klemesu and W. Graham, Global Health Action Vol.2, 2009

There is a growing movement, globally and in the Africa region, to reduce financial barriers to health care generally, but with particular emphasis on high priority services and vulnerable groups. This article reports on the experience of implementing a national policy to exempt women from paying for delivery care in public, mission and private health facilities in Ghana. Using data from a complex evaluation which was carried out in 2005–06, lessons are drawn which can inform other countries starting or planning to implement similar service-based exemption policies.

The process of malaria drug policy change in Uganda: practical realities in implementing new treatment policies

A.O. Talisuna , Presentation from 'Expanding reach of ACTs in the private sector: Dialogue with countries'. MMV Access Symposium, Accra, Ghana, 2 June, 2008.

This presentation describes the issues encountered in the switch to artemisinin combination therapy as the preferred antimalarial treatment in Uganda. Availability of the medicine, and indeed of other recommended antimalarials, is a problem, and patients often turn to the private sector. As well as strengthening the public-sector supply chain, it is necessary to involve the private sector. Training of healthworkers ensures that if stocks are available, adherence to policy in the public sector is fairly high, but continued availability of non-recommended antimalarials is a problem.

Drought-proof rice for African farmers

Savitri Mohapatra, *Rice Today*, April–June 2009, 2 pages

This article describes the collaboration between research institutes, donor agencies and community representatives to develop drought-tolerant rice for African farmers. The effects of climate change and the increase in frequency and severity of drought episodes will have serious effects on African rice production, which is largely rainfed. Support from donors such as DFID and the World Bank has allowed seeds of drought tolerant varieties to be preserved in the WARDA gene bank and shared with researchers around the world.

The Pattern of Returns to Education and its Implications

C. Colclough, G. Kingdon and H. A. Patrinos, Policy Brief No. 4, Centre for Commonwealth Education, University of Cambridge, 2009, 5 pages

The pattern of economic returns to education can help us to understand the poverty-reduction potential of different levels of education. It is commonly believed that labour market returns to education are highest for the primary level of education and lower for subsequent levels. Recent

evidence suggests that the pattern is changing. This paper explores the implications of such changes for both education and labour market policy.

Growth and Multi-dimensional Poverty in Sub-Sahara Africa: Does legislative democracy play a role?

J.C. Saha, IPPG Briefing Note, March 2009, 2009, 2 pages

What has been the poverty reduction experience of Sub-Saharan African countries who have experienced multiparty democracy since the early 1990s? Has the poverty reduction impact of growth been reinforced? If not, what institutional reforms are needed? This briefing looks at these questions for a set of 32 SSA countries.

The Interface Between Research and Policy: Experience from South Africa

L. Gilson and D. McIntyre, *Social Science and Medicine* 67(5), 2008, 12 pages

Increasing attention has been paid in recent years to efforts to strengthen the impact of research on policy in low- and middle-income countries. However, the processes by which such research might have policy impact remain a subject of debate. This paper presents an analysis of the research/policy interface, drawing on the experiences of two South African health policy and systems research (HPSR) units and one specific study which traced the development and implementation of three areas of healthcare financing policy change and debate between 1994 and 1999.

Increasing Access to Quality Health Care for the Poor: Community perceptions on quality care in Uganda

J. Kiguli, E. Ekirapa-Kiracho, O. Okui, A. Mutebi, H. MacGregor, and G.W. Pariyo, *Patient Preference and Adherence* 2009:3, 8 pages

This paper examines the community's perspectives and perceptions on quality of healthcare delivery in two districts of Uganda. The paper addresses community concerns on service quality, focusing on the poor because they are a vulnerable group and often bear a huge burden of disease. Community views were solicited and obtained using eight focus group discussions, and six in-depth and 12 key-informant interviews. User perceptions and definitions of the quality of health services depended on a number of variables related to technical competence, accessibility to services, interpersonal relations and presence of adequate drugs, supplies, staff, and facility amenities.

Conceptualising Women's Empowerment in International Development Agencies

R. Eyben and R. Napier-Moore, *Pathways Working Paper 5*, September 2008, 30 pages

More than a decade after the Beijing Women's Conference in 1995, words and agendas around women's empowerment have changed as the wider international development agenda has moved away from the notion of people-centred development of the 1990s. We trace those changes and tease out the waxing and waning of different associational meanings attached to women's empowerment as used in international development agencies.

Struggles Against the Regressive Proposed Family Law: The unlikely unity of Islamist and secular feminists in Iran

Mahboubeh Abbasgholizadeh, Conference paper from 'Negotiating alliances, overcoming oppositions: women's movements and other social movements', 13 November, 2008, 4 pages

The government of President Ahamadi Nezhad in Iran introduced to parliament a new family bill that would have annulled many of the modest reforms that women had managed to bring about in Iran. Diverse women's groups, from secular to 'Islamist feminists', who had never directly collaborated came together to fight the bill. This paper examines the conditions that made it possible for women to work together across their ideological divides and adopt common strategies in their struggle.

Extra Classes and Subjective Well-being: Empirical evidence from Vietnamese children

Ivy Ko and Jing Xing, Young Lives Working Paper 49, 2009, 48 pages

Do children with access to private tutoring feel happier than those without? In answering this question, this paper offers a novel way to understand the potential merit of providing private tutoring for children. Using a unique data set on Vietnamese children from Round 2 of the Young Lives 2006 Survey, this paper explores the link between taking extra classes and a child's subjective well-being, measured by degree of satisfaction regarding their current and future life.

HPAI H5N1 Transmission Risks: Pathways from Poultry to Humans

Maria Van Kerkhove, Mekong Team Working Paper No.10, 2009, 41 pages

This working paper critically reviewed published, grey literature, and accessible primary reports on HPAI, specifically focusing on highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) subtype H5N1 (HPAI/H5N1) in humans. It reviewed the epidemiology of HPAI/H5N1 in poultry and humans and evaluated what is known about transmission patterns from poultry-to-humans. Although this report focuses on HPAI/H5N1, studies which have evaluated poultry-to-human transmission for other HPAI strains (e.g., H7 outbreaks in the Netherlands, Italy and British Columbia) are included.

Review of National Programmes on Water Science and Technology for the Developing World (Synthesis Report)

SPLASH Report D2.3, 2008, 79 pages

This is a synthesis and analysis of the data generated by the survey of programmes relating to water research for developing countries that are funded or co-funded by the national governments of the SPLASH (European Water Initiative Coordination of Member State Research Programmes in Water Science and Technology for the Developing World) partners. This collated information aims to support coordination and avoid duplication of research efforts between the countries concerned and to help identify opportunities for future collaboration.

Member of the Parliament of Ghana: A hybrid institution with mixed effects

S.I. Lindberg, Africa Power and Politics Programme (APPP) Working Paper No.2, 2009, 20 pages

Institutions matter because of the way they constrain actors' choices and thereby influence the attainment of preferred collective outcomes. This paper describes a key political institution in one African country, the office of Member of Parliament in Ghana. Consideration is given to both the formal rules and the informal norms which constitute the institution. An interview-based study carried out in 2008 is used to explore both the composition of the institution and its relationship to how actors behave, i.e. what the office holders provide in terms of public, collective, club, and private goods.

African Libraries of the Future: Interfacing with the Millennium Development Goals

INASP Infobrief 8: July 2008, 4 pages

On August 16 and 17, 2007, the IFLA Africa Section held a two-day seminar on African Libraries of the Future: Interfacing with the Millennium Development Goals. Funded by DFID and facilitated by INASP, the aim of the seminar was bring together library leaders in Africa to deliberate on ways that African libraries could contribute towards the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This Infobrief describes the key outcomes and recommendations of that meeting.

Exploring the Role of Civil Society in the Formulation and Adoption of Access to Information Laws: The cases of Bulgaria, India, Mexico, South Africa and the United Kingdom

A. Puddephatt, Access to Information Working Paper Series, World Bank Institute, 2009, 56 pages

Civil society has participated in the creation of new access to information laws (ATI) by advocating for ATI legal reform; building popular support for ATI and helping create and focus the demand for information; participating in drafting and shaping legislation and lobbying members of the legislative process; helping citizens understand ATI and how to use legal rights of access; training public officials to handle information

requests; promoting awareness of best practices, both nationally and internationally; monitoring the implementation of ATI laws; and helping citizens use ATI legal rights to achieve wider social goals.

Review of Communications in DFID-funded Research Programme Consortia (RPCs) Overseas Development Institute (ODI), 2009, 100 pages

Review of policy to support better research communication in DFID-funded research (10% study)
One of DFID's models for competitively funded research programmes is the Research Programme Consortium (RPC). There are currently 30 DFID-funded RPCs. DFID has introduced a policy of 10% minimum spend on communications within RPCs, and requires each one to produce a strategy to show how research would be put into use. This document presents the findings of a review to assess the effectiveness of the policy, and captures the achievements and challenges of the policy.

The Hidden Millions: Homelessness in Developing Countries

G. Tipple and S. Speak, Routledge, 2009, 344 pages

This book explores the extent, causes, and characteristics of homelessness in developing countries. Bringing together a major review of literature and empirical case studies and drawing on local research in nine countries in the South, it offers an insight into the lives of homeless people, public perceptions of homelessness, and the policies and interventions which might variously increase or reduce homelessness.

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Recent News Stories

Could nanotechnology improve access to clean water?

The latest Spotlight from SciDev.Net, 'Nanotechnology for clean water', examines whether nanotechnology can provide solutions to water treatment in the developing world and improve access to clean drinking water. This free online resource explores the potential of nanotechnology for clean water, outlines the opportunities and hurdles facing policymakers on the ground, examines the key issues including risk, regulation and technology transfer, and highlights the progress made to date.

Heckle and Chide

A research programme encouraged the travelling public on Kenya's minibuses (matatus) to speak up when the driver is being reckless to force a change of behaviour. With the agreement of the Matatu Owners' Association, the researchers posted signs in 1,000 randomly selected minibuses encouraging passengers to strongly criticise reckless driving and overcrowding. During the two-year trial insurance claims for those minibuses fell by as much as two-thirds, and claims involving injury or death fell by half. Surveys of passengers and drivers showed that the heckling had directly contributed to the reduction in accidents.

New guide to reporting on tuberculosis

Journalists can play an important role in drawing attention to research on TB, making it accessible and raising questions to encourage better decision-making. Accurate information can encourage people to seek diagnosis and treatment, and help to dispel myths and fight the stigma associated with this disease. The DFID-funded Panos Relay programme recently published a new guide to reporting on TB for journalists: 'Sorting fact from fiction'. The guide sets out the main issues around communicating TB research and provides tips and ideas for journalists to develop powerful stories with a human face.

UK boost for AIDS vaccine research

Research into finding an AIDS vaccine that would save millions of lives by significantly reducing the number of new HIV infections received a £40 million boost from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). The grant will support the work of the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) to help accelerate the design and testing of novel AIDS vaccine candidates. One of the projects covered by the grant is the development of a new test, known as the viral inhibition assay, by IAVI and Imperial College London, which aims to improve the evaluation of AIDS vaccine candidates in early-stage development.

Update on DFID call for applications for new product development partnerships for drugs and vaccines

Product development partnerships (PDPs) are a new model to address the need for new or improved products to combat diseases of the poor for which prevention or treatment is lacking or inadequate or that have become resistant to current treatments. The five organisations funded in Phase I are to receive follow-on funding for a further five years, and seven organisations not currently funded have been selected via an open competition and invited to submit full bids for funding during Phase II.

An interview with Chris Whitty

DFID's new head of research, Chris Whitty, discusses priorities of DFID's research for development programme in an interview published in *Nature News* (28 April, 2009). In the article he describes what he will bring to the post, how much money has been allocated for the research strategy, how DFID's research will contribute to the body of research on climate change, what research will be conducted under DFID's health and governance programmes, progress since the research strategy was launched, and what it is hoped will be achieved by 2013.

Sustainable agriculture is essential for sustainable development in Africa

'Put farming first in Africa', a blog article published recently in the *Guardian Online*, argues for the need for investment in agriculture in order to reduce the levels of chronic poverty still faced by millions of Africans and enhance food security. The author, Dr Lindiwe Majele Sibanda, CEO of the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN), highlights the work of a number of programmes in promoting agricultural development, including the DFID-funded Research into Use (RIU) programme.

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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 past 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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