

A Researcher's Guide to Working with the Media

Produced for the Chronic Poverty Research Centre
by the Panos Institute, London, 2005

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1. Introduction

The contents of this guide were informed by a series of interviews conducted by Panos London in December 2004 with researchers, communications specialists and administrative staff from CPRC, ODI and Development Initiatives. A number of key themes emerged from these interviews.

Almost everyone Panos spoke to was keen to develop a more strategic approach to media engagement, specifically citing the need to develop key messages, clarify aims and develop systems to support work across CPRC country partners. On a more practical level most interviewees asked for information about how they could engage with the media immediately and independently (without having to seek guidance from CPRC or ODI public affairs specialists, or wait for the development of a broader CPRC communications strategy). Most felt that space for autonomous decision-making would be critical to a workable CPRC media strategy. Interviewees also talked about the need to build the financial costs of media engagement into budgets and create incentives to increase the value of these activities. Others simply wanted more information about why they should engage with the media, the options for doing so and possible positive and negative outcomes.

In response, this guide has been designed both to support CPRC strategic thinking on media engagement and address CPRC researchers' need to act autonomously. Step-by-step practical advice on working with different sections of the media has been combined with information about the options available and recommendations about what to consider when developing a media strategy. This guide is predominantly aimed at UK staff but many of the points are relevant for CPRC staff internationally. However, specific sources of information on the media in each relevant country do need to be developed. The accompanying background paper *Getting into the Kitchen: media strategies for research* examines some of the current and potential connections between policy, research and the media as well as working through in more detail the steps to follow in developing a media strategy.

1.1 Why Should CPRC Engage with the Media?

Bringing chronic poverty research to the attention of journalists can help you to:

- **Inform and share findings with the general public, specialist audiences and policy-makers**

The media is key to any attempts to reach new and wider audiences outside CPRC's research community or established audience. In terms of building media knowledge of and interest in chronic poverty issues, media engagement will be crucial in enabling CPRC to make visible the experiences of those trapped in poverty.

However, media coverage also has the potential to reinforce prejudices which CPRC wants change. Key messages need to be considered carefully and in the light of an understanding of the media environment.

- **Strengthen links with other organisations and networks working on chronic poverty issues**

Successful communication is interactive and involves the building of alliances and networks. The media can be part of a process which enables two-way communication between a range of stakeholders, acting as a connector in building links between groups interested in chronic poverty, not least through the internet.

- **Generate wider public debate of research findings**

The media provides a forum for debate at local, national and international levels. The media can provide an opportunity for those often excluded from discussions to share their views on CPRC research findings, conclusions and recommendations.

However, at times research may be highly sensitive (i.e. critical of government policy). High profile media coverage could be counter-productive. Any plans to generate wider public debate through the media must be based on a thorough knowledge of the different media in the country and their different audiences.

- **Influence policy and practice**

Research findings are only one of many competing sources of information which are taken into account in policy making. In this context, it is important for CPRC researchers to reach as many stakeholders as possible and become part of a wider dialogue on pro-poor policy change. The media has a key role to play in helping CPRC researchers to become part of general policy discussions, that is to "get into the kitchen and become part of the soup-making" that makes up policy development.

Promoting media interest in each piece of research can result in "issue fatigue" for both the media and researcher. However, there will be key moments in the policy process that new research can feed into and points when a critical mass of research findings make media engagement important.

- **Enable CPRC to be accountable to the public both in the UK and in-country**

There is an argument that researchers have a moral responsibility to share research findings. Having researched in the south there is an ethical pressure to share with country populations – CPRC will need to work through whose responsibility this is. Being funded by British taxpayers there is a similar pressure to share findings in the UK. The media is one means of fulfilling part of this responsibility. However, there are also ethical considerations which may limit this – for instance, research may have been gathered in confidence, limiting researchers' ability to share findings publicly, or at least affect how these are shared. Further ethical issues include considering who has the right to decide whether to share research findings with various publics.

- **Stimulate others to challenge policy makers to respond to research findings**

The media can stimulate and build public interest in chronic poverty and also take on a particular campaigning role itself. In the south, media engagement is essential to the CPRC aim of informing the poorest and enabling them to demand basic services. Radio is often a particularly effective medium for informing the poorest communities living in isolated areas about their rights. This can also be achieved through working with local community-based organisations. In the UK, CPRC research can be linked to others demanding donor responses to poverty (e.g. through the Make Poverty History Campaign). Media engagement can contribute to others demanding responses to research findings.

- **Market and raise the profile of CPRC's research programme, CPRC itself or an individual CPRC researcher**

CPRC has already had positive experiences of engagement with the media which have contributed to success in raising the profile of issues, creating links with the media and stimulating government responses. Becoming a respected credible commentator on poverty issues can be assisted by media coverage.

However, in some cases high profile media coverage can be counter-productive to a programme. There is a risk that credibility could be damaged, or that a researcher can become labelled a government critic.

Don't be put off by the risks highlighted here. By acting on the advice laid out in this guide in you can significantly reduce these risks. For example, by building up relationships of trust with journalists and providing materials in an accessible manner you will increase media understanding of your research messages. In many cases the opportunities that media engagement presents make the risks worth taking.

1.2 What Can CPRC Researchers Contribute?

The media needs you. A public affairs or communications specialist can be relied on to handle the media well, but it is your in-depth understanding of poverty that journalists and broadcasters are really interested in. It is you that can get across the complex issues that your research reflects and bring both human interest (drawn from case studies, household surveys or anthropological content) and credibility to a news story.

1.3 Developing Your Media Strategy

The media is interested in you and your research, but engaging with them effectively will take time and effort. Whatever your reasons for wanting the media to cover your research, you will need to think carefully about your media strategy before making contact with journalists. Consider the following:

Time

How much time can you realistically put aside to liaise with journalists?

Financial Resources

Have you built funds for dissemination or media engagement into your research budget?

Skills

What relevant skills do you have in your research team? (e.g. outgoing individuals happy to be interviewed or people with the writing skills to put together press releases or feature articles).

The support available to you

How can the non-research staff working at CPRC best assist you (i.e. public affairs, communications and administrative specialists)?

The content of your research

What kind of 'story' might your research produce? Will it be 'news' or more suited to a feature article which draws out the human interest?

Your message

What key points do you want to convey? Whether it is explaining what your research is about, what you have found or what are the policy implications, make sure you can say these in 2-3 key points. These should be simple and jargon free.

CPRC's broader communications strategy

Do your plans fit within any broader CPRC communications strategy? How much scope is there for autonomous decision-making?

2. Planning Your Engagement with the Media

2.1 How much do I need to do?

Much of the preparatory work in 2.2 (see below) can benefit from input from communications specialists or support from administrative staff. However, as it is you that must make contact with journalists you will at least need to oversee the work.

Decisions about which media to target and selecting key messages (see 2.23 and 2.31) will need to fit with any broader CPRC communications strategy. The level at which you can make these decisions autonomously should be addressed in any such strategy or discussed with your line manager. Ideally broad criteria should be set out which allow for flexibility in disseminating a variety of research findings to a variety of media. Since it is you who will be ultimately communicating the message, you should have input into the development of messages and be happy with the final version.

The same goes for building relationships with journalists (see 2.32). It is you that journalists are interested in and therefore you are the best person to make contact with them. Although press releases don't necessarily need to be written or

sent by you (see 2.42), you will need to be accessible to be contacted by journalists after they have been sent and will therefore need to have been involved and informed about what is going out. If an interview is requested the invitation should be accepted by a member of the CPRC research team rather than a public affairs specialist if at all possible.

2.2 Before the Research Starts

Be clear about any CPRC communication strategy and then your own objectives for engaging with the media. Take this into account when deciding which media to target. It is also important to consider the time and resources required to produce different types of media content and to build these into your research budget.

2.21 Decide which media to target

UK print media (national newspapers and weekly magazines) – important if you want to have a high profile and stimulate a UK government response.

UK broadcast media (radio and television) – as above and to increase public debate on chronic poverty issues

UK and international specialist press – read by influential people in the chronic poverty field

Online media (websites, e-forums and newsletters) – useful for reaching new audiences quickly and cheaply

Country media – important if you want to simulate a country government response or reach local stakeholders to raise public debate and increase CPRC accountability in the country your research concerns:

- **National Press Print** (print and broadcast media) – important to stimulate a country government response
- **Regional Press** (print and broadcast media) – important to reach local government decision-makers and civil society organisations
- **Local or community media** (broadcast and print) – useful for reaching street level bureaucrats and community based organisations, raising public debate, invigorating the CPRC research agenda and increasing CPRC accountability.

2.22 Think about the type of media content that your research could produce

Print

News Report, News In Brief, News Backgrounder, Feature, Investigative Feature, Comment or Analysis (essay), Interview, Opinion Piece (editorial or columnist), Letter, Cartoon, Announcement

Broadcast

News, Announcement, Spot (30-60 second advert or public information filler), Documentary, Feature or Mini-feature, Talk Show, Drama

2.23 Plan the timing of your research project carefully

Journalists like reasons to tell a story. Launching your research around the time of an appropriate newsworthy event, such as a campaign, a UN day, an intergovernmental conference or a roundtable meeting, will make the media more likely to cover it (see the sample events diary for ideas). Be as opportunistic and creative as possible in tying research to events and topics.

Box 1 - Key Messages

It often takes considerable time and thought to distil a message, but make sure when dealing with the media you have prepared 1 or 2 clear points.

You may also want to think about messages for your broader research programmes and even the CPRC itself as well as or instead of messages from individual pieces of research.

Example Past Messages* used by CPRC

- Social protection should have a higher profile in policy-making (Manchester)
- Pro-poor growth is about quality not quantity (Manchester)
- It is our patriotic duty to do something about poverty (South Africa)

When creating your message:

- Remove any confusing jargon or terminology (phrases such as 'social protection' and 'pro-poor growth' may not be appropriate for your target media)
- Unless your media strategy is designed to be confrontational, steer clear of overly negative messages (such as 'the Millennium Development Goals aren't working'). Your target media will probably not want to cover very gloomy stories and is interested in research which has clear recommendations for action.
- Be careful not to oversimplify your message (a key message could be that poverty is complex).

**Source: Interviews conducted by Panos London with David Hulme and Andries De Toit in December 2004.*

2.3 During the Research

Work out when you will be producing information that will be of interest to journalists. Will you only want to talk to journalists when the final paper is published or will interesting information be produced earlier in the project (e.g. household surveys, case studies, initial findings)?

At this stage you should begin to think about the key messages you want to communicate. These should be in line with the aims of any broader CPRC communications strategy.

2.31 Decide on the key messages you want to get across

- Pull out 1 or 2 key points that your research makes or questions it is asking.
- Follow the news. Ask yourself if you have past or current research findings that can be used to inform current public debates.
- Think about what kind of story you have. Is it a news item linked to a specific date, or a feature story* such as a human interest piece, an opinion piece or a survey based on in-depth research?

**Feature articles depend more on personal contact with the journalists so you will need to catch their imagination. Ideally you should approach a journalist with whom you already have a relationship about a features story (see section 2.32) for advice on building relationships with journalists).*

2.32 Build relationships with a handful of journalists

Step 1 - Put together a list of journalists

Start by reading newspapers and listening to radio/TV programmes (not just your favourites) with a view to noting the name of potentially interested journalists.

Use online directories to find contact details for newspapers, radio and television stations:

www.newspapersoc.org.uk – most newspaper titles in the UK

www.itc.org.uk – television stations in the UK

www.mediauk.com – television, radio stations and newspapers throughout the UK

Step 2 - Make contact

Once you have general contact details, phone the newsdesk at each organisation to get names, job titles and contact details of the people you want to contact.

Wait until you have some 'new' information to give the journalists before calling them. This could be findings from the primary data as they emerge or details of events such as public meetings arising out of the research project.

Introduce yourself to these contacts with a brief phone call, find out the best time to send the person information, the 'lead in' times for their publication (i.e. how soon they need it before it is printed, published or broadcast*) and whether they want it by fax or e-mail. Always make this call in the morning, as journalists are busy writing in the afternoon. Keep a record of the details of the person and when you last spoke to them.

** this could be just days for newspapers, but weeks or months for magazines.*

Step 3 - Focus on 1 or 2 journalists

Once you have identified 1-2 journalists who may be interested in issues that your research raises, build relationships with them to get a feel for what they are interested in. If they turn out not to be interested move on to someone else.

Keep your hand-picked journalists up to date with what's happening at every stage of your research:

- Tell them about new findings as they emerge.
- Invite them to attend events. Once they've met you face-to-face they are more likely to remember you. Journalists are more likely to use material from people they know and trust.
- Always respond promptly to any press enquiries. The way and speed with which you deal with them will affect the media's perception of you and CPRC and therefore the kind of coverage you get.

2.4 After Completing the Research

There are a number of ways to get your research findings into the media:

- Invite the journalists you've cultivated to cover a launch event or meeting.
- Send press releases to your target media (see 2.21 'Decide which media to target').
- Place a feature article, opinion piece or letter you have written (or ghost-written for the CPRC Director).
- Invite one of your selected journalists to collaborate with you on producing a feature.
- Offer a spokesperson to be interviewed or participate in a broadcast discussion.
- Organise a press conference for your target media.

Box 2 – Press Release Format

Use A4 letter-headed paper and put 'NEWS RELEASE' OR 'PRESS RELEASE', the date and your contact details at the top. Double space the text, leave 6cm blank at the top for the sub-editor to write instructions to the printer and a 4cm left-hand margin for the editor's amendments.

If you do not wish the story to be published at once, or if you want the journalist to know that nobody else will publish it before they do, write 'EMBARGO: Not for publication or broadcast before XX hours, XX date' at the top of the page.

Begin with a headline (this should be attention grabbing, therefore not too clever or mysterious). No more than 8 words long and use a bold font.

The first paragraph should be 1-2 sentences that sum up the main findings and are backed up with facts and figures (work out what you are trying to say and boil it down to its essence).

The rest of the text should distil the research into 3-4 main points, backed up with facts and figures (this should expand on the first paragraph, make sure you cover who, why, what, where and when).

Add a conclusion and the main policy implications for the way forward. At the end of the press release text type 'ENDS' in a bold font.

Follow the main text with your contact details again (where you will definitely be contactable for at least the next two days, both in and out of office hours)

Additional Information for editors. Include the word count, describe your institution in a few words, give relevant basic information and statistics and include your website address.

2.41 Inviting journalists to launch events or meetings

- Give them the best possible account of the event and the clearest explanation of why you're doing it. Tell them what's interesting about it for them.
- Make sure the right people are available to talk to them. These could be a senior research fellow, the CPRC Director or country research staff who were involved in the field work. Ideally these people should be well-briefed about the journalists who will be attending.
- Be a tour guide, take them around the office and introduce them to people who they'll get on well with.
- Make sure you have a good understanding of your colleagues' jobs so you can communicate on their behalf.
- Prepare a handout containing some background information about CPRC and the research project including a brief history and some facts and figures.

2.42 Using press releases

A press release must contain some real news – something that will be of interest to your target media (see 2.21 'Decide which media to target'). It must be well-written, simple and free of jargon or technical terms.

- Press Releases must mimic the style and format of a news story (see Box 2).
- For research it is easiest to link press releases to a launch event or public meeting.
- The press release should be sent out 2 days before a launch event. If you have time you could send out a shorter advance press release 10 days before.

Once you have written your press release ask yourself:

- Have you emphasised what's new about your research (news is all about novelty)?
- How does it affect perceptions outside the poverty research community?
- Will the reader finish reading and think, so what?

Sending your press release

- If possible, send it on Sunday*. The time and day of the week that you contact journalists is important. On Sunday not a lot happens and journalists need something to put in Monday's papers and on Sunday afternoon's news programmes.
- Send it early in the day. The later in the day something happens the less likely journalists are to cover it.
- Don't try to compete with a huge news story. Wait for a relatively quiet news period.
- Don't phone journalists in the afternoon. By then editorial decisions have already been made and they are busy writing.

**Whether this is possible or not will depend on how your target media prefers to receive press releases (see 2.32 'Step 2').*

Making a follow-up phone call

- You must phone to check that the press release has been received. Just a quick one will do. Did you get it? Will you be covering it? Do you need any more information?
- Be nice and make sure you're ready to summarise the story in 1-2 sentences. They're likely to be quite busy and offhand, but don't be put off.
- The first question the journalist will ask is "What's it all about then?" If you are contacting a broadcast journalist, this is your chance to prove that you are a suitable interviewee.

Once you have sent your press release be accessible

- Make sure you are available to talk to journalists. Have a mobile number that the press team can contact you on.
- Respond promptly to press enquiries. The way and speed with which you deal with them will affect the media's perception of you and the CPRC and therefore the kind of coverage you get.

2.43 Writing a feature article

Before you agree to write a feature article, make sure you have something striking and convincing to say about your research, and can illustrate it with concrete examples, quotes, human interest stories, and pictures.

The feature may have to be published as if it had been written by the CPRC director, or by a senior research fellow. If this is the case, make sure the 'ghost' author is happy with what you have written before you send it in. Give them the opportunity to make changes. Alternatively, the feature could be published as if it was by the paper's own staff.

- State the main points and argument clearly in the first paragraph – remember many readers only read the first paragraph.
- Keep to the length required by the editor.
- Read the paper first and familiarise yourself with the style the readers expect.
- Double-space, wide margins for sub-editor's amendments

2.44 Participating in television or radio interviews

If you agree to be interviewed it is because you have a message you want to communicate. The interviewer may have a different reason for interviewing you. Preparation is the key to success in getting your message across.

Step 1 - Before you agree to be interviewed find out:

- What type of programme it is. Who is the audience?
- What is the programme about?
- Why has the producer chosen to interview you?
- What does the interviewer know about you, CPRC and the topic?
- What is the interviewer likely to want to know about you, CPRC and the topic?
- Are other people going to be interviewed on the same topic for the programme? If so, who are they? What are they likely to say?

Step 2 - Once you have agreed to be interviewed ask:

- How long will the interview be?
- Will the interview be broadcast live, recorded or be edited before broadcast?
- How many minutes of the interview will actually be broadcast?
- Who else is being interviewed for the programme?
- What questions will the interviewer ask?

Step 3 - Then Prepare Yourself

Think of 3 key related points which will get your message across. For example:

- 1) Welfare should have a higher profile in policy-making
- 2) Current policy doesn't reach the poorest
- 3) Poverty continues to be passed on from generation to generation

Your audience can't take in much more information than this. If your message is complicated it will take a lot of thinking and skill to simplify it into three points. You will have to leave a lot out.

If you haven't done many interviews practice with a friend a couple of days beforehand, see how you do and find out which parts of your techniques you'll have to brush up on. Practice expressing your three points in simple straightforward language and spend some time with a colleague considering the challenging questions the interviewer might ask.

2.45 Tips for interviews

General Tips

- Have a purpose for doing the interview
- Aim for no more than 3 points/messages
- Give good examples. People love stories so identify an example or anecdote to back up your points.
- Find out as much about the interviewer's objective as possible
- Know what you want to say before the interview begins
- Assume the journalist is an expert in journalistic skills, but may or may not be an expert in your field – don't overestimate or underestimate.
- Breathe and relax – you'll be fine

After the interview:

- Remember, the journalists may have put the notebook away, turned off the microphone or the camera may have stopped rolling but what you say may still be quoted or paraphrased.

Box 3 – Useful phrases for handling interviews

Flagging up your main points

“Here are the three main points...”
“The most important point is...”
“What it all boils down to is...”
“The point I wish to emphasise is...”

Verbal Bridges

“What you really need to know is...”
“Yes, that sometimes happens, but the most important point is...”
“Let me put that in perspective...”
“That’s an interesting question, but even more interesting is...”
“What’s important to remember is...”
“That’s not my area of expertise, but what I can tell you is...”
“And don’t forget...”
“Let me just add...”
“To help everyone understand, let me give you some background information...”
“What that means is...”

Tips for TV Interviews

- Listen to the question.
- Present your main point first (e.g. ‘welfare should have a higher profile in policy-making.’, followed by ‘current policy doesn’t reach the poorest’ and then ‘poverty continues to be passed on from generation to generation’).
- Don’t get angry - be assertive not aggressive.
- Don’t be afraid to gesture naturally.
- Try not to fidget and beware of other nervous habits.
- Smile when appropriate.
- Don’t leave your chair at the end of the interview until someone indicates that you should do so.
- If the interview is taped, cutaway shots of the reporter nodding, or of you and the reporter in the interview setting may be shot for editing purposes – Remember, the interview is not over, stay alert of what you say and make sure your posture and facial expression are in keeping with the tone of the interview.

Tips for Radio Interviews

- The pace is often faster than on TV.
 - No-one can see you, so written notes can be used.
 - If using written notes, make sure you don’t just read them out - be conversational.
 - As no-one can see you make sure your tone of voice sounds enthusiastic. There’s no body language to help convey your enthusiasm.
 - Talk as if you are talking to a friendly acquaintance.
 - Use the word ‘you’ as if you’re talking to one person.
 - Use powerful, imaginative words and phrases.
 - Don’t ramble, remember to pause before you make a new point.
 - Be concise.
 - The interviewer may not have eye contact with you - sometimes the interviewer may be gesturing to a technician while you’re talking.
 - Be prepared for a cupboard sized studio.
- If the interview is conducted over the telephone:
- Prior to the call find out exactly what the interviewer wants from you.

- Make sure you use a phone where there will be no disturbances.
- Keep relevant materials by the phone and write down the key points you want to make.

Tips for Print Interviews

- Don't get lulled into a false sense of security just because there are no cameras or microphones.
- Print interviews tend to go on for 30 minutes or more. Remember to flag up or list your main points (see Box 3).
- Jot down any information you couldn't provide the journalist during the interview or need to verify first before providing it.
- Encourage the journalist to call you up if they need further information later or simply to verify the facts.

If the interview is to be conducted over the telephone:

- Arrange a time that is convenient for you.
- Ask what the interviewer wants exactly – find out about the story they plan to write (storyline), whether they are contacting other interviewees, and the context of the piece.
- Focus your mind on the task.
- Avoid any disturbances.
- Write down key points you wish to make.
- Keep relevant materials by the phone.
- Be friendly and polite in tone, but firm if necessary.
- Finish your call when you have made your points and don't want to make any more.
- If the issue is rather complicated to explain over the phone, invite the journalist for a face-to-face interview or offer to send over material first to avoid misreporting.
- If a journalist calls asking for an immediate quote, promise to call back and spend a few minutes preparing your ground. Remember to call back as soon as possible.

3. Make Use of Online Services

There are a lot of online services which specialise in getting research findings out to wider audiences, including the media. They offer a quick, virtually free method of exposing your work to new audiences. Once a paper is posted online, hundreds, thousands or hundreds of thousands of people can read it with no further cost to you. Administrative staff or volunteers could be involved in posting papers or summaries online with limited supervision.

Development Gateway

The Development Gateway is an independent not-for-profit initiative initially developed in the World Bank. The Gateway builds partnerships and information systems that provide access to knowledge for development.

Join different topic groups and upload research papers and other documents at <http://topics.developmentgateway.org>

ELDIS

ELDIS is a gateway to information on development issues, providing free and easy access to wide range of high quality online resources.

Submit research papers and other documents online at <http://www.eldis.org/contribute/cfadd/adddoc.cfm>

Global Development Network (GDN)

GDN is a global network of research and policy institutes working together to address the problems of national and regional development.

Submit research papers at www.gdnet.org/knowledge_base/research_papers/contribute_documents/index.html

id21

id21 is a free development research reporting service, offering the latest and best UK-resourced research on developing countries.

Submit research papers in abstract form at <http://www.id21.org/id21-info/style-sheet.html>

INASP (International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications)

INASP runs a "Directory of Free and Online Resources" as part of its Programme for the Enhancement of Research Information (PERI).

Browse this comprehensive catalogue of online journals, many of which cover development issues at <http://www.inasp.info/peri/free.html>

Livelihoods Connect

A service which provides information resources on the sustainable livelihoods approach to poverty reduction.

The Post-It noticeboard accepts submissions by e-mail, including short summaries of research papers. For details go to <http://www.livelihoods.org/post/postitboard.html>

Panos

Panos is a global network of institutes based in the UK, France, East Africa, Southern Africa, West Africa, South Asia, North America and the Caribbean. Panos works to promote an enabling media and communications environment worldwide and ensure the perspectives of people whose lives are most affected by development are included in decision-making.

Contact the relevant network member to explore possibilities for your research to be covered by in-country media. For contact details go to <http://www.panos.org.uk/about/worldwide.asp>

RELAY: Communicating Research

Panos London's RELAY programme works with media in the South to bring important research findings and recommendations to public attention.

For your research to be considered as the basis for an online print or radio feature, please e-mail details to relay@panos.org.uk. For more information and examples of past features visit www.panos.org.uk/relay

E-Forums and Newsletters

Get involved with e-forums and newsletters. A great variety of different online discussions and news lists exist - some provide the opportunity to discuss new knowledge and experience, some offer a record of government policy in various sectors or countries and others are focused on news and announcements related to a range of development themes.

Keep an eye open for e-forums and newsletters relevant to your research. Forums are often established in the run-up to important development events, so check the relevant websites for any opportunities to talk about your research.

4. Sample Events Diary - potential newshooks

Poverty and Development, UK and international, 2005

January

UN International Year of Microcredit

1st – Make Poverty History campaign launch

10-14th - UN Meeting for Sustainable Development of Small Island, Port Louis, Mauritius

26-30th - World Economic Forum, Davos, Switzerland

26-31st - World Social Forum, Porto Alegre, Brazil

February

28th Feb-11th Mar – 49th UN Commission on the Status of Women, New York

March

1-13th – Fair Trade Fortnight

8th – International Women's Day (UN Day for Women's Rights and International Peace)

11th – Red Nose Day

11th - Commission for Africa report launch

21st - Kofi Annan's Security and Development report launch

April

7th – UN World Health Day

10-16th – Global Week of Action for Trade Justice

11-22nd – UN Commission on Sustainable Development (focus on water and human settlements), New York

May

16th – World Debt Day, Jubilee Debt Campaign

June

1st - Africa Economic Summit

5th - UN World Environment Day

16th – UN International Day of the African Child

July

UK EU Presidency begins

6-8th - G8 Summit, Gleneagles, Scotland

13th - Twentieth Anniversary of the Live Aid concert

September

14-16th - UN General Assembly Special Summit on the Millennium Development Goals, New York

October

3rd – UN World Habitat Day

16th – UN World Food Day

17th – UN International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

November

20th – Universal Children's Day

December

1st – World AIDS Day

10th – UN Human Rights Day

13th – World Trade Organisation Ministerial, Hong Kong

tbc – EU summit, UK

References and Further Reading

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