

## Promoting Evidence-based Development Policy

Better utilisation of research and evidence in development policy and practice can help save lives, reduce poverty and improve the quality of life. All too often, however, it seems that researchers, civil society actors and policymakers live in parallel universes, and relations between them are strained. A better understanding of how research can contribute to pro-poor policies, and systems to put it into practice, are urgently needed.

Speakers in this session will provide:

- a summary of current knowledge about the role of research in development policy,
- an analytical and practical framework to improve its impact,
- the latest on effective research communication,
- development research policy perspectives from DFID, and
- the perspective of a southern (action)research practitioner.

Discussion will focus on:

- Gathering experience from participants – what works, what doesn't work and why?
- What should we do to improve the impact of our work on development outcomes:
  - Who should we be targeting – southern policy makers and practitioners or northern policy makers and donors?
  - How should we be working – focusing on research or on all the other things that need to be done if research is to be influential?
  - How can we work more effectively with southern researchers nationally, regionally and globally?

The workshop will be chaired by **Diane Stone**, Marie-Curie Chair, Head of Public Policy at the Central European University in Budapest.

The **speakers** will be:

- **John Young**, who leads the Research and Policy in Development Programme in ODI. He will speak about:
  - the theory around the role of research in policy processes,
  - a framework to help understand policy processes and develop strategies to promote evidence-based policy making
- **Dominic Furlong**, who has worked on research communication projects for several years. He will speak about:
  - the theory and practice of getting research results out and used,
  - bottlenecks to learning, dissemination and uptake in the north and south,
  - opportunities to improve research communication.
- **Dylan Winder**, who works with DFID's Central Research Department, with policy teams working on livelihoods and information and communication, and as part of a Whitehall-wide team looking at the role of science in policy. He will talk about:
  - the emphasis on communication and engagement in the new CRD research strategy,
  - the impact of current policies on national research capacity and science-policy links,
  - the role of northern donors and researchers.
- **Naved Chowdhury**, who has worked on action-research, capacity-building and policy advocacy programmes in Bangladesh for the last 7 years. He will talk about:
  - the current and future impact of northern-funded and led development research,
  - the capacity of southern researchers and their engagement with policy makers,
  - what should be done to improve the use of research in policy.

Many of these issues are covered in a forthcoming book (**From Development Research to Pro-poor Policy; Evidence and the Change Process**, Compiled and edited by Julius Court, Ingie Hovland and John Young, ITDG Publishing 2004) which explores the links between research and policy, provides powerful and wide-ranging illustrative case studies and explains best current practice on how to conduct an 'influencing agenda'

For further information, see the RAPID website: [www.odi.org.uk/rapid](http://www.odi.org.uk/rapid) and/or the attached background documents:

[Rapid Framework.pdf](#) (Adobe Acrobat 80kb): A 4-page leaflet describing some of the theory behind, and practical usefulness of the RAPID research-policy framework.

[Rapid Framework in Practice.pdf](#) (Adobe Acrobat 163kb): A 4-page leaflet describing how the framework has been used as a research tool to analyse what research has (or hasn't in this case) influenced policy and how it can be used to improve project impact.

[Rapid Framework.ppt](#) (MS Powerpoint 769kb): A generic presentation describing some of the theory behind, and practical usefulness of the RAPID research-policy framework. View as a presentation, or print out in "notes" view for a full description.