

Chapter 5 Poverty Focus of Projects, and their Contribution to Programme Purpose

5.1 Programme Purpose

- 5.1.1 Since 1998 all DFID projects have been reviewed to include poverty eradication as the main purpose. The overarching objective of the RNRRS is to reduce poverty, therefore it is important to examine what evidence there is that programmes and projects have positive impact on the poor, and any evidence on unintended negative impact.
- 5.1.2 The contribution of RNRRS to poverty eradication has been considered at a number of different levels:
- Scoring of project design through Poverty Aim Markers (PAM)
 - PARC's scoring of achievement to project purpose
 - Achievements on DFID's A-H scale
 - Direct Evaluation of Impacts
 - Evaluation team interviews and country visits
- 5.1.3 It has been difficult to draw out generalised lessons due to the lack of data. Where data does exist, it illustrates the wide variation both within and between programmes.

5.2 Scoring of projects through Poverty Aim Markers (PAM)

- 5.2.1 All DFID-funded projects are given Poverty Aim Markers, to indicate the project focus and how direct the likely impact on poverty will be. Analysis carried out by PARC shows that, for seven of the ten programmes, the majority of projects have an enabling focus, and for the remaining three, the focus of the majority of their projects is at the inclusive level. Although all three types of projects, enabling, inclusive and focused, will have an impact on the poor, the impact pathway will vary according to the type of project. The prevalence of enabling and inclusive projects reflects the way in which the demand for research projects was identified at the earlier stages of the RNRRS, where the emphasis was more on IPGs, and addressing issues which had more general applicability, where research outputs were transferable between countries and regions. For this kind of research, the impact on poverty will be very dependent on research outputs being disseminated to organisations and target institutions which can use these to address the problems of the poor in a specific context. This is true of some of the work undertaken in the earlier plant breeding and fish genetics projects.
- 5.2.2 Had time allowed, it might have been possible to identify a trend in changing classification over time as project clusters focus more on national public goods, and respond more to needs identification exercises. Certainly, the country visits indicated that a number of current projects, particularly those managed by non-traditional research partners such as NGOs, had a strong focus on the poor. Earlier projects were rather more dominated by UK researcher interests with less of a direct poverty focus.
- 5.2.3 A case can be made for both types of approach. Where enabling and inclusive projects have addressed issues which were relevant to the poor, and have been successful, their impact can be much greater because of the greater generality of the research issue. In responding to the needs and demands of the poor, as identified by a focused approach, an approach often associated now with the sustainable livelihoods framework, a project may identify technologies that are, in themselves, transferable, and the process of implementing the project may improve understanding about the role that improved technology and understanding about natural resources may play in addressing poverty. In practice, successful research projects combine an element of both supply and demand- the existence of an IPG, and a set of organisations at national level who understand how to apply this in a specific context. The challenge for the RNRRS is where to place itself in this context, and where the comparative advantage of the UK science community lies.

5.2.4 DFID was a world leader in developing the livelihoods approach clarifying the complexity of poverty issues related to poor peoples asset base and the policy and institutional environment that they operate within. LPP and FRP have both adopted the livelihoods approach to problem surveys allowing interventions to be prioritised within the livelihoods framework. This does not, however, imply that the work so identified necessarily has a direct poverty impact per se.

5.2.5 The livelihoods framework and the concomitant approach to poverty focus guiding decision making does put DFID into pole position compared with other agencies in directing its efforts towards poverty eradication. To the extent that RNRRS programmes have adopted the livelihoods approach, they have also mainstreamed poverty as a key guiding influence. (7.2)

5.3 PARC scoring of contribution to programme purpose

5.3.1 As part of the Impact Assessment exercise undertaken by PARC, in preparation for this evaluation, PMs were asked to score the contribution of their projects to the programme purpose. Because of the nature of this work and the time resources necessary to complete this exercise, some PMs commissioned an external consultant to undertake this. The PARC then compiled averages based on the results reported by the programmes. These are shown in Table 7. It is difficult to make objective comparisons amongst programmes, based on this data, because of the combination of self-assessment and external appraisal, however from the scores for PSP, FMSP, FRP, NRSP, LPP more than 50% of projects have a moderately or very high contribution to purpose.

5.3.2 Where there have been independent Output to Purpose Reviews (OPRs) or evaluation reports, these have indicated that projects rate reasonably well on contribution to purpose, and this is reinforced by the specialist reports. During core team interviews, a number of programme managers, particularly those who had taken over mid-way through the RNRRS, stressed the changes in direction they had made in the programme. This may have led to earlier projects being assessed as having limited, or even no contribution to purpose. As there are no mechanisms for tracking the adoption of the outputs from these projects, it is difficult to say whether or not these assessments have been unduly harsh.

Table 7 Number of projects rated, and their distribution (percent) according to degree of contribution to programme purpose

Programmes	No Projects rated	Contribution to Purpose (Percent of Projects rated)						
		None	Very little	Limited	Some	Moderately high	Very high	n/a
LPP	118	0	0	12	21	30	30	7
NRSP	72	0	10	15	24	40	11	0
AHP	60	1	28	42	22	7	0	0
CPHP	158	0	0	15	39	32	11	1
CPP	459	0	1	2	9	18	24	46
FRP	94	0	0	3	18	59	20	0
AFGP	60	0	3	37	43	17	0	0
PHFP	14	7	14	0	65	7	0	7
FMSP	41	0	0	0	3	34	51	12
PSP ¹¹	21	0	0	9	18	18	50	0

Source: PARC (2004)

¹¹ The data for PSP were supplied at a later date by the PSP programme manager

5.4 Achievements on the DFID A-H scale

- 5.4.1 The A-H scale identifies the level at which a project is aimed at design stage, and where the level achieved in implementation. This ranges from A (agreement with partner institutions) through level E (adoption by target institutions) to level H (uptake by end users). As reported by PMs, or their consultants, the distribution of target level by projects varies considerably by programme (Table 8). One, PHFP, identifies well over half of its projects as designed to have uptake by end users, whereas CPHP has no programmes designed at this level (though it now rates almost a third as having achieved end-user uptake). However, the most common design of projects (almost half) are aimed at levels D and E, the promotion of research outputs to target institutions and their adoption by those institutions. Where there are sequences of projects, it is likely that the earlier projects will be designed to deliver at levels A through E while later projects might deliver at levels G or H. Unfortunately, aggregation at the programme level makes it difficult to pick out these linkages between projects.
- 5.4.2 This is entirely consistent with the responsibilities of PMs, as laid out at the beginning of the RNRRS. However, it means that the contribution of the research to poverty impact is reliant on the dissemination and application of the research findings. This depends on the capacity of global and national organisations to further develop and adapt research outputs to local conditions, or disseminate the information to the local level. PMs are charged with identifying uptake pathways, but have recognised that this, in itself, may not be sufficient, and have responded in different ways, according to their own assessment of opportunities and costs, and the types of research outputs produced. This is discussed in more detail below, but has often involved forging links with national governments and other donors for promotion of research outputs.
- 5.4.3 Table 7 and Table 8 have to be understood as snapshots in time. Both contribution to purpose and achievement on the A-H scale will continue to evolve over the remaining period of the RNRRS.

Table 8 Distribution of projects by A-H Target Level

Prog- ramme	Total projects	Target at Design Stage								Current Achievement										
		No. of projects with A – H rating	Rating							No. of projects with A – H rating	Rating									
			A	B	C	D	E	F	G		H	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
NRSP	85	81	1	4	3	3	3	24	10	11	3	26	5	2	1	12	4	1	1	0
AHP	60	60	4	6	6	12	9	2	1	20	60	6	10	14	10	5	3	4	8	
CPP	409	309	3	10	34	51	31	51	57	72	247	0	10	32	44	23	48	46	44	
LPP	116	109	4	2	8	25	20	8	23	19	109	7	2	18	33	16	11	10	12	
PSP	22	16			1			5		10	16		1		6		1		8	
CPHP	176	176	13			57	106				173	4	2	15	36	31	9	25	51	
AFGP	58	58		11	9	10	7	12	4	5	58		14	9	9	9	13	3	1	
F MSP	50	50		1	9	20	6	7	4	3	50	3	5	5	12	11	11	2	1	
PHFP	14	14				2	2			10	14		1	1	6	5		1		
FRP	129	94		1		41	19	17	6	8	94	3	2	2	37	15	13	8	14	

Source: PARC (2004)

5.5 Direct Evaluation of Impacts

Impact Assessment Studies

- 5.5.1 Direct evidence of the impact of RNRRS programmes on poverty is limited. Projects are required to report on a regular basis, and in some programmes, mid-term reviews for some projects are undertaken by independent evaluators. In some programmes, Final Technical Reports (FTRs) are reviewed externally. Few projects have formal external evaluations, and, to date, no project has had a full external impact assessment. However, PSP has funded some impact assessment work of its Participatory Crop Improvement (PCI) projects.
- 5.5.2 There are a number of examples of external project assessment: in 1999/2000 four major studies were undertaken by consultancy companies on research themes in crops, livestock, forestry and fisheries. These identified potential returns to poor farmers (and others) from adopting research outputs, and, in some cases, were able to quantify these. Estimates were made of potential overall gain from adopting research outputs, on the basis of numbers of end-users in appropriate livelihood systems, who could have an incentive to adopt, but there was no attempt to assess spread of actual adoption.
- 5.5.3 As indicated earlier, the PARC (2004) report provides useful information about the structures of the programmes, and the impact pathways anticipated by the Programme Managers (PMs), but direct information on impact is still very piecemeal.
- 5.5.4 Many of the PMs have started to undertake/ commission impact assessments of particular projects in their programmes. CPP has undertaken a number of studies looking at the linkages between various elements of its programme (commercial horticulture, pest management) and poor people's livelihoods, and has also included an impact on livelihoods survey in the Mid Term Review (MTR) of one of its projects in Nepal.
- 5.5.5 In the country interviews for this evaluation, the Core Team also came across two projects in Uganda, managed by an NGO, where impact assessment had been undertaken at the end of the project, using survey methods to assess positive and negative impacts on project participants and neighbouring families. CPHP has employed an evaluation specialist over much of the RNRRS period, and the current specialist is assisting them in developing an approach to assess impact. CPHP has also commissioned an evaluation of their Partnerships for Innovation approach, which they adopted in 2002, after concerns about the resilience of their uptake pathways, and the overall approach to poverty-oriented research
- 5.5.6 Other programmes are also undertaking impact tracking and assessment exercises. NRSP has developed its own conceptual model for impact assessment, and has undertaken an assessment of its rainwater harvesting programme in Tanzania, and the impact it has had on the economics of production and livelihoods. NRSP has also undertaken a more general study of the determinants of livelihoods, and how projects have interacted within livelihood strategies. FRP has agreed with its lead advisor to monitor three projects on an ongoing basis, to develop a set of robust data on impact. Results from these impact assessments should be collated and analysed centrally to contribute to future policy design.
- 5.5.7 Table 9 examines the ways in which the external evaluation reviews undertaken in 1998-2001, and the more recent impact assessments, have addressed impact on poverty.¹² Earlier studies focused very much on productivity and income gains, and presented estimates of overall likely financial benefits, based on explicit models or assumptions about uptake. Some more recent studies have addressed a broader definition of poverty, within a livelihoods framework, and have asked about environmental impact, the use of increased income to improve physical, human and social capital, and, in a very few cases, vulnerability.
- 5.5.8 Much of this evidence does not seem to have been collected on a systematic basis. Only 16 out of the 35 studies examined had surveyed beneficiaries, and only two of these differentiated amongst informants by any measure of poverty. Two differentiated by gender of project beneficiaries. There has been little attempt to identify negative impact, except in two assessments undertaken by AT Uganda, as part of the implementation of CPP projects. More details on the studies can be found in Annex 7, under the relevant programme.

¹² Almost all the external assessment date from the earlier period. The three exceptions are PHFP's impact assessment review (though this was conducted by a PAC member), CPP's MTR of chickpeas in India and a PSP study of promotion of chickpea in Bangladesh

- 5.5.9 A notable exception is the PSP. Since 2002, the PSP has invested in reviews and impact assessments of its projects to support its participatory research methodologies. The programme has undertaken 17 reviews and impact studies and the evidence for the direct benefits from the research and from their methodologies is becoming apparent. There should be the opportunity for DFID and the other research programmes to take lessons from the PSP's participatory processes and from the way in which they have initiated impact assessment to support the strategic development of their work.
- 5.5.10 There is now more evidence on impact than in 2002, when Flint and Underwood undertook their study. However, much of the work is still underway, or available only in draft form. This evaluation can only repeat the findings of the earlier study – that at present the systematic evidence on impact is limited, but that this does not mean that there has not been, nor will there not be, real and significant benefits from these research programmes. Many of these project level assessments show real benefits at local level, but there is little, though increasing, information on the speed, and extent of uptake¹³. PSP now has data on varietal diversity for rice in Chitwan over a 5 year period, and it is expected that FRP's monitoring initiative will also provide uptake information.
- 5.5.11 Significantly, there is no mechanism for undertaking the kind of broad-reaching impact assessment that could justify the investment of the scale of funding of the RNRSS in terms of either economic benefits or impact on livelihoods. The cost of this would be impossible to fund under individual programmes and there is no central budget to address this.¹⁴
- 5.5.12 There also needs to be consideration given as to appropriate ways to monitor the impact of International Public Goods (IPGs). The impact of these is likely to be achieved through uptake by international and national research agencies for adaptation at the national level, but there are no good models for functional indicators of achievement.
- 5.5.13 Impact at policy level has been documented in programmes' annual reports. Many of the programmes appear to have engaged successfully, through policy briefs and workshops, with policy makers, and international agencies. FMSP and FRP have commissioned projects or project clusters¹⁵ which are directly focussed on policy outputs, but other programmes have had an effect on policy through addressing constraints which arose through project implementation. The CPP policy influence on biopesticide registration legislation in Kenya was a major achievement, not only nationally but is also extremely influential internationally.

¹³ The issue of when it would be appropriate to expect impact was raised by a number of PMs. This will clearly vary according to type of pro□

¹⁴ Nev using programme development funds.

¹⁵ FRP's work on carbon sequestration and certification of timber are notable here.

Table 9 Impact Assessment (IA) studies and their Treatment of Poverty

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Programme	No of IA studies		Aspects of impact explored						Comments
	External	Internal ¹⁶	Productivity gains	Income benefits	Distribution of benefits to poor ¹⁷	Other aspects of livelihoods	Survey of beneficiaries	Predicted quantified benefits	
AFGP	1		X	X	X				This review examined 5 case studies. Environmental impact was assessed.
AHP	1		X	X		X			Discusses socio-economic impact of zoonotic diseases
CPHP	2	2	X						The study had access to earlier surveys on which to base some of its findings. One external study is ongoing. " internal studies included OPRs and some elements of impact assessment.
CPP	2	2 as part of project			X	X			The more recent project assessments have been very livelihoods focused and the two internal projects have explicitly asked about negative impact.
FMSP	1	1	X	X	X				3 projects were examined. 1 internal assessment has been carried out.
FRP	1			X		X			The summary report is presented within a livelihoods framework
LPP	1		X	X	X	X			Social benefits in terms of improved access to women and better community working practices and use of benefits to improve sanitation and nutrition.
NRSP	1	1		X	X	X			Based on an incomplete draft of the assessment. An internal assessment has been undertaken.
PHFP	2				X	X			One project was assessed at a very early stage, and there was no impact to report. The impact assessment review held stakeholder meetings
PSP	5	12	X	X	X	X			3 external and 6 other impact assessments under Participatory Crop Improvement work . Assessment increasingly important since 2002.

¹⁶ The evaluation team has distinguished impact assessments which include members of the project or programme team from those that have been undertaken solely by independent consultants commissioned by either programme managers of DFID.

¹⁷ Few assessments gave quantitative figures for this, but this column has been ticked if there was some discussion of access to or use by the poor (somehow defined) of the outputs of the project.

Evidence from in-Country Visits

- 5.5.14 The Core Team conducted interviews with stakeholders in Africa and Asia to collect information, among others, on local assessment of the impact of RNRSS projects. The point was made by many stakeholders that 3 years was too short to identify impact and that there needed to be follow-on projects with in-built mechanisms for commissioning of objective impact assessment.
- 5.5.15 On the basis of discussions with local stakeholders, and assessment of documentation provided, the indications are that almost all projects have had short term positive impact on the incomes of the poor at the community/local levels among the limited number of participants in project activities. In some cases, this may simply be because of free services and inputs delivered during the project process, but in others there is evidence of technologies being adopted. Furthermore, there is some evidence of spread to neighbouring communities in the majority of the projects. However, there is virtually no evidence of economic impact at regional or national levels, although there are prospects of such impacts in the future. The team was unable, in the time available during in-country visits, to explore whether there were unintended negative effects, or sections of the community who were excluded from these project benefits.
- 5.5.16 A majority of the projects have already had impact on the scientific community, in terms of adoption of methodologies pioneered by the projects (e.g. participatory variety selection methods developed that have influenced other projects in West Africa, and adoption of similar methods from Nepal to neighbouring areas of India, methods for creation of Community Livelihoods Facilitators and Participatory Business Plans extended to other NGOs in Ghana, boxing of fodder in Tanzania being adopted and developed in Kenya).
- 5.5.17 In some countries, it was clear in discussion that projects had had a direct impact on the policy environment. LPP has had an impact on legislation on urban livestock keeping, as a result of a scoping study undertaken in East Africa, and has also had input into the livestock policy of Kenya, based on experience in registering goat keepers in the studbook. CPP has had an impact on legislation over biopesticides, and is currently funding a project to help horticulturalists conform with new EUREPGAP regulations. AHP research has resulted in sleeping sickness epidemic legislation in Uganda. These are examples of impacts achieved because of the commitment of local partners to follow through constraints, with the support of the programme, and a willingness to respond flexibly on the part of the PMs as the context of projects evolves. However the experience is not widespread with no obvious examples in half the countries visited by the Core Team¹⁸.
- 5.5.18 There is some evidence of impact of successful projects on extension systems which have adopted and are propagating RNRSS tested technologies (e.g. extension of peri-urban dairy practices in Ghana)
- 5.5.19 In the country visits, the team found little emphasis on issues of environment, gender or HIV/AIDS. Even in countries in East Africa, where HIV/AIDS is a major issue at national level, there was little evidence of it being regarded as a factor in project design or implementation. Some projects were focussed specifically on women, but otherwise, there was little indication of gender issues being addressed. When questioned, many researchers indicate that if a crop is grown mainly by women, then research into that crop is gender-sensitive. This indicates a lack of understanding of the importance of exploring the roles of both men and women in producing and marketing agricultural commodities, and the effect that changing technology could have on these, in beneficial or negative ways.
- 5.5.20 Impact assessment is time consuming and expensive, and methodologies are still being developed for assessing impact within a holistic livelihoods framework. Nonetheless, the Surr report¹⁹ recommends that DFID should be required to report more regularly and effectively on the impact of its research programmes, summarised in a single report, made publicly available every three years. The evaluation team endorses this, and feels that for future research programmes, DFID should develop an impact assessment strategy, and an appropriately timed programme of impact assessments, commissioned centrally.

¹⁸ Ghana, India and Indonesia

¹⁹ M. Surr et al., Research for Poverty Reduction: DFID Research Policy Paper, November 2002

5.6 Indications of Likely Future Impact

- 5.6.1 Impact is difficult to assess directly, for both resource and timing reasons. However, the way in which programmes are designed, the choice of project and project partners, the effectiveness of management in achieving outputs and in disseminating results will all contribute towards increasing the probability of positive impact (and identifying and responding to unintended negative impact).

Identification of Demand

- 5.6.2 From the beginning the RNRRS has emphasised the importance of research being demand driven. This was defined in three ways: where a development opportunity can be identified with some measure of benefit to be achieved; where an identifiable community of beneficiaries or end-users can be described, representatives of whom have participated in defining their needs, or where one or more target institution has been identified and has explicitly agreed the objectives of the research.
- 5.6.3 Initially, the demand for research seems to have been identified more by the UK research community itself (the first definition) or by certain more upstream target organisations. There was a legacy of projects which had been started before 1994, and of projects which were developments from earlier projects. However, as the RNRRS progressed, and particularly after the livelihoods approach was adopted by DFID, there was more effort invested in engaging with the end-users. This took three basic forms:
- Use of Programme Development (PD) funds on scoping studies, which included focus group discussions, as the basis for developing new calls for proposals. These needs identification and prioritisation studies have been carried out at regional and cluster level (for example, CPHP, FRP, CPP, PSP, FMSP and NRSP)
 - Use of PD funds to hold stakeholder workshops after a Project Concept Note (PCN) was accepted, and before the programme memorandum was developed (a requirement for LPP projects after 2000)
 - Encouraging projects to hold stakeholder meetings at an early stage in the implementation, a requirement in FRP and CPHP.
- 5.6.4 Programmes which have not adopted these more formal processes have also sought to improve the relevance of projects awarded through a variety of means, for example, AHP and LPP commissioned a geographic analysis to establish the locations of poor livestock keepers to sharpen their focus on suitable target countries. The AHP commissioned a major study²⁰ which further examined the distribution of poor livestock keepers in Africa and Asia, then ranked livestock disease constraints in terms of their impact on the poor, both through their effect on livestock and on human health and went on to examine which of these constraints could be alleviated by research. This study has been widely taken up by the international community, notably the Wellcome Trust is establishing a £25 million animal health research initiative.
- 5.6.5 Scoping studies have also been carried out to identify ways in which programmes can better address cross-cutting issues, such as gender and environment. In addition, AFGP has a gender mini-website, addressing the issues of women in aquaculture, and CPHP has developed a guidance note on gender for researchers developing PCNs.
- 5.6.6 The coalition approach, adopted by CPHP in recent years, has taken a variant on the first form by holding regional workshops to identify thematic areas and prioritising them according to country priorities. This has reduced the influence of UK research institutions on the research agenda (though some UK institutions have been invited to attend these workshops) and has led to the research process becoming more open to responding to local demand, with CPHP acting as facilitators to the process. CPHP would argue that, by ensuring that Southern institutions are in the driving seat, and by requiring projects to correspond to national research priorities, the chances of uptake by government organisations or other donors, and therefore of achieving impact, are improved. In addition, try to encourage themed coalitions that can define their own composition, leadership, roles and responsibilities.

²⁰ Perry et al. "Investing in Animal Health Research to Alleviate Poverty", AHP 2002

- 5.6.7 Increased engagement with national stakeholders and with end-users has advantages in terms of focussing research and developing project design. There is general agreement that these different approaches have led to increased relevance and have strengthened institutional linkages which facilitate dissemination and uptake promotion. It is too early to say whether or not greater involvement of end-users at an early stage in project design will increase the impact of research. Even if the data were there to make such a comparison, some of the older projects which are seen as successes have built on many years of linked research projects to develop clusters of work, and it is difficult to attribute impact to any particular project in the overall process. It is likely that greater involvement of end-users in the design of adaptive research projects will increase the impact of those particular projects, and it is certainly in keeping with current approaches to participatory work. It may also develop transferable methodologies, such as participatory plant breeding and farmer field schools for livestock keepers.
- 5.6.8 However, it may also reduce the immediate transferability of some project outputs, by moving away from a more global or regional public goods approach. It also raises the question as to why funding for this type of research is being managed from the U.K., rather than supporting, say, block funding of NARS in selected focus countries. In addition, there will still be ideas for good research which emerge from the research community, and have strong global public goods attributes. Care must be taken to maintain space for these ideas also. These concerns are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

Involvement of Intermediate/ Uptake agencies

- 5.6.9 PMs have a responsibility to identify uptake pathways for their research outputs and to identify appropriate target organisations to act as intermediaries between the researcher and the end-user to promote adoption and deliver information. Traditionally the model has been one of the researcher developing a product which s/he passes on to the extension system, for adoption, or to a development agency or NGO for use in a development programme. Sometimes this approach has worked well, particularly if there have been good links with ongoing development work, such as projects funded by DFID country offices. However, it is a difficult process to manage from the U.K., as the necessary contacts and networks need to be maintained. This is probably easier for a relatively small and close professional community such as aquaculture than for some of the larger and more diverse programmes such as CPP and CPHP. The difficulty of maintaining links with developmental activities has increased as DFID country offices have moved away from funding large-scale projects towards more emphasis on direct budget support within the framework of PRSPs. Greater autonomy of DFID country programmes has also led to a perceived diminution of interest in NR research projects and more difficulty engaging the country offices as intermediate agents.
- 5.6.10 Increased involvement of southern research partners in the design of projects has, in some cases, helped increase the linkage with local uptake agents, but some programmes have recognised a need for a more systematic approach to improving uptake linkages. For example, a number of the NR International managed projects have employed regional coordinators who have, amongst their responsibilities, the promotion of research outputs and maintaining the profile of the research at national and regional level. These coordinators have helped develop and maintain links between UK and local researchers, but also between local researchers and government agencies and policy makers. In one case which came to the team's attention during the country visits, the regional coordinator was able to create links between researchers and the national office of another bilateral agency which led to follow-up funding for an RNRRS project which was entering the developmental phase.

²¹ Pluralistic research provision and dissemination has been widely promoted by DFID country offices, and now by the World Bank in its African Agricultural Productivity Programme.

²² It can be argued that the processes of participatory research and dissemination methods developed by some of the programmes are in themselves these are not written up and regarded as the main objective of the research process by the PMs.

5.6.11 The coalition approach adopted by CPHP has taken this a step further by encouraging the involvement of uptake agencies at the earliest stages of project design, thereby creating greater ownership of the output by NGOs or extension systems of the project output. The emphasis on the innovation process has moved the focus away from research as a stand-alone service, towards addressing the totality of the process from researcher to end user. This recognises the importance of institutional change in impact-oriented science, particularly where there is lack of capacity in the promotion process, which is often dependent on weak and under-funded extension systems. The initial results from the evaluation of this change in approach by CPHP are promising, and indicate that research outputs are much more closely linked into the dissemination and uptake process than under the previous approach, but it is too early to say whether this will lead to sustainable impact, or whether any improvement will be worth the extra costs involved in managing this kind of approach to research and innovation.

Approach to Dissemination

5.6.12 In the last two to three years, the focus of the programmes has shifted away from initiating new research streams to ensuring that the outputs from previous and ongoing research projects are captured in accessible products targeted towards various types of user: the research community, development agencies, government organisations, both at policy level and the extension services, the newer service providers, such as NGOs and the private sector, and the ultimate beneficiary, in many cases the resource-poor farmer. Many of the programmes have developed dissemination or communication strategies, either focussed around project clusters (LPP, for example) or individual projects (AFGP). CPP has communication strategies at programme, cluster and project level. LPP contracted three UK organisations to act as dissemination/ promotion advisers, who are now focussing on scaling up activities.

5.6.13 Some programmes have funded projects to examine the effectiveness of different dissemination models, for example the use of radio soap operas, or CD toolboxes. LPP and AHP are promoting touch screen information kiosks in India. A number of programmes have invested in more accessible websites, to enable easy access to project results and briefing documents. There has been considerable impetus to get products out into the hands of those who can take forward the results of the programmes, as the RNRRS reaches its final years.

5.6.14 There have also been efforts to promote project outputs in a more integrated manner. CPP, LPP and CPHP have combined forces in Bolivia, under the INNOVA project, which is developing mechanisms for linking demand with the supply of agricultural research, within the new government framework for agricultural research and extension (SIBTA). The overall purpose is to strengthen technology innovation systems in potato based cropping systems, from a cross-programme perspective. PHFRP has also developed a project to promote its research outputs within a livelihoods framework, the Cambodia Post -Harvest Fisheries Livelihoods Project, which is building the capacity of the Community Fisheries Development Office.

5.6.15 As these uptake activities have been concentrated in the last two years, there are limited opportunities to assess their success, and learn from the experience. There also appears to be no systematic way of identifying the factors which lead to successful uptake for projects which address the enabling environment. Are there systematic ways of influencing policy, or is it more a question of being opportunistic and flexible in approach? NRSP is considering whether there are systematic ways of influencing policy or whether it is a question of being opportunistic and flexible in approach for one suite of projects (Rain Water Harvesting) but this is one area where DFID could benefit from carrying out an independent study after the RNRRS has come to an end, to identify possible lessons to inform future activity on uptake and dissemination.

5.7 Key Findings on Poverty Focus and Contribution to Programme Purpose

5.7.1 Despite the lack of conclusive impact data it appears that RNRRS has had some impact on poverty, and that the poverty focus has increased during the past five years. The key findings in this area are:

Poverty focus of project design

- In terms of PAM, 7 programmes have enabling focus, 3 have inclusive focus
- For PSP, FMSP, FRP, NRSP, LPP more than 50% of projects have a moderately or very high contribution to purpose
- Almost half of all projects are aimed at levels D and E, the promotion of research outputs to target institutions and their adoption by those institutions.

Evidence of poverty impact

- Direct evidence of a poverty impact is limited but:
 - Few projects have formal external evaluations and to date no project has had a full external impact assessment.
 - There is no mechanism for undertaking the kind of broad-reaching impact assessment that could justify the investment of the scale of funding of the RNRRS in terms of either economic benefits or impact on livelihoods.
- The Surr report²³ recommends that DFID should be required to report more regularly and effectively on the impact of its research programmes, summarised in a single report, made publicly available every three years;
- Three years is too short to identify impact and follow-on projects are needed with in-built mechanisms for commissioning of objective impact assessment;
- Many projects are now undertaking impact assessments but there is no centralised system for collating and analysing these results;
- Consideration is needed as to appropriate ways to monitor the impact of International Public Goods (IPGs).

Poverty impact at policy level

- Many of the programmes appear to have engaged successfully, through policy briefs and workshops, with policy makers, and international agencies;
- DFID claims that it has increased the poverty focus and emphasis on capacity building within CGIAR but the Team has not been able to confirm this;
- Majority of projects have developed technologies and methods which have potential for increasing productivity and/or reducing poverty;
- A majority of the projects have already had impact on the scientific community, in terms of adoption of methodologies pioneered by the projects;
- There are examples of impact on legislation but the experience is not widespread;
- In terms of evidence of impact of successful projects on extension systems:
 - There is virtually no evidence of economic impact at regional or national levels although there are prospects for such impacts in the future;
 - Uptake worked well where there were good links with ongoing development work, such as projects funded by DFID country offices.
- DFID would benefit from carrying out an independent study after the RNRRS has come to an end, to identify possible lessons to inform future activity on uptake and dissemination.

²³ M. Surr et al., Research for Poverty Reduction: DFID Research Policy Paper, November 2002

Poverty impact at beneficiary level

- A number of current projects, particularly those managed by non-traditional research partners such as NGOs had strong focus on poor
- Based on discussions at country level, it appears that almost all projects have had short term positive impact on the incomes of the poor at the community/local levels among the limited number of participants in project activities, though this may, in part, be the result of free services and inputs made available by the project.
- There is some evidence of spread to neighbouring communities in the majority of the projects.

Future impact

- A number of changes in project design and implementation since 1999 increase the chances of poverty impact. These include:
 - More emphasis on consultation with potential end-users in stakeholder workshops at early stages in the project design and implementation;
 - Increased involvement of southern research partners in the design of projects has, in some cases, helped increase the linkage with local uptake agents;
 - Many of the programmes have developed dissemination or communication strategies, either focussed around project clusters;
 - Different innovative methods in dissemination employed e.g. radio soaps, CD tool boxes, touch screen information kiosks, Websites.