



Story Ideas

Medicines development by Africa

There is little or no comprehensive information on the production of medicines in Africa and by African players. The Yaoundé Process investigated this and presented findings at the Global Ministerial Forum on Research for Health that was held in Bamako, Mali in 2008. In Mali, an open consultation in Bamako to allow countries to voice their needs was held. The open consultation was in preparation for an international meeting to be hosted by Cameroon later this year. Results of the Yaoundé Baseline Study of medicines production across Africa were presented at the open discussion. An international study showing scenarios and approaches that African countries can use to create their medicines development strategies was also presented at the open discussion. For more information about the Yaoundé Process visit: www.yaoundeprocess.org

Research for Africa's health systems

Results of a consultation with more than 150 high-level African scientists and policy-makers and northern institutions were presented at the November 2008 Global Ministerial Forum on Research for Health. The consultation centred on the relevance and impact of research on the strengthening of health systems in Africa. The study and a discussion at the Bamako meeting were a basis for a paper, to be published after the 2008 Forum.

Debate on 'Aid Effectiveness'

Alignment and Harmonisation in research for health: AHA Study: a special publication series on alignment and harmonisation of health research can be found at: <http://www.cohred.org/AHA>

Responsible vertical programming

Can international research for health programmes strengthen national research for health systems? In wealthy nations, a system for funding and managing research that responds to the health needs of their population is the basis of national health policies and services. The picture of research for health in the low-income countries is quite different. Yet there are several global health research programmes working in the world's poorest countries with a potential to add another contribution to national development. These programmes can support growth of these countries' research for health systems. A study by COHRED explores the effect of global disease-specific research for health programmes on research for health in low- and middle-income countries. Results indicate that 'vertical' programmes can become catalysts for improving research for health capacity in poor countries over the long term. However, for this to happen, the research programmes have to agree to invest in the development of research for health systems. The study shows that national research for health priorities are largely set, and development donors and programmes provide funding. This funding focuses on solving specific problems – such as TB, malaria, HIV/AIDS, child health, vaccine development and reproductive health. Some examples of the current situation summarised from the study:



- In Cameroon, 25% of all health research in 1999 was contracted directly to individual researchers. Government and institutional systems of governance were bypassed.
- In Zambia, only 12 health research projects were registered with the national Council of Science and Technology in 2006. This is a fraction of the existing research in the country.
- South Africa does not have a national register of externally funded research. Where information is available, it often covers clinical trials only.
- At the time of the study, Uganda was not providing national project funding for research for health , while income from externally funded research for health projects totalled some \$24 million.