Policy Influencing and Media Engagement: an Overview

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Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

Introduction

'Policy Influencing and Media Engagement: A Resource Pack' draws together material presented at a joint ODI - CPRC Workshop hosted by the ODI on 17th and 18th January 2005. This overview paper highlights the importance of understanding political, historical and other contextual factors, as a prerequisite to effective policy engagement. It reflects on the experiences of the Chronic Poverty Research Centre, identifying the opportunities and challenges of using research effectively to influence policy processes for chronic poverty reduction.

Understanding the barriers to pro-poor change

The policy influencing role of research has increased in importance along with rising donor attention on the importance of evidence-based policy-making. As policy formation and implementation processes become more transparent and based more strongly on evidence, more room is created for research to have greater influence. It is essential to recognise, however, the limitations of context. The domestic political context and nature of policy formation processes are influenced themselves by broader dynamics, such as the liveliness of domestic policy debates. The credibility of researchers and the rigour of research results, as well as their resonance within dominant discourses, combine with practicalities, such as the timeliness of engagement and accessibility of research presentation, to influence the role and impact research can have on policy makers and their interests. Power networks may determine the impact of evidence on policy and political analysis is required to better understand where and how it might be possible for research to have influence. This paper presents ideas, tools and analytical frameworks for such analysis.

Dominant poverty discourses and donor interests have huge effect on policy agendas, and have tended towards a focus on economic stabilisation and growth. Issues which fall outside the dominant focus are often challenging and construed as subversive. Policy responses to poverty and marginalisation tend to reinforce categorisations of the poor as 'deserving' and 'undeserving', reflecting deep seated societal views that are difficult to change. Identifying policy fracture points can help to shed light on how and why discourses inhibit policy attention on certain issues. Opening up policy space is a crucial step to bringing difficult issues to the table, and it may be important to include key change agents, and the right networks, as well as street level bureaucrats who influence how policy is implemented.

The political space for reducing chronic poverty is influenced by the existence – or otherwise – of institutional channels which represent chronically poor people, for example political parties, social movements, legislative representation and certain ministries. 'Drivers of Change' analysis, (a recent exercise pioneered by DFID), responds to the need for greater contextual understanding and is applied to assist the international community to predict which policy reforms might succeed and which are likely to be implemented in a half-hearted manner. This approach is of value to the CPRC as it highlights the value of taking structure and institutions into account; that historical legacies influence policy-making and implementation; and the role of incentives and the need to find entry points for policy engagement. There may however be some limitations to be aware of when

considering this approach, not least the existence of power relations that may trap people in their circumstances and are directly related to current and past policy activities.

What has CPRC done so far?

Policy engagement and influencing activities have to date not been the core priority for CPRC. However all country partners have made some headway, benefiting from personal and institutional contacts, as well as using working and other opportunities to combine more traditionally academic dissemination with broader communication and advisory activities. CPRC partners have also benefited by working through other organisations and networks, and the media.

For effective influencing, identification of key players is very important. Central Government is often a key player in the poverty agenda. Business interests tend to be very strong, and represent an important national lobby. The research community usually can not compete at this level. Public opinion is also important. People tend to be sensitive to the needs of the 'deserving' poor (notably older people) but attitudes towards the poor and poverty in general is often underlined by fear and mistrust, and linked with wider societal attitudes.

CPRC country experiences in Bangladesh, India, South Africa and Uganda, reflect different national policy processes and discourses on poverty. It is evident however that there remain big gaps between vision and action or implementation, especially where rent seeking and other obstacles to policy uptake are evident.

Tracing direct impacts of the CPRC on policy debates, policy making and implementation is nevertheless problematic as causality is highly complex. Some tools for doing this are presented in the paper. The CPRC however is yet to develop its own set of comprehensive tools to assess its impact, but there is already some evidence of influence. Academics, donors and civil society are beginning to use the language of chronic poverty, for example, and 'chronic poverty' has become a visible issue in the Bangladesh I-PRSP and in the Ugandan Participatory Poverty Assessment II, to name a few.

It is a real challenge to successfully combine research and communication activities in a way that impacts positively on both research and policy. CPRC activities have to date and in large measure been initial and exploratory in nature. A clearly emerging lesson is that the way in which policy engagement is positioned within the research process has clear implications for the way in which researchers can impact on policy making. It is important that CPRC researchers retain their independence from governments while also fulfilling their aim of preventing further descent into chronic poverty and promoting effective policies to assist people exit long term poverty. Policy analysis and policy engagement are set to become more central to CPRC activity during its next phase of funding (2005-2010) and this overview and accompanying resource pack are written to help with this expansion.

1.   Introduction

This paper provides an overview for 'Policy Influencing and Media Engagement: A Resource Pack'. The Resource Pack draws together material presented at a joint ODI - CPRC Workshop hosted by ODI on 17th and 18th January 2005 on *Policy Influencing and Media Engagement*.

This paper summarises the key points raised in workshop presentations and background papers. It also draws on the policy processes literature to a limited extent, to contextualise the other material presented. The paper highlights the importance of understanding political, historical and other contextual factors, as a prerequisite to effective policy engagement; it briefly introduces tools for improving research-policy links; discusses the national and international policy influencing, dissemination and communication experiences of CPRC country teams and other partners; discusses the challenges and advantages of working with the mass media in the North and South and briefly introduces the CPRC's plans for policy engagement over the next five years.

1.1   Why is the policy influencing role of research important?[1]

Demands on researchers that their outputs influence policy have increased since the early 1990s. Why is this?

Recent shifts in aid architecture have intensified donors' interests in evidence-based policy-making, increasing the pressure on researchers to influence policy with their research. The introduction of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and the increased proportion of aid channelled through general budget support have increased donor focus on the quality of the governance structures, good decision-making and policy formation and implementation. Many donors want to see policy making and budgetary processes become more transparent and more strongly based on evidence. In many countries, the new approaches to aid delivery, particularly PRSPs, have increased the level of domestic debate around new policies, drawing in civil society and other actors including national poverty and policy experts.

However, openings for poverty and policy-related research to influence policy processes are sometimes limited. The political context and the existing culture of evidence-based policy-making are crucially important in determining what level of engagement is possible. While robust evidence can be persuasive, it is still only part of the picture and power networks mediate the impact of evidence on policy. Increasing the utilisation of such evidence is a complex process and it cannot be assumed that findings about chronic poverty will generate a rapid change in national discourses or policy.

Understanding the political dynamics of policy change, particularly those forces in society that may be supporting or opposing change, may improve the likelihood that evidence will be used to influence decisions and support successful policy implementation. Opening up opportunities for

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[1] This section draws on Bird et al (2005) What has DFID learned from the PSIA Process? Advisory Report for PAM, DFID. London: Overseas Development Institute.

parliamentarians, civil society and the general public can be beneficial and can also help to make chronic poverty research findings more influential in policy terms. Political and power analysis is an important start to understanding and predicting where it may be possible for research-based evidence to have an impact on policy-making.

Substantial barriers to the effective uptake of research-based evidence remain. Political and power analysis (including 'Drivers of Change Analysis') can help to predict where research-based evidence is likely to only weakly influence policy-making. In some countries, chronic poverty related research results fed into policy. However, the CPRC does not yet have a strong enough evidence base to trace its policy influence around the world. In some countries political economy barriers to pro-poor policy and practice are powerful and research evidence is unable to provide strong countervailing pressure against the exercise of elite power.

1.2 Factors determining the policy influence of research

Work by RAPID has shown that a wide range of inter-related factors determine whether research-based and other forms of evidence are likely to be adopted by policymakers and practitioners (RAPID, 2004a). These factors can broadly be divided into three overlapping areas: the political context; the evidence; and the links between policy and research communities, within a fourth set of factors: the external context. An idealised model of these factors is presented in Figure 1 below. In reality the overlap between the different spheres may vary considerably (ibid).
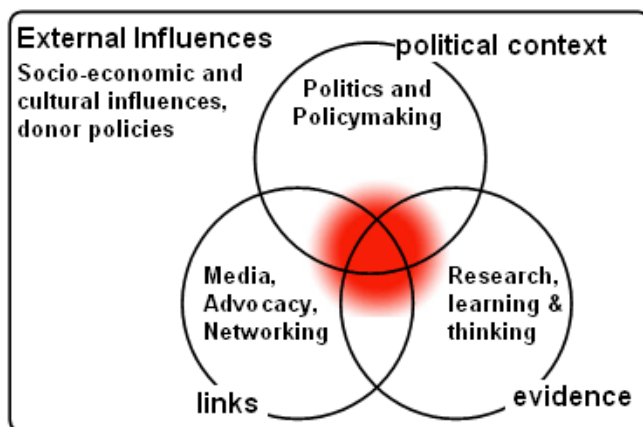
Figure 1: ODI's Policy Process Framework

(See RAPID (2004a) Briefing Paper No 1. in the *Policy Influencing and Media Engagement Resource Pack* for further information about the RAPID Framework.)

1.3   The barriers to influencing policy with research-based evidence

Influencing policy with research results is not easy. The exercise becomes more difficult when the nature of the domestic or international political economy means that key decision-makers are inherently unlikely to take the results of the research seriously. In some countries researchers face real challenges when attempting to persuade policy makers to take the needs of the poor seriously. When asking them to focus not only on the poor but on the chronically poor, the challenges often increase. This means that having clear and convincing evidence of the scale and severity of a problem is not always enough – even when policy advice is provided which suggests (costed and practical) ways of tackling the problem. This issue is discussed at greater length in Section 2, below, and in Bird et al (2004).

A review of the literature highlights a number of factors which make it more likely that research-based evidence will inform policy-making. These include:

- domestic political context and policy formation processes (including links between policy makers and other stakeholders, the strength of social movements and coalitions, elite perceptions of the poor, the effectiveness of 'the developmental state' as opposed to the clientilistic or neo-patrimonial state, the openness of political processes and debate and so on)
- the liveliness of issue-based domestic politics
- the credibility of the research team
- the apparent rigour of the results
- resonance of the findings with dominant country-level and international discourses
- presentation of results to policy makers in an absorbable and useful format (sometimes alongside effective use of the media and other intermediaries)
- timeliness of dissemination
- the degree to which evidence is commonly used in national policy formation
- the degree to which national policy makers have an interest in the study and its findings.

(Weiss, 1977; Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith 1999; Sutton, 1999; Gladwell, 2000; Bird et al, 2004; RAPID, 2004b, Stone & Maxwell 2004)

These issues point to the importance of combining robust methodologies and a 'quality product' with a 'quality process'. The bottom line appears to be: if government ownership is low and policy analysis and dissemination are not integral to the study's design then, no matter how good the technical analysis, policy influence is likely to be more limited.

1.4   The role of the researcher in policy change

Clay and Schaffer remind us: 'the whole life of policy is a chaos of purposes and accidents'. Simon Maxwell suggests that researchers need to act as policy entrepreneurs, to impose some order on the chaos of purposes and accidents. He identifies four styles of policy entrepreneurship, which illustrate how the researcher can best contribute to the policy process.

(a) The researcher as 'story-teller'
The world is complex, and in order to present that complexity to policy makers – to identify a problem and suggest a suitable solution it is important to have a convincing narrative. Such narratives are powerful but can be profoundly misleading and 'counter-narratives' develop.

(b) The researcher as 'networker'
Policy-making usually takes place within communities (policy or epistemic communities) of people who know each other and interact. You can be 'inside the tent' or 'outside the tent'. Being 'inside the tent' increases the likelihood of having influence. Active involvement in formal and informal networks can enable researchers to influence policy, as their message is more likely to be listened to.

(c) The researcher as 'engineer'
'Street level bureaucrats' are important implementers of policy. If we are interested in policy as practiced ('policy is what policy does'), rather than policy on paper, then we as researchers must influence not only senior policy makers but also the implementers of that policy.

(d) The researcher as 'fixer'
Researchers also need to understand the policy and political process, so that they know who to try to convince and when. Simon Maxwell identifies the source of researchers' power as being important, and draws on the work of Charles Handy (1976). Handy identifies these sources of power as: physical power, resource power, position power, expert power, personal power and negative power. Maxwell suggests that we need to recognise how influential we can be as 'experts'.

Researchers clearly have to decide when to use each of these four approaches to policy entrepreneurship and how to sequence them. We need to ask ourselves what we are trying to achieve and what are the best instruments to do it. This means asking who is making what decision, when they are making it and what product is needed in order to influence the decision. There are trade-offs between different approaches to policy influencing (e.g. between using personal networks and contacts and the media) and we need to know which method will be most appropriate at different times. Individuals may not be suited to all of the four modes of policy entrepreneurship, and teams may need to be built which contain people capable of working in the different styles.

2.   Understanding the barriers to pro-poor policy change

There is evidence to suggest that having a good understanding of policy processes and political economy helps researchers to design appropriate policy engagement strategies and increases the likelihood of their research achieving influence. Understanding context is important whether researchers hope to influence the international development community, national or local governments, non-government organisations or the private sector.

In this section of the overview paper we present ideas, tools and analytical frameworks which provide useful starting points in policy and political analysis.

2.1   Barriers to pro-poor policy agenda setting and policy legitimisation[2]

Despite clearly identified severe and widespread problems, which have been shown to drive and maintain poverty and which are also clearly associated with marginalisation and vulnerability, policy makers often fail to respond adequately. Even where issues make it onto policy agendas, there are barriers to policy formation. There are further barriers to new policy being accepted sufficiently widely - by both the general public and by 'street level bureaucrats' – that they are prioritised and properly resourced for implementation. Although there may be technical, administrative, managerial and budgetary causes for policy failure, the policy process is a political and social process and it is these elements of the process that are fundamental in both blocking policy agenda setting and policy formation.

The political processes surrounding policy agenda setting and policy making appear to be strongly influenced by the dominant poverty and development discourses in many instances. National discourses are significantly influenced in developing countries by donors, and what we see is that the dominant discourse of both the international development community and national country governments still largely focuses on economic stabilisation and growth, with policies for social development and asset creation for the poor concentrating largely on untargeted investments in the health and education sectors (although there are exceptions, e.g. in India, where there is a stronger focus on reducing income poverty). In fact Craig and Porter (2003) rank priorities in the poverty agenda as macroeconomic growth and stability, good governance, poverty reduction (through service delivery) and social protection (which gets the status of 'last among equals', despite rhetoric to the contrary). Debates higher up the hierarchy shape the possibilities below, and debates below have little influence on decision-making at the higher level (e.g. ceilings on poverty spending). Furthermore contradictions are overlooked and synergies are not developed (Hickey, 2005). Hickey (2005) suggests that "hierarchies are not 'accidental' but inscribed within and enforced by conditional mechanisms and dominant/hegemonic discourses". Such worldviews results in an expectation that growth will result in significant and sustained poverty reduction with any remaining poverty being largely residual.

The dominance of this way of thinking does not encourage a focus on investment or policy agendas 'outside the box'. The 'box' which delimits the areas of accepted focus can also be described as the 'framework of possible thought' (Chomsky, 1987). Issues which fall outside this box or framework are regarded as subversive or irrelevant. Research findings which identify such issues are rigorously interrogated and may even be intentionally and systematically undermined by the knowledge communities allied with the dominant paradigm. Dominant poverty and development narratives may interact with, and support, elite perceptions. These elite perceptions commonly reinforce categorisations of the poor as deserving and undeserving. These categorisations are used to justify the limited attention and low budgetary allocations given to particular issues and groups.

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[2] This section draws on Bird et al (2004) 'Fracture Points in Social Policies for Chronic Poverty Reduction' October 2004. ODI Working Paper 242. CPRC Working Paper 47

The categorisations of deserving and undeserving poor, in turn, determine the framing of certain research questions, so that some questions are emphasised and work on them funded, while others are not even fully articulated. A lack of research funding for these low priority areas limits the generation of empirical evidence which might challenge their perceived unimportance. The framing of research questions and the availability, or otherwise, of empirical evidence has an interactive relationship with both agenda setting and policy formation.

The poor articulation of the needs of marginalised groups is also due to poor mobilisation around social movements, co-opted and low capacity leadership, weak identification as constituencies by elected leaders, and poor or partial representation by interlocutors. These contribute to weak agenda setting. Support from international NGOs, the international labour movement, cross-national faith-based networks, members of international epistemic communities (e.g. members of the women's movement) and the international community can all provide support to both social movements and the leaders of civil society. This support may take the form of information, resources and/or capacity support. Similar attention on the international and cross-national groups to encourage them to interrogate their motives and forms of engagement has the potential to improve their effectiveness, when speaking on behalf of the poor, vulnerable and marginalised.

Even where an issue has moved onto policy agendas in developing countries, either through domestic political activism and the work of social movements, or through the work of researchers – either working locally through 'actor networks' or with international allies through 'international epistemic communities', vested interests, within the international development community and the national polity may argue persuasively against policy innovations. The likelihood of this happening at the national level is heightened by a lack of vertical solidarity between national elites and others and where the chronically poor, marginalised and vulnerable groups have low political capital.

The political economy in many developing countries is such that the need to deliver improved rights for marginalised and vulnerable groups is rarely seen to justify either increased political attention or the devotion of increased resources to those groups. Alternative justifications for greater political and budgetary focus lie in identifying the instrumental benefits of improving their well-being (e.g. increasing the likelihood of achieving the MDGs or supporting enhanced productivity and economic growth). However, these links are rarely adequately understood, and if understood, there is rarely sufficient empirical evidence to support such arguments (due to limited research interest in these issues).

The policy fracture points identified in the section are differentially important in different countries and also within the same country in relation different issues. However, what is likely to be true across sectors and countries is that for relevant policies to be formed, legitimised and effectively implemented policy discourses need to be shifted so that the needs of the chronically poor and marginalised and vulnerable groups are identified as valid. Opening up policy spaces and expanding the 'framework of the possible' appears to be the crucial first step to validate the interests of social and political movements and to enable the collection and dissemination of improved technical information, raise the profile of currently under-emphasised policy issues and support processes

resulting in the legitimation, constituency building, funding and effective implementation of new policies.

As has been shown above, agenda setting, policy change and implementational improvements may be supported by social movements and by researchers involved in 'actor-networks' and 'international epistemic communities'. These can work to shift not only donor opinion but domestic policy - by targeting change agents within key ministries and engaging with domestic civil society. Where barriers to policy change are profound, attempts can be made to change *policy as practiced* by targeting street level bureaucrats. Where effective, this can mean that although *policy as written* remains the same, ground level experiences are profoundly altered. This illustrates that although policy discourses are important, so too is what people *do*.

Governments find it difficult to prioritise marginal groups and the chronically poor. They are unlikely to develop and implement policies favouring these groups over larger and more powerful groups, as they would have little to gain and much to lose as a result. To move beyond this impasse requires an attitudinal change which can support processes of social change. These changes in attitudes and socio-cultural behaviour depend on the development of effective lobbies in areas where they are currently absent or weak. It also depends on the creation of fora for debate and the emergence of strong political leadership. Such leadership is unlikely where governments do not have sufficiently grounded experience in tackling the multiple deprivation experienced by the chronically poor or in dealing with complex social problems. It is also unlikely if the international community fails to challenge the current international poverty and development discourses and support the development of pro-poor social and political movements.

These are long term 'projects' – not amenable to short term project funding or current budget support cycles. They require commitments of donors' intent across long time periods, and irrespective of government-government relationships. The evolution of epistemic communities around policy issues can be nurtured; this is possible even in difficult policy environments. Donors should recognise that they wield considerable power in shaping what is in the 'framework of the possible' – power derived not only from the resources they dispense but also from the knowledge they can choose to bring (or not bring) to the table.

For more on this theme please refer to Section 3.3 of the *Policy Influencing and Media Engagement: a Resource Pack,* particularly to the PowerPoint presentation and accompanying papers*:*

- Bird, K. et al (2004) 'Fracture Points in Social Policies for Chronic Poverty Reduction' October 2004. ODI Working Paper 242. CPRC Working Paper 47
- Bird, K., O'Neil, T., and Bolt, V.J. (2004) 'Illustrative Case Studies of the Fracture Points in Social Policies for Chronic Poverty Reduction'. London: ODI and CPRC.

2.2 Political analysis

2.2.1 Political 'space' for poverty reduction?

Sam Hickey identifies four different forms of 'policy influence': procedural, substantive, structural and sensitising influence. Procedural policy influence alters the policy-making process and achieves recognition for excluded groups. Substantive policy influence achieves actual changes in policy. Structural policy change results in the transformation of political institutions. Sensitising policy influence successfully alters either the attitudes of particular actors about specific issues and/or groups, or wider shifts in public opinion (2005).

Box 1: What is the distinction between politics and the political?

Political analysis in development thinking often approaches politics as a technocratic exercise and ignores both power struggles and informal institutions. Sam Hickey highlights the need to recognise the conflict inherent in politics. 'Politics is the discourse and struggle over the organization of human possibilities' (Leftwich and Held 1984). It is 'the ensemble of practices, discourses and institutions that seek to establish a sense of social order and organization'. The political constitutes 'the antagonistic dimension that is inherent in human societies and which is located within the struggles of diverse social groups for power and resources' (Mouffe, 1995).

Source: Hickey 2005b

The political space for reducing chronic poverty is influenced by the existence – or otherwise – of institutional channels which represent chronically poor people, for example: political parties, social movements, legislative representation and certain ministries. Consultative processes (for example Sector Working Groups connected with the drafting and implementation of Poverty Reduction Strategies) can create 'policy spaces' for the chronically poor to feed into political decision-making (Hickey, 2005a).

The political discourse strongly influences whether chronic poor is on the policy agenda. National and international poverty discourse has a two way relationship with the attitudes and belief systems of the political elite. The dominant discourse and elite attitudes are highly influential in determining how issues are framed, which are identified as priorities and the policy responses to those issues. The availability or otherwise of scientific data on particular forms of poverty is affected by the nature of the political discourse (low priority issues are unlikely to be the focus of research attention and national data is unlikely to be collected which provides robust and convincing evidence).

The way that the poverty discourse is framed influences representations of poverty, poverty reduction and the poor. So, for example, if the poor are described as undeserving and the architects of their own problems, pro-poor policy responses are unlikely.

The socio-political practices and political capabilities of the poor are important determinants of the nature and intensity of pro-poor policy response. The political behaviour of the poor may be just one element of their wider coping strategies, but their ability to engage politically depends on the density and effectiveness of their social and political linkages. In addition, the institutional and organisational resources of the poor influence the effectiveness of their political engagement, as well as the availability of collective ideas for effective political action (Whitehead and Gray-Molina 2003: 32 in Hickey 2005a).

Poverty reduction policies are inherently political. 'Anti-poverty' interventions are rarely straightforward responses to poverty, but respond "to a larger arena of contestation where other issues are at stake and both national and international actors have a large say" (Villarreal 2002: 83). Researchers are unlikely to be effective if they take a naïve approach to policy formation and assume it to be a linear and technocratic process, devoid of power and politics and Hickey highlights the importance of identifying opponents and allies if researchers are to effectively influence policy (2005b). Kanbur's analysis (2001) of the 'nature of disagreements' may help researchers to map out the territory and place themselves within it (Hickey, 2005b). By thinking through which of the two main 'tendencies' they fit into (see Box 2 below), researchers may find they understand better why their research results are failing to convince their audience and develop strategies to increase the likelihood of success for the future.

There is a great deal of donor rhetoric around the importance of government 'ownership' of pro-poor policy processes. However, such policy agendas are often donor-driven. In addition, there is evidence to suggest that governments can be committed to policies without necessarily 'owning' them (Hickey, 2005b). The nature of the political contract between the State and society may provide us with greater insights into the commitment (or lack of it) that the political and policy elite has to support and implement pro-poor policy. Researchers seeking to influence policy and practice in areas that will reduce the numbers of people living in chronic poverty should attempt to understand the state-society contract and align their policy advice with the contract. In doing so they should support activities which build extend citizen rights and status and avoid promoting policies which undermine downward accountability (Hickey, 2005b).

Box 2: 'The nature of disagreements' within policy processes/spaces'

Group A: the Finance Ministry Tendency	*Group B: the Civil Society Tendency*
"The current economic reforms are likely to lead to greater inequality in rural areas…this is defensible as there is no other alternative" (Anonymous). - Finance & Trade Ministries - Economic analysts, economic policy managers and operational managers in the IFIs and the Regional Multilateral Banks. - National banks - Trade and manufacturing associations - Financial press - Academics: many (not all) economists trained in the Anglo-Saxon tradition – e.g. overseas economics advisors	"the neoliberal model has been proved right…it is now about integrating a human perspective…need to add on a people-centred focus" (MoGLSD). "there is no-one in Uganda currently articulating a model of pro-poor growth…it just isn't happening" (NGO director) - Social sector ministries: Health, Education, Gender etc. - Some aid agencies, or sections/members thereof: UNDP, UNICEF, DANIDA etc. - NGOs: operational and advocacy based - Academics: most non-economists

Key dimensions of difference
- Level of disaggregation
- Time horizons
- Market structure and power

Implications
- differences in power and capacity between these actors
- different ideologies

Source: Developed from ideas presented in Kanbur (2001)

For more on this theme refer to Section 3.2 of *Policy Influencing and Media Engagement: a Resource Pack* and see the following papers:

- Hickey, S. (2005a) 'Understanding the politics of challenging chronic poverty: some conceptual approaches.' Power point presentation at *Policy Influence and Media Engagement,* a joint ODI-CPRC workshop, at ODI on 17-18 January 2005
- Hickey, S. (2005b) 'Understanding the politics of challenging chronic poverty: some conceptual approaches.' in Bird, K., and Grant, U. (eds.) Policy Influencing and Media Engagement: A Resource Pack, London: ODI and CPRC.

2.2.2 *Drivers of Change*[3]

DFID supported the design and implementation of 'Drivers of Change' (DoC) analysis having identified that many developing country governments were unresponsive to the needs of the poor. DFID felt that describing this as a 'lack of political will' was inadequate, but that their country level

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[3] This section summarises sections of DFID (2003) 'Drivers of Change.' DFID Drivers of Change Team. London: DFID. November 2003

analysis was commonly technocratic, ahistoric and apolitical and in order to deepen their understanding of the barriers to pro-poor change they had to develop new analytical approaches.

DFID recognised that donors were generally better at saying *what* needs to be done to reduce poverty than *how* to help make it happen. They felt that in order to be effective, development programmes needed to be better grounded in an understanding of the economic, social and political factors that either drive or block change within a specific country or region, and recognised the need to identify ways that aid could support pro-poor change processes

In DoC analysis, the local situation is examined rather than preconceived policies. The underlying and longer-term factors that affect the political will and institutional capacity for reform are analysed, including the incentives and capacity for change that is likely to benefit the poor. It is hoped that greater contextual understanding will help the international community to predict which policy reforms might succeed and which are likely to be implemented in a half-hearted manner. The analysis helps donors to identify pro-poor reforms that can be supported in the short- to medium-term, while working to support longer-trend changes.

Successful DoC analysis has highlighted the importance of understanding not only a country's current political economy, unpacking 'a lack of political will' to support and implement pro-poor policies, but the historical antecedents of the country's political institutions, norms and practices. Where analysis identifies barriers to pro-poor change, an alternative may be the development of indirect or enabling interventions, within the context of the longer-term support programme (10 to 15 years) encouraged by the DoC approach. An additional facet of the DoC is that it encourages serious reflection by donors on their role as political actors, and encourages the international community to understand how aid affects country level incentives.

What is a 'driver' of change?
A 'driver' of change has the potential to bring about pro-poor change. It is not just a reforming individual but processes of interaction between structural features, institutions and agents' centred on relationships of power, inequality and conflict (DFID, 2003).

Figure 2: Drivers of Change: the interaction between structural features, institutions and agents.[4]
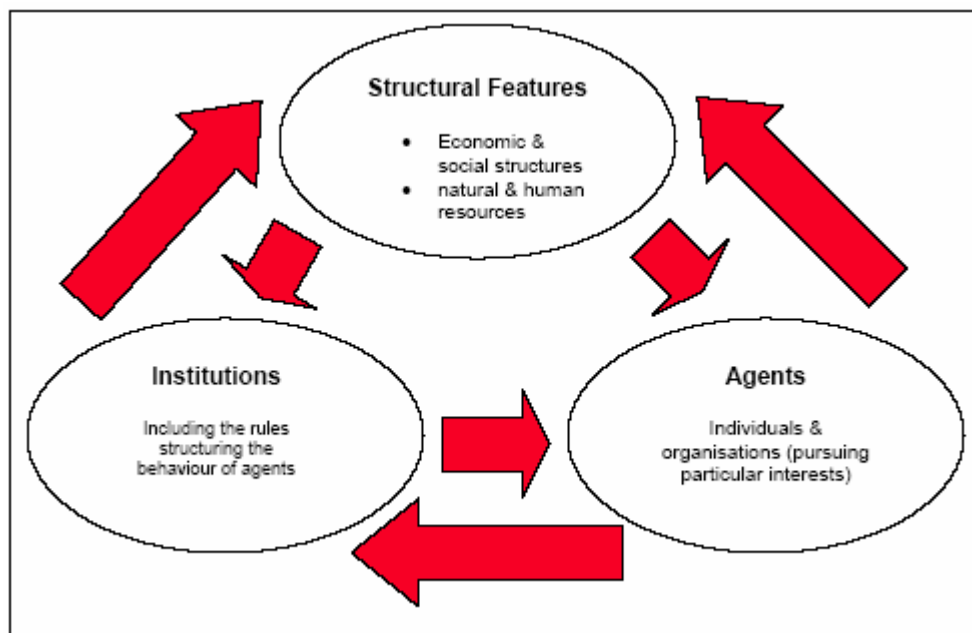
Box 3: The Drivers of Change approach

- **Basic country analysis** including social, political, economic and institutional factors affecting the dynamics and possibilities for change.
- **Medium-term dynamics of change** including incentives and capacities of agents operating within particular institutional domains (i.e. policy processes)
- **Role of external forces** including donor actions, aid modalities and influence strategies on these processes
- **Link between change and poverty reduction** including how expected changes will affect poverty, on what time-scale, and the implications (being careful to include change that
- **Operational implications for DFID** including how to translate understanding into strategies and actions in the Country Assistance Plan
- **How DFID works** including organisational incentives for staff to retain, refresh and use the understanding developed through Drivers of Change work.

Source: DFID, 2003

Lessons from the DoC analysis for the CPRC

Joy Moncrieffe (2005b) identifies three key lessons from the DoC analysis for the CPRC:

1. the value of considering structure and institutions.

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[4] The conceptual ideas outlined here were developed by Oxford Policy Management, which led several early Drivers of Change studies for DFID. See "Drivers of Change: Reflections on Experience to Date", Oxford Policy Management, Oxford, June 2003.

2. the need for deeper understanding of the ways in which historical legacies (institutional, political, economic and social) influence policy-making and implementation.

3. the importance of creating incentives and identifying (even unconventional) entry points for policy engagement

2.2.3 Limitations to the 'Drivers of Change'

Joy Moncrieffe suggests that the CPRC should not expect the 'Drivers of Change' approach to necessarily deliver "fresh insights or 'break-through' policy solutions" (Moncrieffe, 2005b). She identifies a number of approaches that researchers focusing on chronic poverty need to be aware of when adapting the Drivers of Change approach to the study of context for chronic poverty related research:

- **Agency.** A focus on agency tends to assume that if the chronically poor are provided with enhanced assets and opportunities (including opportunities for participation and voice) that they will exercise their agency to improve their own welfare. Moncrieffe suggests that this 'overlooks the possibility that power relations can trap people in circumstances that restrict their capacity and willingness to act/resist' and downplays impact of people in their roles as social actors accepting and upholding 'conditions that sustain their own inequality and poverty'.

- **Institutions.** It is important that researchers recognise the blurred distinction between formal and informal institutions. This is particularly important when attempting to understand the factors underlying chronic poverty.

- **Stakeholders.** Individuals who are active 'behind-the-scenes' may be just as important in policy processes as the visible 'key stakeholders'. In order to understand the role of less visible agents, researchers need to seek insights into the "varied ways in which 'power performs'".

- **History.** Which history matters? Different versions of history will emphasise different issues and may lead to different policy prescriptions.

- **Donors.** An analysis of the role of donors in country-level policy processes would enrich researchers' understanding of the policy context and provide them with a good grounding for successful (donor related) policy engagement

2.2.4 An analysis of the power asymmetries which drive and maintain chronic poverty

Moncrieffe (2005b) identifies four different forms of power:

1. **Overt and Coercive:** The more powerful can use their positions to compel others to act in ways they would prefer not to.

2. **Hidden and Coercive:** The more powerful can operate effectively from behind-the-scenes, influencing agendas and discourses. Coercive power can be embedded in formal and informal institutions, remaining hidden but effective.

3. **Overt and Non-Coercive:** Power is not only coercive; it can also be (visibly) instrumental in building consensus.

4. **Hidden and Non-Coercive:** -Where there is 'tacit consensus', power relations are upheld unintentionally and even unconsciously. For example, there are groups who not only come to accept disadvantageous hierarchical arrangements but actively defend and uphold them.

Moncrieffe provides examples of these different forms of power in her note 'Power Analysis: examples from the literature and field' (Moncrieffe, 2005c) and her note "Is 'Drivers of Change' analysis useful for Chronic Poverty analysis? Summary Notes" (Moncrieffe, 2005b) presents pointers for political analysis which incorporates an understanding of power and both formal and informal institutions (see Section 3.1(3&5) of the Resource Pack).

3. What has the CPRC done so far?[5]

3.1 Introduction

The Chronic Poverty Research Centre aims to produce top quality research on chronic poverty and to use that research to effectively influence policy. It has achieved on both of these aims, at national and international levels, over the past five years. In this section of the paper we draw on this experience of core CPRC partners in Bangladesh, India, South Africa and Uganda to illustrate how the national and international policy environment influences the communication of research findings to policy makers. We also highlight the importance of team composition, partnerships and other concrete factors such as funding and capacity on the way in which researchers approach policy engagement (see Section 4.2 of the Resource Pack for partners' reports and summaries).

There is potential for tension between advocacy-related activities and policy oriented research and 'pure' academic activities. Creating a credible knowledge base has been the main priority for most CPRC country teams, and for people working on thematic or sectoral research. There has been some tension around ordering, prioritising and focus however. For example, should political and policy analysis influence research theme prioritisation and research design or not, and more practically, when should the results of research be communicated and policy engagement activities begin? These have been responded to differently across the partnership. Researchers have grappled with these tensions and questions, acknowledging the trade-offs and determining their own priorities.

Some researchers in the CPRC have been reluctant to become too actively involved in policy engagement. They have felt that insufficient time and resources had been invested in primary and secondary data collection and analysis leading to initial and incomplete findings which are not yet ready for policy use. Others have felt that evidence has been sufficiently strong to begin the process of dissemination and policy engagement. CPRC partners have had to juggle these positions to meet

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[5] This section draws on the discussions presented in CPRC-Bangladesh (2005), CPRC-India (2005), CPRC-South Africa (2005) and CPRC-Uganda (2005).

core research expectations alongside some dissemination and communication expectation. As noted by the CPRC South Africa team, in practice this has often boiled down to simply deciding whether to spend time working on a paper or attending a workshop. How research is communicated however, (strategically, opportunistically, or *ad hoc*), holds clear repercussions for its impact and reach. (See also Section 1.4, above on types of policy entrepreneurs).

3.2   Experience of policy engagement: an overview.

3.2.1   National politics and discourses on poverty

The discussion above has centred on how domestic politics and poverty discourses can set boundaries on permissible debate, namely what issues can be raised and engaged with and what issues are seen as subversive, inappropriate, and untimely. Researchers in the CPRC are aware of the policy context, the boundaries of debate and the possible entry points for policy debate in their own countries. Their understanding includes an analysis of the structure of government and policymaking, wider discourses around poverty, as well as to more specific issues around research team competencies and partnership support. These issues are discussed here.

Since 2002 the political terrain in South Africa, for example, has been very favourable to engagement in policy-oriented research on poverty due largely to heightened attention in the media and among politicians, (alongside a dearth of poverty oriented research which created demand). However, this has not necessarily translated into the easy uptake of the kinds of policy concerns raised by the CPRC in South Africa. Why is this?

In each of the CRPC partner countries researchers have found a degree of political openness to discussing chronic poverty. Policy makers in Bangladesh, India, South Africa and Uganda have all been found to recognise that the poor are not a homogenous group.

The Government of Bangladesh is generally open to discussing the ideas of importance to the CPRC, and there is a perception within the CPRC-Bangladesh team that policy makers are moving away from broad brush anti-poverty policies towards an attempt to develop policies which respond to marginalisation and the different needs of poor people. For example, Bangladesh's PRSP has a special focus on the removal of hunger and chronic poverty, ("removing the 'ugly faces' of poverty"). Unfortunately policy decisions are often distorted by corruption and nepotism making it difficult to address issues around exclusion and the marginalisation of particular people.

Poverty eradication also ranks very highly on the Ugandan Government's development agenda. The PRSP/PEAP tends to be the vehicle through which poverty related issues are discussed and the CPRC in Uganda can engage. However, despite strong policy statements a number of studies indicate that the PEAP is having mixed poverty impacts, with the poorest sections of the population benefiting least.

Poverty has gained urgent policy attention (particularly over last 5 years) in India, too. This is illustrated by numerous plans, documents, policy statements, budget speeches, including at senior

political levels. However, Government programmes are often targeted broadly to vulnerable groups and areas (such as 'Backward Areas', drought prone areas, deserts and wastelands, and States with high populations below the poverty line). And there is still a big gap between the vision and effective implementation resulting in poverty reduction. CPRC-India notes that it has become almost mandatory for in-coming governments to offer new poverty reduction packages. The raft of approaches lack coherence and it is unclear whether they are capable of altering the underlying/basic conditions of poverty and how poor people live. Furthermore, the implementation of policy initiatives is compromised by political and bureaucratic vested interests, attracted by the expanding anti-poverty budget. Rent seeking and the consolidation of power associated with poverty reduction programmes has led many to become sceptical about the likelihood of poverty reduction being achieved, at least in the short and medium term.

The South African government recognises the need for more coherent policy making and clusters of government departments are beginning to work together on policy. This approach is still quite new and is proceeding at different paces in different Provinces. An advantage of the approach is that it allows for the development of more integrated anti-poverty strategies, which are likely to work well with the CPRC's concerns for inclusion. CPRC-South Africa researchers have engaged with the 'social cluster' in the Western Cape. This links departments focusing on issues as widely spread as social development, welfare, trade industry, health, and agriculture.

Identifying key players in different aspects of policy making and implementation is crucial for building a strategic and effective influencing agenda. In all of the CPRC focal countries (Bangladesh, India, South Africa and Uganda) central government tends to have a strong degree of control over the setting of policy agendas. In Bangladesh local government merely implements the decisions made by central government and there is a similar relationship between the Central and State governments in India. Such centralisation can undermine efforts to tackle State-specific causes of poverty as they can be poorly understood by Central government. CPRC country teams in both Bangladesh and India have therefore identified the importance of developing clearly differentiated approaches to policy engagement in order to respond strategically to the formulation and implementation challenges at different levels.

The preoccupations of governments can limit the space for constructive policy debate. For example, CPRC-India has observed that the Central Government's focus on growth-poverty linkages has set the boundaries of the debate thus constraining the ability of pressure groups to influence poverty-related policy (see reference to the 'framework of possible thought', in Section 2.1, above). Despite this, there is a tradition of evidence based policy making in India. This may be supported by researchers taking roles in government (e.g. in the Indian Planning Commission) and therefore creating an appetite for research-based evidence.

It is helpful for researchers to have a good insight into the approach of key government institutions to poverty. Within the Ugandan Central Government, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MFPED) coordinates policy-making, including the design of the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) (Uganda's PRSP). The Poverty Monitoring and Analysis Unit (PMAU) (within MFPED) has been involved in CPRC design and analysis, and has been an 'open door' into

government for researchers involved in chronic poverty-related research. They have also kept CPRC-Uganda informed of the government's changing poverty research agenda.

The key player South Africa is the Treasury. Here, however, their main concern is with efficiency of social spending (e.g. how social grants are used, cost-benefits etc). The Treasury has shown some interest in talking to the CPRC-South Africa, and the team feels that they need to be ready to respond to their concerns. However, they are aware that they are at a disadvantage. The Treasury is more likely to be convinced by research generated by neo-classical economists than by sociologists or political scientists (see Box 2, above, which illustrates the potentially conflicting world views of 'the treasury' vs. 'civil society'). This reflects a pattern across CPRC partner countries, where economic data is preferred, probably because of the dominant role of Ministries of Finance/ the Treasury in national poverty debates.

In India national level policy makers tend to be unappreciative of research findings generated by qualitative research and in order to be seen as rigorous *nationally* representative statements based on large household data sets tend to be necessary (representative vs. anecdotal). Whether this is caused by weaknesses in the use of qualitative methods or whether it causes such weaknesses is difficult to tell, but only small numbers of researchers are experienced in the use of qualitative methods and even fewer are comfortable in combining qualitative and quantitative approaches.

The exception is perhaps Uganda, where despite a preference for economic and statistical evidence participatory data is welcomed by government and feeds directly into the design of the PEAP. For example, when findings highlighted the priority poor people place on drinking water access, budget allocations to the water sector increased.

The CPRC faces a challenge. Should they attempt to change the world view of Ministries of Finance/ the Treasury (what evidence is valid? what questions are important?) or work through organisations or people who already have good access? If the latter approach is selected, is it in danger of compromising the CPRC's work or is it simply the best way of getting the message across?

Clearly, there is scope for debate on chronic poverty in each partner country but there are also limits. Within the vast literature and debate around poverty analysis, causes and policies, the distinctions between chronic and transient poverty are often not clearly made. The CPRC can and has tried to change this. However, as the South African Treasury example illustrates, how research is received by different actors is important.

Researchers are only one of a number of actors trying to influence government. In Uganda, the most influential body of lobbyists is perceived to be business, notably the Uganda Manufacturers' Association (UMA). In Bangladesh too, the team felt that government tends to listen to lobbies and business interests more than to researchers and the general public. In a context where politicians often also run their own businesses they may have their own particular interests and close allies, and it is difficult to compete. And, the CPRC-India team note a hierarchy with industry, lobby groups and media groups, having stronger voice than NGOs and researchers. Researchers may be approached when a specific problem is particularly acute or solutions are not working, and these are

likely to be influenced by crises and media attention as well as changes in political and bureaucratic leadership.

In Uganda and South Africa poverty debates are strongly linked to economic growth debates. There is a perception amongst the Ugandan elite and bureaucrats that economic growth generates the most important escape route from poverty, and that poverty eradication efforts should therefore focus on enabling growth. This perception considers categories of people that experience long-term duration, severe and multi-dimensional poverty as being residual groupings that only need specialised welfare support programmes. In the country's PEAP design and implementation the pillar that focuses on economic growth and structural transformation (referred to as "economic management" in the new PEAP) has received the most attention.

Similarly, in South Africa the poverty agenda focuses on what can be achieved through economic growth - despite the fact previous economic growth has spectacularly *not* created the promised jobs. There are many contested ideas and an increasing openness within some parts of government to take on new ideas. Generally, however, there is tendency to believe people's priority is to become millionaires and a fear of 'giving money away' to those that 'don't deserve it'. This is articulated through debates on targeting assistance. Poverty is seen as residual and poverty interventions are therefore like 'crumbs thrown to excluded and vulnerable groups'.

This resonates with public opinion. In South Africa, government fear of responding to poverty is tied in with elite perceptions that link poverty to crime, and are articulated through discourses around the 'deserving and non-deserving poor'. The work of CHIP and HelpAge in South Africa has helped develop recognition of the rural pensioner as a crucial and deserving category. However, there is a perception that single mothers only have children in order to access government grants. So, while there is certain ambivalence and concern, there is also fear and mistrust of the poor. These attitudes are not unique to South Africa.

The view among the public in Uganda is mixed and sometimes incoherent. In Bangladesh, the prevailing view is that the poor are poor because they are not industrious. People think that the poor are embedded in "cultures of inaction" and "cultures of begging" and that it is this that restricts their upward mobility. However there is no one view; many people also believe that poor are poor because of a lack of opportunity through which they can improve their situation (see Hossain and Moore, 1999 and 2002 for an analysis of elite perceptions of the poor).

Generally people are may be sympathetic to certain groups, but there are strong negative views that must be taken into account. In Bangladesh, this reflects wider societal processes of exclusion that disadvantage certain groups, such as lower caste Hindus (e.g. *Namasudra*), some minority ethnic groups (e.g. *Santal*), and some low status professionals (e.g. scavengers) who are not allowed by other groups to take part in mainstream livelihood and social activities. These are difficult attitudes to change. Specific interventions to raise awareness among general public are required to bring them into, and have them accepted within, mainstream economic and social life.

Indifference is also a challenge. In India indifference and benign neglect are prevalent. To a large extent, people consider poverty as a *fait accompli*, a necessary evil. The urban middle class tends to blame population growth (especially, among the resource-less) as the main cause of poverty and supports calls for a stronger government role in population control (i.e. reduce freedom of choice in the name of development). Overall, there is a perception that poverty could be mitigated (though, slowly) through generating awareness amongst the poor of what they are doing wrong (e.g. a lack of family planning) and state support or control.

Poverty analysis and discourses are established over time. They set the stage for policy making and can be difficult to actively shift or move forward. The boundaries of permissible debate differ but the challenges are similar across the four CPRC partner countries. Gaining recognition that there is differentiation amongst the poor is a challenge, more so in some countries (e.g. Uganda – 'we are all poor here') than others (e.g. Bangladesh). A further challenge is to persuade policy makers to acknowledge and then respond to the drivers of chronic poverty, and once policies have been formulated to fund them adequately and operationalise them effectively.

3.2.2   Team composition and incentives

How has team composition influenced dissemination and policy engagement activities? Most CPRC researchers prioritised conventional academic dissemination between 2000 and early 2005. This reflected the core research focus of the Centre and the competencies of its partners. Although the CPRC has a number of NGO partners (Action on Disability and Development, HelpAge International and Save the Children) the CPRC has been composed mainly of researchers. Few researchers are confident in their interactions with the media or when involved in advocacy and policy engagement. Furthermore between 2000 and 2005 the CPRC did not have a central communications and policy engagement strategy. This has led to CPRC's dissemination and communication strategies being largely based on conventional academic publications, seminars and conferences both internationally and at national level, plus fairly *ad hoc* and responsive policy activities.

CPRC-India, for example, is comprised of well reputed academics. The core team consists of four professors based in university departments and research institutions, and their main (but by no means only) dissemination activities to date have been through traditionally academic channels. The CPRC is also university based in South Africa and based at a prominent research institution in Bangladesh. Only in Uganda is the lead organisation a research NGO, although a core partner is university based. This is not a criticism but rather a reflection of where the CPRC's strengths lie and where teams may need support.

Understandably dissemination and communication activities undertaken by researchers will reflect natural comfort zones, reflecting disciplinary backgrounds as well as institutional affiliations and incentives. The role of a research institution is different to that of an advocacy or representative organisation. As noted the CPRC- South Africa, the role of a research institution should be to use research, data and expert opinion to deepen and strengthen debates.

The challenge is combine research and communication activities in a way that can impact upon policy debates by producing outputs that do not remain isolated as academic publications and university-based debate. In India, working papers are distributed to key ministries, heads of multilateral and bilateral organisations, a few CSOs, selected media and academics, plus other interested researchers. A seminar organised by IIPA brought together a network of senior academics who were asked to write contributing papers on issues of chronic poverty. It was inaugurated by the Secretary of the Ministry of Personnel, and a Member in the Planning Commission delivered the keynote address, along with other local and national government dignitaries. The event was covered favourably by a national newspaper (as "refreshingly different").

Communication and policy influence activities in South Africa have benefited from the strong personal contacts established over time by lead researchers before the CPRC was formed. For example, one colleague built social capital and trust through shared ideas and activism during the Apartheid era. These people are now in policy positions. The CPRC-South Africa has traded on these old connections while also creating new ones. A proactive approach to working with the media has lent chronic poverty research coverage which in turn has also opened certain doors to the CPRC. The CPRC-South Africa is now questioning whether this kind of approach can however also close doors as well.

Personal contacts have been crucial. Bangladeshi colleagues felt the reputation of the previous director of CPRC-Bangladesh helped in getting the CPRC a foot in the policy door. He was an active advisor of government, NGOs and donors in Bangladesh. The CPRC continues to benefit from these activities.

Institutional affiliations and contacts are also crucial in establishing a reputation which allows researchers policy entry points. In Bangladesh for example, the CPRC is hosted by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, which is a premier national research institute. BIDS is itself affiliated to Ministry of Planning, and so is closely linked to government planning processes. Researchers are encouraged to feed into government planning processes and policy research in related areas is a core institutional objective. The CPRC-Bangladesh team therefore benefits from having the easy attention of policy makers, donors, and the media. BIDS always tries to disseminate its research findings to the donors and has good capacity for disseminating through electronic and print media. It has a good relationship with the media, who often provide coverage of BIDS seminars and workshops and invite BIDS researchers to comment on major economic and social policy issues.

Institutional incentives can clearly support policy engagement activities. This is the case at BIDS. However, even at BIDS despite the core interest in policy relevance, the onus is placed on academic publications and this pressure can reduce time availability for other activities. There is no formal recognition of policy-related work through promotion or any other formal route. Informal incentives around building reputations and informal recognition, as well as professional satisfaction, are important but the wider institutional environment must be factored in when considering how researchers view and design policy engagement.

There is an important question around 'when' researchers feel comfortable engaging on issues, which reflect all of the factors mentioned above. In India for example, the team was conscious of the large poverty literature, and considered it important to wait until substantial and significant research findings were available, before starting dissemination and engagement. Some CPRC researchers feel very strongly that engaging with policy makers using incomplete findings can damage reputations, doing more harm than good in the long run. As in India, 'our [panel surveys] work is still at a nascent stage and much of the research needs to be conducted before we try to influence policy at the national and state level'. This is a valid and understandable position.

Internationally, and at the country level, the CPRC has been involved in a wide range of dissemination activities aimed at both non-academic audiences. However these activities have been fairly exploratory, ad hoc and initial in nature. These have ranged from the production of short video clips and newspaper articles through to meetings with individual policy makers and advisory work for governments and donors (refer to the Annex for a comprehensive list of centre wide activities).

Dissemination and policy engagement has tended to evolve iteratively and cautiously. A strategic approach to policy engagement needs to work with researchers own understanding of their potential contribution as well as challenging them to think more strategically about how they might use their work to best effect. One way of doing this might be to work locally through appropriate partners.

3.2.3   Working as a partnership

The CPRC itself has a limited capacity. Partnerships outside the core team have offered the opportunity to take research activities to a wider audience. In India, this has mainly been through commissioning well reputed academics to work on areas not covered by the core team. This has helped to build CPRC-India's reputation, as it has benefited from the reputation and networks of the wider research base. Other kinds of partnership hold potential too and the CRPC could explore these for expanding the kinds of policy influence it can achieve. CPRC-South Africa has partnered NGOs (for example action campaigns, women's forum, and others). In this way the CPRC has assisted in creating a hub of intellectual exchange with those involved in advocacy.

National partnerships

Government may be more likely to listen to researchers and civil society when they have a coherent and consistent message. This may be best achieved when several organisations coordinate. This was the approach that CSOs took when inputting into the revision of the Ugandan PEAP. CPRC-Uganda was actively involved, and used CPRC findings actively in their engagement.

In South Africa the CPRC has supported other civil society initiatives on related policy issues, such as social protection. For example by providing expert testimony in court, and contributing to collaborative research with members of the Basic Income Grant alliance.

It is useful to refer here to the work of HelpAge International (HAI) in Uganda, whose activities have helped establish a place for older people's needs, contributions and concerns in policy making. Their work is briefly outlined and offers a potential model for collaboration for CPRC consideration.

Increasing awareness that older people must be recognised by government is evident in Uganda through the creation of a ministerial post on ageing and disability, within the ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD). Other developments include the establishment of a working group on aging and the production of reports on ageing. HAI has used these openings to lobby for older people's issues to be mainstreamed in the PEAP. This is crucial, as in Uganda, if a case is not made through the PEAP, funding is unlikely to be forthcoming.

HAI and local partners contributed to the cross-ministerial, multi-sectoral working group on ageing. This group reviewed key policy and research documents, including the PEAP, the Ugandan Constitution, and national policies and sector programmes. Trust built up with the Ministry of Health (MoH) over a period of time through joint working and a history of collaboration was crucial to the success of this engagement. Over several months HAI supported a local partner in a process of consultation and lobbying of government. This consultation achieved practical outcomes and raised awareness of the issues facing older people amongst officials. It also helped shape the working group programme and stimulated working group members to attend the meetings and participate actively. An indication of the programme's success is that it has received top level government support, where it has been adopted as government's response to the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing.

HAI has worked to link the working group with older people at the community level. This has involved including members of the working group in research assessing the food security and health status of older people in 6 districts in Uganda as well as their participation in development policy and programmes, and their access to public services. This exposure to the realities of older people's lives has been invaluable in encouraging working group members to identify reforms to policy or practice that their Ministry might make which would improve service delivery for older people. Members of the working group will also be involved in disseminating the results of the research through workshops at District levels with community, authorities, service providers, as well as at the National level. HAI and partners have also used the media (press, TV and radio) extensively to highlight their progress and findings. They are also interested in seeing the programme replicated in other African countries.

HAI judge that their advocacy is beginning to generate results. Officials involved in the working group have had their awareness raised. Some of the same officials have been involved in the revision of the PEAP, and their increased awareness of the issues of older people has fed into its redesign.

This experience illustrates what can be achieved if sufficient time, energy and resources are allocated to long term engagement. For the CPRC it is important to know what relevant agencies are doing in low income countries, so that CPRC researchers can contribute to and collaborate where appropriate. Partnerships with NGOs clearly offer opportunities to engage in more direct policy advocacy than researchers are themselves often happy or able to do. Clearly, connecting the work of HelpAge International and the CPRC in Uganda (and elsewhere) offers considerable scope for collaboration and complementarity. Refer to Section 4.2(10) of the Resource Pack for a full case study of HAI experience in advocating for the rights of older people in Uganda.

International partnerships[6]

Being part of an international partnership has offered CPRC partners an international dimension to their policy engagement and communications activities. To date much of the work at international levels has been the responsibility of Development Initiatives (DI).

DI has led the CPRC in thinking about its core aims in policy engagement: what do we want to achieve and how are we going to do it? Successful policy engagement is built around relationships of trust through direct, preferably personal dialogue. By responding to policy makers' agendas and needs it becomes possible to use these relationships to transmit messages based on evidence and application of evidence to policy. In the international environment, organisations are clearly limited in their mandates and scope but individuals themselves often have a wide sphere of influence.

DI identified two broad themes for the CPRC policy engagement strategy. Firstly, to demonstrate that the inclusion of people living in chronic poverty is part of the MDG process – that the MDGs and pro-poor growth are less likely to be achieved if the chronically poor are ignored. Secondly, to build on the high level, more aspirational commitments in, for example, the Millennium Declaration which promise 'a World free from want' and the inclusion of *everyone* in the benefits of progress.

Many individuals working in international institutions have a strong personal commitment to these goals. By demonstrating that it is necessary to tackle chronic poverty if other MDG targets are to be met, the CPRC can strengthen commitment to the more aspirational aims. In attempting to do this, it is important that the CPRC is not perceived as a threat or potentially damaging. It is helpful to have a clear 'brand' which supports the development of an association between a recognisable image and the concept of chronic poverty. Packaging information for the audience is important. Bearing in mind the information overload and time constraints facing international policy makers, it is useful if outputs contain pictures, graphics and quotes which 'jump off the page'. The Chronic Poverty Report, brochures, newsletters, 'opinion pieces' and policy briefs all provide good examples of this.

A fragmented constituency of people are working on, or interested in, different groups issues – disabled people, older people, minority ethnic groups, remote rural areas, people systematically disadvantaged by lack of assets or their place in the labour market. In trying to influence this constituency, the CPRC deliberately sought the individuals responsible for relevant policy areas (e.g. disability) and helped them to contextualise their focal group. This helped the CPRC to communicate its message while helping the individual policy maker raise the profile of their issue within their organisation. Instead of being a minority issue, it becomes a major policy strand.

CPRC experience to date has been that engagement within the international policy arena has been easy to initiate but hard to maintain. Core engagement – where the relationship with the policy maker or opinion former is central to the CPRC partner's regular work – has been sustained. But engagement with some international processes has been hard to maintain, partly because the level of interest generated has been such that it has been difficult to respond adequately. Consequently, the strategy for the next phase is to concentrate on a smaller number of deeper collaborations. Refer

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[6] This section draws on issues raised Development Initiatives (2005)

to Section 4.2(11) of the Resource Pack for DI's full power point presentation on international level engagement and Section 4.3 below for an outline of CPRC future plans.

In addition to DI's (and others) international activities, CPRC country teams have responded to central CPRC dissemination expectations. For example, as part of an international partnership all country partners were expected to begin their programme with a high profile national launch. In India this was organised in partnership with the Ministry of Rural Development; attended by senior policy makers and senior academics and NGO representatives, and multi and bilateral organisations, plus the media). In Uganda it was launched by the Ugandan Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Hon. Gerald Ssendawula (represented by Margaret Kakande, Head of the Poverty Monitoring and Analysis Unit, within the Ministry). These activities have helped establish the research centre and publicly indicate a commitment to engage with policy.

The partnership has also been able to draw from and benefit from central CPRC dissemination support, such as:

- CPRC Website www.chronicpoverty.org
- CPRC newsletters
- CPRC Working papers
- CPRC international conference
- CPRC international partner workshops
- The Chronic Poverty Report (2004-5)
- Other academic publications
    - World Development articles
    - Journal of Human Development

A full list of dissemination outputs is available in the annex to this document. In addition of course, CPRC partners have been expected to produce their own outputs, particularly Chronic Poverty Reports which are hugely useful policy influencing tools. Most countries also produced a short overview which is more accessible to policy makers. The draft 'State of the Poorest Report 2004-2005: Bangladesh' was launched in May 2004, shortly before the meeting of the Paris Club, to raise awareness and understanding about those citizens who are benefiting the least (or not benefiting at all) from the country's recent economic growth and improving social conditions. In India a short overview of an edited book on chronic poverty was usefully turned into a journal article (World Development) and is also presented at workshops and training sessions. The benefit of working as an international partnership is that there is a core team interested in and ready to discuss research findings. Peer pressure is felt by all partners to produce work to a high standard.

3.3   Tracing impacts

Have researchers been able to trace their influence on policy debates, policy formation and policy implementation? A number of policies have been developed over the five years the CPRC has been active which are likely to benefit the chronically poor. This is true in all CPRC partner countries and at the international level. But, causality is complex and assessing the impact of research on policy and practice is notoriously difficult. The CPRC is yet to develop tools which give it the confidence that it

can trace the impact of its dissemination, communication and policy engagement work on either policy discourses or changes in policy and practice. Nevertheless there is some evidence that the CPRC has influenced policy and practice.

i. Some evidence of changing discourse
In Bangladesh academics, donors and civil society are now using chronic poverty language, and in India the Prime Minister actually referred to chronic poverty during his first address after taking office.

ii. Engaging in national and regional poverty reduction processes
Chronic poverty has been mainstreamed in the Bangladesh IPRSP. The CPRC team contributed to the preparation of a number of thematic background papers for the full PRSP, which emphasised some poverty duration issues (namely disability, problems in isolated rural areas, and the poverty effects of a poor health delivery system). In Uganda as well, poverty duration has become an important dimension included in the Ugandan Participatory Poverty Assessment II, which informs the PRSP formulation and is now listed as a priority issue in the government's research strategy.

Specific meetings with key government officers and donors in Indian states have enabled the CPRC-India to discuss research findings and push forward local poverty reduction debates. Similarly in South Africa the CPRC is having important inputs at the Provincial level. Trusting relationships have been established and CPRC researchers perform advisory roles for the government of the Western Cape, notably in their Integrated Food Security and Nutrition programme, and in the development of their integrated poverty reduction strategy.

CPRC researchers also contribute to policy thinking through their formal engagements. In Bangladesh for example the CPRC contributed as members of commissions and boards, by providing advice and overview roles to the Public Expenditure Review Commission (PERC), Social Development Foundation (SDF) of the Government of Bangladesh, the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI), National Statistical Council, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), and the Caritas Development Institute.

iii. Ad hoc advisory work for government, donors and NGOs
In addition to formal and commissioned engagement, CPRC teams have responded to ad hoc requests for advice. These inputs carry particular weight as they are less formal and provide support directly to those that need it and can use it.

In India the CPRC has shared its findings with DFID, and these have fed into their Country Assistance Plan. The team has also responded to many other requests for presentations research findings by donor staff and government personnel including DFID, UNIFEM, National Commission for Women, World Bank, UN, UNDP, World Social Forum, National Labour Institute and the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. They have presented at a joint donor workshop in London, as well as at colleges and universities across India and elsewhere. UNIFEM requested 200 copies of working papers for distribution to their Indian partners and are supporting the reprint of a further 300 copies, and are exploring the possibility of translating some papers into Hindi.

The Bangladesh team has also been informally consulted by government, donors, (DFID, ADB) and NGOs personnel who simply visit the office for advice (for example on how to analyse and use panel data). Team members have been invited to discussions of programmes. For example the team advised government on the design of the food for education programme, which was later changed to cash for education.

Sometimes researchers have found that they need to simply use openings opportunistically. The Uganda Episcopal Conference (Catholic Bishops) workshop on "Debt Relief and Poverty Eradication" was facilitated by the Director of CPRC-Uganda. The opportunity presented a good chance to introduce the concept of Chronic Poverty to the Bishops and to demonstrate that a large proportion of Ugandans are not only poor but are structurally excluded from participating in development activities. In their closing statement (which was presented to the President of Uganda) the Bishops articulated the concept of chronic poverty and urged Government to do all in its means to address it.

iv. High profile events
More than 120 senior Government of Bangladesh representatives, leading academics, NGO policy activists and donor staff attended the one-day launch of the Bangladesh Chronic Poverty Report ("State of the Poorest"). Around 30 people (majority journalists, NGO leaders and poverty researchers) attended a half-day 'dialogue' session on the Report and its implications. Both events received widespread coverage in the Bangla and English newspapers in Bangladesh, and extracts from the 'overview' section were disseminated in the press. Similarly, in India the CPRC organised a seminar that was covered by a national newspaper.

The launch of the CPRC-Uganda was held by Uganda's Minister of Finance. A poverty data workshop brought together economists, sociologists and others from the Ministries of Gender, Labour and Social Development and Finance, Planning and Economic Development, to analyse the evidence from different data sets that show some poor people continue to stay in poverty over generations and are not benefiting from current policy interventions. Ministry of Finance officials present at the workshop invited the CPRC to contribute to the revision of the PEAP in the following year.

v. Engaging strategically with the media
The media can have a role in articulating dominant discourses, as well as influencing government and the general public (refer to Section 4.1(4-6) of the Resource Guide on how to develop a media strategy). The CPRC already works with the media on occasions, but there is scope for being more strategic.

In Bangladesh for example, there are many newspapers, mostly privately owned but some state run. The press is critical of government policy and activities to an extent (for example corruption issues are often covered). The CPRC team have written newspaper articles. One titled "Talk of the Marginalised People (Prantajaner Katha)" received tremendous attention from civil society and a huge public response.

The data workshop held in Uganda was followed up by a radio programme aired on national radio. However, it has become apparent to the Ugandan team that most in the media (including print and

broadcast media practitioners, and gatekeepers such as editors and producers) had a very superficial knowledge of the PEAP process, and knew even less about chronic poverty. Reporting tends to be limited to the presenting the conclusions from discussions, workshops and meetings that key politicians have attended. This suggests that involving the media earlier on in the research process may develop reporters' understanding of the issues and generate more stimulating reporting.

However, there are trade offs to developing a high profile with the media, as identified by CPRC-South Africa. Establishing a stance critical of government can establish the presence and profile of the CPRC but it can simultaneously limit openings for policy engagement (closing policy doors rather than opening them). The CPRC needs to identify when more can be achieved by participating in internal government debates?

See Section 5 of Policy Influencing and Media Engagement: A Resource Pack where the main dissemination and communication activities undertaken by the CPRC between 2000 and early 2005 are presented in full. See also Section 1.4 above, which suggests different approaches towards policy entrepreneurship and PANOS (2005) 'A Researcher's Guide to Working with the Media.'

4.   Overcoming the barriers to pro-poor policy change: communications and dissemination

Table 1 and Box 4 suggest some practical approaches to use in communicating research results in order to achieve pro-poor policy change. We refer readers to the papers by PANOS presented in the *Policy Influencing and Media Engagement: A Resource Pack,* and to the work of RAPID (see http://www.odi.org.uk/RAPID/index.html). Another resource is likely to be useful. In early 2005 DFID was in the final stages of producing a *Communications Toolkit.* When complete, this will be available in paper format, through a new public access website (the DFID Research Portal 'Research4Development') and, potentially, as a CD Rom. DFID hopes that they will be able to encourage all DFID funded researchers to use the toolkit.

Table 1: When and how to use different communication & dissemination methods to achieve maximum policy influence.

Tool	When?	How?	Target?	Why?	Examples	Risks
1. Development Researcher Roles:						
Development narratives ('Story teller')	In uncertain contexts (after you've done the research)	Describe scenarios that simplify ambiguity	Practitioners, bureaucrats, and policy-makers Media	Incredibly powerful stories can inform policy and persuade for change	'getting the prices right' , structural adjustment, debt relief, etc	Scenarios may over simplify and mislead
Networking ('Networker')	Continuous activity	Engaging in formal and informal networks, committees, events, know people – 'ooze charm'!!	Policy networks	If you are 'in the tent' your voice will be heard and have influence	ODI: rural Development and Forestry Network, Humanitarian Practice Network (HPN) etc	Requires considerable time and effort
Engaging on the ground ('Engineer')		As part of research process	'Street level bureaucrats'	Focus on implementation gaps between what politicians/ policy makers think they're doing and what happens on the ground		
'Fixer'	If you want to change something you need to first know your source of power (physical power, resource, position, expert, personal and negative power)	Know when to make your pitch and to whom	Ministers Head of bi-lateral agency Senior bureaucrats	Researchers' 'expert power' is often very powerful.		Need to know the policy and political processes well
2. Communication and dissemination methods						
Academic publications and working papers	When findings are clear	Submit to journal or research centre for review	Academics Limited policy makers	Effective dissemination to specialist audiences Reputation and recognition	CPRC working papers; World Development; Etc.	Dissemination tends to miss policy makers and reach academics only
Reports	Bring together a collection of findings	Written in an accessible style without jargon and well presented	Governments Donors NGOs	Reach a wider policy audience	International Chronic Poverty Report 2004/5	Resources International comparability can be

Tool	When?	How?	Target?	Why?	Examples	Risks
				Useful reference text	National chronic poverty reports	hard
Meetings, round tables, workshops and conferences	Launching the research During and after research	Informal contact with journalists	Academics Policy makers within relevant departments Invite journalists	Useful for longer cross expert discussion and deeper analysis Not just dissemination but communication Build receptive environments	CPRC conferences	Lead to too many demands on research Make conclusions before they're clear
Newsletters Posters Policy briefs	When have something 'new' or conclusive to say Or to stimulate debate on hypotheses		Distribution lists of interested and solicited parties Send in bulk to relevant institutions	Present a collection of findings Can be useful for journalists and policy-makers who don't have time for long pieces Easily and quick read	ID21 IPC one pagers	Skills Resources Attribution
Print media	Pegged to particular events – spring and annual meetings of the IFIs, e.g. Or, wait for a quiet news period Send your ideas, stories, etc to arrive when journalists can use them (e.g. on Sunday for Monday's papers; mornings not afternoons, etc)	Fast and simple messages, timed to Decide your key messages and any sound bites Think about the story you have – what is the best medium? Expend energy building relationships with journalists interested in your topics Respond to enquiries Send press releases	Message tailored to particular media audience Work out which department or section of newspaper to target and focus on just 1 or 2 individuals Country level Local or community media	Inform the general public, and generate debate Strengthen reputation and links with others working in field Feature article can draw out the human interest story	News report News in Brief News Backgrounder Feature Investigative Feature Comment or Analysis (essay) Interview Opinion Piece (editorial or columnist) Letter Cartoon Announcement	Story boring or un-newsworthy Written in academic style and ignored Journalist doesn't understand concept of chronic poverty Sound bite taken out of context Time and effort Risk alienating policy makers if findings controversial or misrepresented

Tool	When?	How?	Target?	Why?	Examples	Risks
						Unwanted policy responses Create a media image that doesn't favour research activities
Specialist press	Continuous but best around a particular event Contact them when you have something 'new'	Respond to enquiries	Specialists and senior policy makers e.g. The Economist	Reach specialist audiences and policy-makers Reputation and credibility Shaping debates and strengthens links	Feature Comment or Analysis (essay)	
Radio TV/video	Around a particular news story or event (campaign, a UN day, intergovernmental conference, roundtable meeting etc) Launch the research Preliminary findings Conclusions	Phone the studio to ask who's the right person to deal with Decide your key messages Think about the story you have – what is the best medium? Respond promptly to enquiries Prepare for interviews	National level Local or community media	Reaches a non-literate and/or remote audience Stimulates debates, encourages phone in Public service and campaigns Articulates demand for action from policy-makers	News Announcement Spot Documentary Feature or mini-feature Talk show Drama Newsnight (UK) Local radio – e.g. radio discussions on HIV/AIDS in Uganda	On record if say something wrong Time and effort Confidence Risk alienating policy makers if findings controversial or misrepresented Create a media image that doesn't favour research activities
Websites Email E-forums	Interesting research findings and/or questions Launch the research		Wide audience internationally Can be fairly informal discussion forum and work doesn't need to be complete	Reaches wide audience – locally and globally Website useful reference resource Alerts can be sent when new work available on	Eldis Global Development Network World Bank discussion forums	Email overload

Tool	When?	How?	Target?	Why?	Examples	Risks
				website		
Lobbying	During and after the research Before major events	International commitments can present useful leverage Persuasive information required (e.g. the numbers of people living in chronic poverty) – simple language, Informal networking at events important Branding and visibility help Offer people a platform to speak and promote your messages	Parliamentarians Senior multi-lateral organisation representatives Bi-lateral representatives Junior ministers and bureaucrats	Promote policy makers to act Accountability Get your text into statements at events and you'll have leverage for years to come	Human Development Report lobbying Uganda Minister of Finance speech at the CPRC conference	Researchers have moved on to other 'new' work Need to understand the bureaucracy Packaging information to persuade can draw attention away from research activities Labour intensive and demands grow exponentially
Development education	To mitigate crisis To spread information that can improve lives	Through media Community level discussion for a	Schools Farms Community centres	Deliver messages directly to people that can benefit or use them	HIV advocacy Participatory research	May raise awareness of problems/issues but not provide solutions Raise expectations

Source: Ursula Grant, 2005, drawing on Development Initiatives (2005); Panos (2005a & 2005b); Maxwell, S (2003), ODI (2002 & 2003)

Box 4: Increasing the influence of Chronic Poverty research on policy

What you need to know	What you need to do	How to do it
Political Context: ▪ Who are you trying to influence – government or the donors? ▪ Who are the policy makers and different interest groups? ▪ Is there demand for differentiated poverty analysis in this country or sector/ theme? ▪ What are the sources / strengths of resistance to pro-poor policy change? ▪ What is the policy-making process? ▪ What are the opportunities and timing for input into formal processes?	▪ Get to know the policymakers/ interest groups, their agendas and their constraints. ▪ Identify potential supporters and opponents. ▪ Keep an eye on the horizon and prepare for opportunities in regular policy processes. ▪ Look out for – and react to – unexpected policy windows.	▪ Work with policy makers. ▪ Link your research topic to current national or donor priorities/ concerns. ▪ Line up research programmes with high-profile policy events. ▪ Reserve resources to be able to move quickly to respond to policy windows. ▪ Allow sufficient time & resources.
Evidence: ▪ What is the current theory? ▪ What are the prevailing narratives? ▪ How divergent is the new evidence? ▪ What sort of evidence will convince policymakers?	▪ Establish credibility over the long term. ▪ Provide practical solutions to problems. ▪ Establish legitimacy. ▪ Build a convincing case and present clear policy options. ▪ Package new ideas in familiar theory or narratives. ▪ Communicate effectively.	▪ Develop high-quality research programmes. ▪ Gather evidence of how chronic poverty research has (1) influenced national and international debates and (2) supported pro-poor policy change ▪ Involve parliamentarians, civil servants, government & other stakeholders to deepen national ownership & open up policy processes, legitimacy & implementation. ▪ Develop a clear strategy and resources for policy engagement.
Links: ▪ Who are the key stakeholders in the policy discourse? ▪ What links and networks exist between them? ▪ Who are the intermediaries and what influence do they have? ▪ Whose side are they on? ▪ Is there a supportive 'international epistemic community'?	▪ Get to know the other stakeholders. ▪ Establish a presence in existing networks. ▪ Build coalitions with like-minded stakeholders. ▪ Build new policy networks. ▪ Get to know and link with existing 'international epistemic communities', where one does not exist, can one be developed?	▪ Develop and build partnerships between your research team, other researchers, policy makers, civil society and communities. ▪ Identify key networkers and 'salesmen'. ▪ Use informal contacts.
External Influences: ▪ Who are main international actors in the relevant policy areas? ▪ What influence do they have on aid, trade, investment and policy? ▪ What are their priorities and mechanisms?	▪ Get to know members of the international community (inc. donors & INGOs), TNCs/ private sector players. What are their priorities and constraints? ▪ Identify potential supporters, key individuals and networks. ▪ Establish credibility. ▪ Keep an eye on international donor discourses and look out for changes and opportunities.	▪ Develop extensive background on donor policies. ▪ Identify priority policy/ practice you want to influence. ▪ Orient communications to suit donor priorities and language. ▪ Contact (regularly) key individuals. ▪ Try to work with the donors and seek commissions.

Adapted from Court et al, 2005.

5.   Assessing policy impact

As we have highlighted above, it is very difficult to assess the policy impact of dissemination and communication. The heightened focus that the CPRC intends to place on influencing policy in the next phase of its work will create demand for tools to assess effectiveness.

The RAPID programme has worked to develop an overview of different tools that can be used to assess policy impact (see Start and Hovland, 2004, also at http://www.odi.org.uk/RAPID/Publications/Documents/Tools_handbook_final_web.pdf). This set of tools are clustered around four areas; **research tools** (including episode studies and focus group discussion); **context assessment tools** (the planning cycle; force filed analysis, problem tree analysis, stakeholder analysis, influence mapping, SWOT analysis, and triangle analysis); **communication tools** (mapping the product life cycle, the 'marketing approach', organisational readiness assessment, market segmentation and the battle map, the marketing mix, the promotions mix, positioning and position mapping, the copy platform, pre-testing your message, camera ready, write shops); and **policy influence tools** (policy entrepreneurs, Boston box, policy papers, networking, a lobbyist's hierarchies of need, getting to yes, the 4 Ps of being influential, engaging public participation, campaigning alliances: pros and cons).

This set of tools is not meant to be all-inclusive, and can certainly be complemented with time and from other fields, but an assessment of policy impact will essentially involve a well-motivated selection of tools of this sort.

5.1   Most significant changes

'Most Significant Changes' (MSC) is an impact assessment and monitoring tool that involves the collection of 'significant change stories' from a range of stakeholders that are then analysed, discussed and verified. The stakeholders are involved both in the decisions about what should be recorded (the 'domains') and analysis of the data produced. The focus lies on channelling attention on project impact, but involves monitoring as it is conducted throughout the programme cycle and provides data on impact and outcomes. The MSC tool can be used to develop a richer picture of change, identifying unexpected outcomes as well as values of those involved. It can be usefully applied across cultures and outside professional spheres and terminology (Davies and Dart, 2005:12). The technique is more useful in instances where learning is considered an essential component of the monitoring process, and where the main interest lies in the effect of a particular intervention on people's lives.

MSC has been applied by NGOs and governments in developed and less developed economies, in participatory rural development projects, agricultural extension projects, educational settings and mainstream human services delivery.

Most Significant Changes monitoring is different from common monitoring practice in at least four respects: (a) The focus is on the unexpected, (b) Information about those events is documented using text rather than numbers, (c) Analysis of that information is through the use of explicit value

judgements, (d) Aggregation of information and analysis takes place through a structured social process. (For a summary see http://www.healthcomms.org/comms/eval/msc.html, and for the MSC Technique Guide see http://www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.htm).

6.　　What are our plans for the future?

There are lots of lessons to learn from CPRC experience to date. Between 2000 and 2005 CPRC partners have been engaged in a wide range of policy engagement activities that have raised the profile of chronic poverty both at national and international levels. However this has tended to be somewhat ad hoc and has not guided by an overarching communications strategy. Country partners have been busy doing research and disseminating findings as well as engaging in policy discussions as and when they can. As the CPRC enters a new phase there is a new opportunity to rethink the role of policy engagement and develop a coherent centre wide approach. This resource pack aims to inform that development.

Country partners have recognised the many trade-offs between engaging beyond the traditionally academic styles of dissemination and moving towards a communications strategy that has policy influencing as an ultimate goal. Strategic approaches are time consuming and demand adequate resources in order to be done well. There are important complementarities however that can be missed by more ad hoc and unplanned activities alone. By directly engaging in policy processes researchers and therefore their research benefit from more contextual insight. Presentation of work in multiple different formats can have positive spin offs for researchers as responses and feedback are generated from different institutional perspectives. Engaging in policy processes enable researchers to clarify the usefulness of their work, identify gaps in knowledge and implementation challenges.

CPRC Phase 3 (2005-10) will combine core research with policy analysis and policy engagement activities. Directors will oversee the systematic coherence across and within these activities and policy focused activities will be strengthened through core team recruitment. Future policy engagement will be founded on a clear understanding of opportunities and pathways at different levels, and build from core team members' key strengths and collective capacities.

The CPRC will continue its successful international level policy engagement through continued collaboration with different international donors, multilateral organisations, forums and NGOs. Engagement will be proactive with a limited number of agencies, through ongoing dialogue and joint working. Broader international engagement will be largely restricted to dissemination of outputs.

At the national level initial and exploratory policy engagement will become more strategic. A number of governments have expressed intentions to develop policies which alter the terms on which the chronically poor are incorporated and included. Where CPRC partners have developed relationships with governments and civil society efforts will be made to build upon these to create opportunities for sustained engagement on specific issues. A number of 'engagement projects' are planned. These will ensure ongoing consultations, particularly on specific policy issues (social protection, health and education for example), and aim to respond to requests for assistance, monitoring progress and

facilitating synergies between national agencies whilst also allowing CPRC partners to retain their research independence.

Some communication will focus on the idea of 'chronic poverty' to outline the scope of the problem while also challenging notions of poverty as static or deserved. This will provide more fertile ground for ideas about solutions. Immediate priorities are those where there is confidence that significant engagement activities can take place immediately. Medium term priorities are those where further policy analysis or research is needed before a deep policy engagement can take place. In order to ensure a shared understanding of CPRC's engagement strategy, a Chronic Poverty Engagement Partnership will develop and keep updated an 'engagement overview matrix' listing key audiences and priorities. The website and other communication mechanisms will be developed as core dissemination and communication tool managed by an appointed knowledge management expert.

The aim is to transform the ways in which poverty reduction policies are assessed and formulated, such that over time greater attention is given to preventing entry into chronic poverty, and the promotion of exit strategies.

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