

Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council

RAWOO

building bridges in research for development

Review of 1997 and 1998

Building Bridges in Research for Development

Bi-annual review 1997-1998

Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council

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Preface

This bi-annual report for 1997-1998 reviews the first two years of the Council in its new, international composition, with members from both developing countries and the Netherlands. It examines the major challenges in the Council's work, it presents the RAWOO approach to enhancing knowledge for development and the basic policy principles underlying this approach, and it reports on work in progress.

The past two years have been very rewarding and fruitful in terms of sharing experiences and learning from each other. The Dutch members of RAWOO have experienced that it makes a difference to discuss development research in direct dialogue with stakeholders from the South, instead of merely reflecting on these issues amongst themselves. The developing-country members of RAWOO have experienced that it is worthwhile to present their views directly to their colleagues in the Netherlands and to act as the co-architects of a new, joint programme in which their views are incorporated.

As RAWOO, we strongly believe that knowledge is an important prerequisite for development and that adequate research can contribute to better understanding of development issues; to better policy responses, management practices and action; and--in the end--to improved livelihoods and a better quality of life for the poor in the developing world. We also are convinced that the paradigm in development research has to shift in order to better respond to the challenges that developing countries are facing. In essence, these challenges are threefold:

1. Development research should respond to the needs and problems of developing countries themselves. This implies involving the local people who have a stake in research, government and society in the process of needs assessment and the setting of research priorities.
2. Addressing complex development issues through research in many cases requires linking disciplines that range from the natural sciences to the social and economic sciences and the humanities.
3. Imbalances in North-South research cooperation need to be redressed in order to build partnerships that are equal, genuine and sustainable.

These three challenges find their expression in the title of this report, 'Building Bridges in Research for Development'. This metaphor describes the major thrust of RAWOO's work. Enhancing knowledge for development requires building bridges between stakeholders, between disciplines, and between North and South.

All of the above sounds logical. Nevertheless, we find that putting these principles into practice is not easy. The international research community is inclined to focus its attention much more on issues that are on the agenda of the existing research centres in the North than on the priorities defined by stakeholders in the South. Most research programmes are in fact defined by the North, even if they focus on specific problems in the South. The challenge is to reverse that pattern and to solicit support from the North for research needs defined by the South. RAWOO's main contributions are to offer a forum where researchers and other stakeholders in the South can define their own agendas, and to foster cooperation with Dutch researchers on the basis of those agendas.

Secondly, the concept of interdisciplinary research may sound beautiful and logical, but it is hard to implement in practice. Most academic disciplines are so fixated on their own academic standards that it seems to go against their principles to allow other disciplines their own input. Nevertheless, most issues on the Southern agenda require cooperation between various disciplines, especially if they are issues defined not only by academics, but also by society-at-large.

Thirdly, there is a huge difference between the North and the South in terms of research capacity and facilities. Capacity-building in the South should have priority for at least two reasons: to provide researchers in the North with qualified debating partners, and above all to enable the South to set its own agenda based on its own context. There are thousands of qualified researchers in the South who have

PhDs from first-class universities. Of those who choose to continue their academic careers in the South, many can survive only by agreeing to work on Northern agendas. Unless it becomes possible for them to serve needs as defined by their own societies, they are bound to act as agents of their academic colleagues in the North.

We realise that it will take decades to correct this imbalance. Nevertheless, we believe that building up and supporting research capacity in the South deserves high priority, if only to enable Southern governments, in cooperation with their own researchers, to design the right policy instruments for setting their own development agendas.

The Council hopes that this report will inform the individuals and organizations in its national and international networks about the developments and challenges in its work, and that it will stimulate dialogue on new, innovative approaches to conducting research for development and new modes of South-North research cooperation in support of these approaches.

Gert van Maanen
Chairman, RAWOO

Part One Getting started as a new Council

1. RAWOO's new beginning in 1997

The new-styled RAWOO started its work in February 1997, when it was installed for a six-year term by the then Dutch Minister for Development Cooperation, Jan Pronk. Although RAWOO had already been established as a sector council in 1990, the event marked the beginning of a new period with some rather fundamental changes in the Council's mandate and composition (see box 1 and 2). The main task of the Council was reformulated, whereby more emphasis was placed on its role as a research programming body. However, the most important change was the fact that nationals of developing countries were appointed as Council members alongside Dutch nationals. As Mr. Pronk pointed out in his speech, this new composition marked a major change in the Council's history and, in his view, will no doubt have a major impact on the Council's work (see box 3).

Box 1 RAWOO's mandate

RAWOO was established by the Minister for Development Cooperation, also on behalf of the Minister of Education, Culture and Science and the Minister of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries. RAWOO is part of the system of sector councils set up by the Dutch government to provide recommendations on how scientific research can best be attuned to meeting society's needs. The needs to be met in RAWOO's case are those of developing countries. RAWOO acquired the status of sector council in January 1990 through a Royal Decree. RAWOO's principal tasks are: (1) to put forward proposals for research programmes, the coordination of research, and research infrastructure within the framework of existing government policy, and (2) to foster communication among the various parties involved in research for development: researchers, policy-makers and end users, both in the South and in the North. The Council's field of activity is described as 'research that is of relevance to the developing world'. Whether this research is conducted in the Netherlands or in another country does not matter, as long as it is funded entirely or in part by the Dutch government. Total government expenditure on development-related research is estimated at 300 to 400 million guilders a year. Disciplines are not prescribed; research can be in any field. The only requirement is that it is relevant and useful to the developing countries and to the makers of policy for Dutch development assistance.

Box 2 The Council's composition

Sector councils like RAWOO are composed of members from the research community, civil society organizations, and government departments. Given the tasks they have to perform, this multi-sector composition is essential for the way the councils operate. The new RAWOO has 15 members representing the research and user communities. Six of them are from developing countries. Members are appointed for a period of three years and may be reappointed once. The Council has three governmental advisors, one appointed by each of the Ministers involved.

Chair:

G.H.O. Van Maanen, Director Ecumenical Development Cooperative Society, The Netherlands

Members:

Dr I.S.A. Baud, Senior Lecturer Social Geography of Developing Countries , University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Dr J. Bouma, Professor of Soil Science, Wageningen Agricultural University, The Netherlands

Dr M. Diouf, Research Director CODESRIA, Senegal (as of January 1999)

Dr. Duong Quynh Hoa, MD and former Minister of Health, Vietnam (till January 1999)

Zelmyra Flores Cruz, Nicaragua (till May 1998)

Dr M. Guhathakurta, Associate Professor Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

Dr A. Klamer, Professor in the Economics of Art and Culture, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands (till January 1999)

J. de Milliano, MD and former Director of Médecins sans Frontrieres, The Netherlands (till April 1998)

S. Montañó Virreira, Sociologist and former Undersecretary for Gender Issues, Bolivia (as of June 1998)

Dr C. Mukherjee, Professor of Development Economics and Director Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum, India

Nguyen Thi Kinh, Vice Rector, Hue University, Vietnam (as of January 1999)

Dr J.B. Opschoor, Professor of Development Studies and Rector Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, The Netherlands

Dr J.M. Richters, MD, Professor of Women, Culture and Health, Leiden University Medical Center, The Netherlands

Dr E.J. Ruitenbergh, Director Central Laboratory of the Netherlands Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Dr W.J.J. Schipper, Professor of Literary Theory and Comparative Literature, Leiden University, The Netherlands

Dr J.J. Semboja, Executive Director Research on Poverty Alleviation Programme, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Dr L. Soete, Professor of International Economics and Director Maastricht Economic Research Institute on Innovation and Technology, University of Limburg, The Netherlands (till January 1999)

M. van Walt van Praag, Former Secretary of UNPO, The Netherlands (as of January 1999)

Advisors:

Dr J.E. van Dam, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, The Netherlands

M.L.E. Jansen, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, The Netherlands

J.G. Waardenburg, Professor of Development Economics at Erasmus University Rotterdam and Chief Scientist Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands

Box 3 Resumé of Minister Pronk's speech to the new Council

Minister Pronk started off by looking back over the past two decades of thinking about policy for development research. He said that RAWOO had played an important role in this process by bringing the various parties involved in research together and by stimulating debate. What proved to be difficult, however, was figuring out how to bring the views of researchers and policy-makers from developing countries into the process of policy-making and decision-making regarding research for development. Until recently, this was done in a rather ad-hoc way. But the new RAWOO will be operating in a different manner. The overseas members will be regular members who will function on an equal footing with the Dutch members. Mr Pronk urged the developing-country members to be as critical as possible and stressed that their inputs will be highly valued. The Council should also insist on receiving feedback regarding its work--from the Ministry, from partners in developing countries, and from partners in Europe. More generally speaking, it should strive to improve the link between research and

development policy. Mr Pronk went on to highlight the shift in Dutch government policy for development research that took place in 1991. A new mechanism for supporting demand-driven research initiated and implemented by the South--known as the Multi-annual, Multidisciplinary Research Programmes, or MMRPs--was introduced as the backbone of future research policy. Later, in 1994, RAWOO recommended also introducing a mechanism for supporting South-North research partnerships. The Council's recommendations led to the conclusion that both mechanisms are needed and can coexist. In recent years, the Council has already been bridging the gap between the two by involving itself in the MMRP programmes and by working towards North-South research cooperation driven by research needs in the South. The Minister speculated on the possibility of organizing systems for mutually influencing both mechanisms. As for the partnership approach, the Minister felt that it will be important for the Council to gain experience with new modes of North-South research cooperation, in which both partners are collaborating on an equal footing. Finally, the Minister said that the government--in response to RAWOO's advisory report 'A Medium-term Perspective on Research for Development'--has endorsed four priority research areas for the coming years: economy and environment, biodiversity, sustainable agriculture, and health. These areas were chosen from 12 recommended priorities, but the Minister added that the Council should feel free to come up with new themes.

2. Drawing up a work programme

The new Council acknowledged that the former Council had laid some important groundwork through its advisory report entitled 'Medium-Term Perspective on Research for Development', which contained recommendations regarding priority research themes as well as a research approach. Since the Dutch Minister for Development Cooperation had responded positively to a number of these recommendations, the Council felt that at least some of its activities should be directed towards putting these recommendations into practice, particularly those related to setting up South-North research programmes in the field of health and biodiversity along the innovative lines set out in the advisory report. Apart from this, the Council decided to put three new themes on its agenda: globalization, conflict and development, and research partnerships.

On the basis of these considerations, the new Council drew up a work programme which consisted partly of ongoing activities initiated by the former Council and partly of new activities. Almost two years have passed since then. During this period the Council had six plenary meetings where general policy directions, approaches, working methods, and work in progress were discussed. At the same time, Council working groups convened to discuss the progress of specific activities.

Meanwhile, proposals for collaborative South-North research programmes in the field of health and biodiversity have been submitted to the Netherlands government. New areas for research--globalization, and conflict and development--and the cross-cutting policy issue of South-North research partnerships have been put on the agenda and are being worked out.

3. Purpose of the document

In this context, the bi-annual review 1997-1998 has three specific objectives: 1) to reflect on the past two years and sketch the developments and challenges in the Council's work; 2) to communicate the RAWOO perspective, and its policies, approach and working methods, to individuals and organizations working in the field of research for development in the South and in the North; and 3) to report on work in progress.

The Council finds it important to improve its profile and to account for what it has been doing, both to the Ministers for whom it is working and to the research community and other interested parties in the Netherlands and in the developing world. Another important function of this document is to share information and to stimulate discussion on the issue of enhancing knowledge for development and determining the way that research and research partnerships can contribute to this. Also for this reason, RAWOO has recently updated and renewed its website, so that information on the Council's work and on ongoing activities is more easily accessible, and can be made available to a wider audience through the electronic networks connecting us on a global level.

Part Two Shifting the paradigm in research for development

A number of trends and developments, both in society and in science, have played key roles in shaping the Council's policies and its approach to research for development. The present report will first take a closer look at these challenges. Later it will consider how the Council has responded to these challenges.

4. Major challenges

Closing knowledge gaps

The importance of knowledge for development and the existence of knowledge gaps between and within countries are increasingly gaining attention in the international communities of science and development.

Development based on knowledge can indeed make a difference. Knowledge is important for guiding social and technological change, for making informed, evidence-based decisions, and for improving the livelihoods and the quality of life of the people in the developing world. However, research in the context of development is a means to an end and not an end in itself. It is an instrument for harnessing knowledge that can help provide insight into complex development issues, generate options for policy, management and action, and empower people and organizations in developing countries to cope better with their problems.

Countries and people differ in their capacity for acquiring, absorbing and using knowledge. Evidence suggests that these knowledge gaps--i.e., the unequal distribution of knowledge between rich and poor countries, and within countries between rich and poor people--are widening. Therefore, more needs to be done to reverse this trend and to narrow these gaps.

Countries like Canada, Sweden and the Netherlands have long recognized that knowledge can make an important contribution to development, and have therefore long supported special programmes for development research. Recently, major international organizations such as the World Bank and UNESCO have also emphasized the role of knowledge for development and the need to close knowledge gaps.¹

Enhancing research capacity in the South

Increasingly, organizations active in the field of research for development take the view that closing knowledge gaps requires that priority be given to helping developing countries to enhance their own research capacity. This includes the capacity to conduct research, to formulate and implement national research policies, and to create the institutions and enabling environment needed to support these efforts.

The RAWOO report 'Supporting capacity-building for research in the South: recommendations for Dutch policy', issued in 1995, was prepared at the request of the Minister for Development Cooperation. It analyzes the body of issues related to the objective of building research capacity in developing countries and identifies directions for future Dutch policy in support of this. The most important of these is the promotion of a broad, coherent approach to capacity-building which centers on three levels within the research system: the training of researchers (micro-level), the building up and strengthening of institutions (meso-level), and the creation of an enabling environment which is favourable to research and to its use for development (macro-level). As there are often considerable differences between the starting situations in the various countries, this approach will have to be worked out within a country-specific or region-specific context.

¹ The World Bank's World Development Report 1998 looks at the problems of development from the perspective of knowledge and argues that differences in income and human well being between rich and poor countries are related to knowledge gaps (World Bank, Knowledge for Development, 1998). See also the draft declaration prepared by UNESCO for the World Science Conference, which will be held in June 1999 in Budapest.

Accommodating new modes of knowledge production

Research for development cannot be looked at in isolation. We need a broader approach that seeks to capture the interactions between the different elements of national knowledge systems in developing countries: research, technological development and innovation, education, training and skills development, dissemination, and use.

In recent years the linear (or 'science-push') model of knowledge development, which presupposes that basic knowledge trickles down into applied knowledge and technological and social innovation, has been widely criticized as naive and its validity has been questioned, particularly in the context of the developing world. More realistic models are now being developed which incorporate the need to solve practical problems or meet development needs, whereby demand is influencing supply--that is, the type of research that is to be done. As José Goldemberg put it, 'In developing countries, government goals and the "demand-side" pull are often lacking. As a result, universities and research centres have become isolated from the rest of the country in an ivory tower, more connected to research centres in Europe or the United States than to the obvious needs of industry, agriculture or education in their own countries. ...It is important that developing countries avoid the allure of costly but ineffective programmes and establish a system that rewards solving practical problems. Although that emphasis may seem to stray from the tradition of academic research, the truth is that many seemingly mundane problems require very sophisticated tools and technologies'.²

New schools of thinking have emerged which are exploring new concepts of knowledge production, new research methods and techniques, and new organizational and institutional innovations better adapted to these new concepts (see box 4). Emphasis is placed on societal needs (or 'demand-pull') and on interaction between research demand and research supply, or between the knowledge producer and the knowledge user, be it in government, in the private sector or in local communities. Producing knowledge is one thing; equally important is the way new knowledge is absorbed, communicated and applied by end-users and potential beneficiaries in areas of public policy and society. The relevance and usefulness of research may be enhanced by involving representatives of user groups in research policy-making: that is, needs assessment, priority-setting, and implementation. Therefore, bringing together researchers, government policy-makers, and representatives of NGOs, the private sector and community-based organizations--and facilitating the interactions between them--is one of the key pillars of a successful knowledge policy.

Box 4 The second mode of knowledge production

The work of Michael Gibbons and others who have introduced the concept of the second mode of knowledge production as opposed to the first traditional mode, with which we are all more or less familiar, has given an enormous boost to the discussion on new concepts of knowledge generation and application.³ This second mode is characterized by:

- societal needs ('discovery in the context of application'). This includes both basic research and applied research.
- transdisciplinarity (integration of knowledge from different disciplines, but also integration of other sources of knowledge and skills);
- heterogeneous networks in which different knowledge producers--academic researchers, applied researchers, and consultants--are working together in close interaction with the potential end-users or clients;
- a different mode of quality assessment (based not only on peer review and scientific criteria but also on societal criteria and the views of other reviewers).

² José Goldemberg, physical sciences professor at the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil, and former top government adviser on science policy, in *Science*, vol. 279, 20 February 1998.

³ M. Gibbons et al., "The new production of knowledge: the dynamics of science and research in contemporary societies", London, Sage publications, 1994.

Linking locally specific and global knowledge

Two trends can be observed: the localization of knowledge systems, and their globalization. On the one hand--and this is a worldwide phenomenon--there is greater pressure on research and higher education systems to be responsive to the perceived needs of the societies which they seek to serve. There is thus growing appreciation for location-specific knowledge which is fundamental to servicing the changing needs of societies. On the other hand there is internal pressure within the research community to adhere to international scientific standards and to keep up with those at the international frontier in order to remain effective in the global science system.

In principle, global knowledge and locally-specific knowledge can complement and reinforce each other. Countries can acquire knowledge by tapping into the global knowledge base and by adapting this knowledge to local needs and specific contexts, while the results of country-specific or area-specific research can add to the global body of knowledge. But countries also have to develop their own national knowledge base in order to be able to serve essential national needs and priorities. Moreover, a national knowledge base and capabilities are necessary if a country is to be able to assess, absorb and adapt knowledge which comes from outside. According to Ndulu, '...there is a growing appreciation for location-specific knowledge in a rapidly evolving global knowledge system. This appreciation derives from the continuing "surprises" from experiences of specific regions or countries in declining with economic and social development. The world continuously learns from "best practices" and exceptions to received wisdom to augment its knowledge base. This provides opportunities for area-specific research to contribute to global learning, as long as avenues for effective exchange of information in internationally accepted formats exist.'⁴

The need for a systems approach to development issues

It is increasingly recognized that development issues must be addressed through a systems approach, for example in the areas of natural resources management and biodiversity conservation, public health, water and sanitation, education, and urban development. These issues have so many different aspects--technical, socio-economic, cultural and political--that they are too complex for any one discipline to handle. Harnessing knowledge to help solve these complex development issues in most cases requires linking a range of disciplines from the natural to the social and economic sciences, to the humanities. Integrating the issues through a systems approach means integrating disciplines and unraveling complex cause-and-effect relationships: that is, a broader approach that seeks to explain the interactions between the different elements.

The problem, however, is that although the need for multi- or interdisciplinarity is widely recognized, it is far more difficult to undertake such research in practice. In fact, there are some formidable barriers in the research system which hamper such research. The traditional disciplinary organization of research is stifling the need for interdisciplinary approaches, which call for teamwork across disciplinary boundaries that brings together researchers and professionals with different knowledge, skills and capabilities. The problems and barriers are well known and will not be repeated here. What should be done is to stop paying lip service and to build on experiences, lessons learned, and best practices which show what works and what doesn't.

Rethinking North-South research partnerships

The issue of research cooperation between developed and developing countries has been the subject of debate at a number of recent conferences and other forums, for example in Bern, Switzerland, and in Leiden, the Netherlands.⁵ Increasingly it is felt that there is a need to rethink the traditional mode of North-

⁴ Benno J Ndulu, "Development Research at the turn of the century and into the near future", (mimeo) 1997. The current debate between economists and geographers on the "new economic geography" also touches on the issue of area specific versus global knowledge (See *The Economist* of March 13th, 1999).

⁵ Daniel Maselli and Beat Sottas (eds), 'Research Partnerships for Common Concerns', Proceedings of the International Conference on Scientific Research Partnership for Sustainable Development, North-South and South - South Dimensions, Berne, Switzerland, March 5 -7, 1996. And: 'Research Partnerships for Sustainable Development', European Conference held under the auspices of the Dutch Minister for Development Cooperation

South collaboration in research and to open up new avenues for developing more equal, genuine and sustainable research partnerships.

The conferences mentioned above have highlighted certain imbalances in North-South research partnerships, which to a large extent are related to dependency relations and to differences between Northern and Southern partners in terms of power and control over agendas and resources.⁶ These unequal relationships are inclined to have certain adverse consequences:

- International priorities tend to take precedence over national or local priorities.
- Developing-country researchers only play a role in data collection and field experiments, instead of being involved in all stages of research.
- The North-South connection tends to be overemphasized, to the neglect of networking at national or local level within the South.
- Too much attention is given to the international publication of results, rather than to national needs for dissemination.
- There is too much emphasis on scientific relevance and not enough emphasis on development relevance.

Redressing these imbalances is important if partnerships are to be built that are sustainable, relevant, and rewarding for all partners concerned.

5. Shaping the RAWOO perspective

How should we respond to the trends and developments outlined above? That was the key issue the Council had to address as it was discussing the strategic policy directions it should follow and the approach it should take. During the past two years, ideas gradually evolved through a process of sharing experiences and exchanging views among the Council members and between the Council members and the overseas partners. What came out of this process is that we need new, innovative ways of conducting development research and of achieving South-North research cooperation if we are to meet the challenges we all face. What follows are the basic policy principles guiding the Council's work, and the key elements of the approach and working methods that have been developed. This is not to say that the thinking has ended here. Quite the contrary, ideas are still evolving in a continuous learning process that is being fed by actual experiences on the ground.

Policy principles

Three basic principles guide the Council's work. First, the Council believes that research for development must be needs-oriented and demand-driven in order to ensure that it responds to the problems and needs of the developing countries. It must aim at generating knowledge and insights that can contribute to better understanding of development issues, to better policy responses, management practices and action, and--in the end--to improved livelihoods for the poor. This means that the process of generating and applying knowledge is placed in an application-oriented, or development-oriented, context. This may include both basic research and applied research, and in many cases multi- or interdisciplinary approaches as well, since the multi-faceted nature of development issues often requires a combination of knowledge and skills from different disciplinary and institutional backgrounds.

Second, capacity-building and institutional development must be an integral part of efforts to enhance the role of research and knowledge for development in the South. In order to be effective, we need to strengthen the national knowledge system as a whole, not only in terms of research training and staff development, but also in terms of institutional mechanisms--for formulating and implementing research policies; creating an enabling environment; establishing networks with the user community in government departments, NGOs and community-based organizations; increasing skills for the management of

and the European Commission, Leiden, the Netherlands, March 1997 (proceedings forthcoming).

⁶ J. Bunders and C. Mukherjee, 'North - South research partnerships: redressing the imbalance'. Paper presented at the European Conference on Research Partnerships for Sustainable Development, Leiden, the Netherlands, 11-13 March 1997.

research; improving research infrastructure and facilities; and disseminating and utilizing research findings through effective communication and information channels.

And third, South-North research partnerships, as a vehicle for enhancing knowledge for development in the South, must be equal, genuine and sustainable. This means that we will have to redress certain imbalances in North-South relationships in research. A new type of research partnership is needed, based on mutual trust, understanding, sharing of experiences, and a two-way learning process. In such a partnership the various stakeholders and partners will work together on an equal footing at all stages and levels: during the process of setting the research agenda, as research programmes are designed and implemented, and in the governance and management of these programmes.

The three-pronged RAWOO approach

For the design of research programmes for development, the Council, together with its overseas partners, developed the three-pronged approach which lies at the heart of its work. Addressing development issues through research requires linking:

- the major stakeholders in knowledge organizations, government and society in the process of acquiring, absorbing and applying knowledge;
- knowledge producers and professionals from different disciplines and institutional backgrounds through multi- or interdisciplinary cooperation;
- researchers in the South and the North (which may also include South-South cooperation).

This three-pronged approach to harnessing knowledge for development is illustrated in figure 1. It is also what is referred to by the metaphor used in the title of this report. Building bridges in research for development requires linking stakeholders, disciplines, and North and South.

Working methods

As regards working methods, the key words are '*interactive*', '*process-oriented*' and '*learning-based*'. '*Interactive*' means involving local stakeholders as the prime movers in the agenda-setting process and facilitating the creation of heterogeneous networks of researchers, policy-makers, NGOs, and people at the grassroots level.

There is a broad range of methodological challenges involved in the process of interactive policy-making for research. Methods will have to be developed for involving the stakeholders in the research process. This includes participatory methods and techniques for identifying problems and setting priorities, and for translating problems into researchable questions. Linking up scientific disciplines confronts us with the fact that researchers employ different theoretical concepts and paradigms, different methods, and different temporal and spatial scales and levels of analysis.

Building mutual trust, understanding and consensus between all the actors and partners involved is not a one-time exercise but a process--a voyage into the unknown, a voyage of building on experiences, learning, and adapting to changing circumstances and needs--in short, a process of levelling off. In this context, it is also important that mechanisms be developed to ensure that the various stakeholders can truly identify with the programme and see it as something owned by themselves and not as something which comes from outside. Building long-term research partnerships cannot be done overnight. It takes time for partners to get to know each other, to learn what each wants, and to appreciate the differences and similarities between their perspectives, concepts, research methods, and cultural backgrounds.

Finally, there is the mutual learning which is the key to the RAWOO approach. This is a process of searching and learning through interaction--between the multitude of players in the development-research arena; between mainstream science and new modes of knowledge production; between indigenous knowledge and global science; between researchers from the South and the North; and between people with different cultural backgrounds, attitudes and behaviour.

Box 5 Joseph J. Semboja, RAWOO member and executive director of the Research On Poverty Alleviation Programme (REPOA) in Tanzania

'In my opinion the Council plays three main roles. The first is the role of innovator and thinker. In this role it has to be ahead of many stakeholders; it must be able to identify research needs and methods. Although the Council is not responsible for developing research agendas, it has the duty to test the ideas and to create an environment that enables the relevant stakeholders to decide and act. The Council's second role is that of mediator between the Netherlands government and researchers (from North and South). The Council can transmit the Dutch government's ideas about research needs to the researchers, and then facilitate their implementation. At the same time, the Council can transmit to the Dutch government the ideas of researchers (in North and South) regarding relevant research areas, and pass on research results that are relevant to policy. The Council's third role is to facilitate collaboration and partnership between Northern and Southern researchers, and among Southern researchers themselves. The Council has the duty to convince researchers that collaboration and partnership produce more gains, and that the isolation of one partner, or dominance of one partner over the other, diminishes the achievements of both.

The current unequal relations between Northern and Southern researchers is a culture that will take time to uproot. Unfortunately it is perpetuated by the South's lack of financial resources and its currently inadequate capacity for research. While financial constraints could be removed by allocating research funds to the South, it is more difficult to deal with the lack of human research capacity. This has to be built up through collaboration between experienced and inexperienced researchers. It is unlikely that industrial models can be applied to the human capacity-building needed for research. The challenge facing the Council is therefore how to develop a framework for collaboration and partnership between Northern and Southern researchers which will produce maximum benefits for the researchers on both sides. This framework will have to be developed on the basis of experience. To provide an environment that will enable Northern and Southern researchers to work together, we will have to learn by doing.'

Box 6 Hans Opschoor, RAWOO member and Rector of the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, the Netherlands

'Being a member of RAWOO is a pleasure--in fact, a very useful pleasure, from my point of view. I hope that those who are to digest the products of RAWOO will find it worthwhile too--but in this report I am to be more concerned with my own experiences.

Reflection on how to advance research programmes which are not only relevant (in that they address the knowledge side of issues of public or societal significance) but also essentially driven by the concerns of the stakeholders (in the jargon, 'demand-' or 'needs-driven') is very refreshing in itself. Most academic research policy is driven by the concerns of the researchers and their organizations--it is based on the new questions emerging from ongoing research. One could also say that it is driven by the supply side. My experience with looking at research from a 'downside-up' perspective dates back to 1983, when I joined a research advisory council similar to RAWOO: the one for research on the environment and nature. Since 1990 I have been the Chair of that council. What makes RAWOO special is the fact that the stakeholders are defined as being representatives of countries in some of the economically less 'developed' parts of the South. It took a while before the discussions turned into a real dialogue, but they have. And it does make a difference.

My own concerns are related to the social aspects of sustainable development, broadly defined to cover much more than ecological aspects. I expect that these issues will gain in significance, if only because of trends I perceive in environmental changes at the local, regional and--especially--the global level. These changes are largely triggered and accelerated by ongoing economic growth unless a qualitatively new kind of development emerges. In RAWOO we work on this in several ways: by looking at changes in biodiversity, by promoting the design of more sustainable patterns of land use, and by trying to give some substance to concerns over the implications in developing and emerging economies of changes in production and consumption patterns triggered by ecological concerns. But what RAWOO does is force me to put these issues into a new perspective. I am asked at the same time to look at research questions coming from those more concerned with issues of conflict, security and globalization. This is both challenging and inspiring.

What makes RAWOO potentially fruitful is not only that it looks at a range of research issues from its special 'bottom-up' perspective, but also that it reflects on how to maximize the benefits of this by placing its efforts in a

comparative, cross-cultural framework. This deepens our understanding tremendously, and I do hope that RAWOO will be able to communicate this to those whom we advise. Out of all of this, new research partnerships are showing up already--and will continue to emerge--between Dutch researchers and their institutions, and with colleagues elsewhere. That is a contribution not only to development cooperation but also to the wider interests subsumed under the heading of 'international cooperation'. It is exciting to be part of this, which will be mutually rewarding in the long run for all the countries and research communities concerned.'

Box 7 Chandan Mukherjee, RAWOO member and Director of the Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum, India

'At the time I joined RAWOO in 1997, it was not clear to me what exactly my role would be and what I should expect as a researcher from the South. The main basis for my decision was the advice from my professional friends in Holland, who said I should accept the invitation. They felt that I could play a meaningful role as a member in RAWOO from the South. I soon discovered that I was in the midst of a set of people from Holland and from developing countries who were serious about fostering development-related research that would be relevant and useful in South and would go beyond personal achievements. I was also impressed by the obvious sincerity of Mr Jan Pronk, the Honorable Minister for Development Cooperation at the time, whose idea it was to include researchers from the South in the new Council. It was a rare experience to meet a politician (in any part of the world) who has a total conviction that research can play a constructive role in development action, and who has a vision of the nature of the relationship between research and policy—who sees it as a two-way, interactive process. Up to then, both in the North and in the South, the role of research cooperation in general had been limited to a notion of 'transfer of technology' or 'transfer of knowledge'. The rhetorics of development cooperation may have changed since the War, but the content had remained the same. But the mission of RAWOO questions the very basis of this notion.

We, the Council members, come from different disciplines and professional backgrounds, but it was quite inspiring to see how quickly the whole group came to share a commitment to the mandated mission of RAWOO--to promote research and research capacity, both in the South and in the North, which are relevant and accessible to the South and which are also owned and can be used by the South for its own development. It is not that we in the Council speak with the same voice. In fact, we have different points of view, and different perceptions about what needs to be done, what are the priorities, and what are the roles of Southern and Northern researchers in producing the required knowledge. We even differ on such fundamental issues as what is relevant. So the picture is not entirely rosy, but we do share a commitment.

The central theme in RAWOO's mission is the need to establish South-North partnerships on an equal footing in order to build capacity (both in the South and in the North) for conducting research on the development problems of the South. The challenge lies in developing such genuine partnerships against all odds.'

6. Designing South-North research partnerships

A major portion of the Council's activities in 1997 and 1998 were focused on the process of designing two collaborative South-North research programmes: one in the field of health research with Ghana, and one in the field of biodiversity research with the Philippines.⁷ These programmes were initiated as pilots in order to try out and test the principles and approach outlined in part two of this report—or, to put it another way—to put theory into practice and to follow the adage that the proof of the pudding is in the eating, although 'doing' might be a better word here. The question was whether it would be feasible to design research programmes in a different, innovative way reflecting the paradigm shift advocated by the Council.

Both exercises were an attempt to break new ground in the way North-South research partnerships are being designed, by emphasizing the following:

- The developing country should take the lead in defining its own national research agenda (in this case for health research in Ghana and for biodiversity research in the Philippines) through a consultative process involving the relevant stakeholders in research, government and society.
- Dutch research capacity should be mobilized on the basis of research needs identified in the South; this capacity should be attuned to those needs.
- A comprehensive approach is needed combining research activities, human resources development, institution-building, networking, and infrastructure development.
- The programme's governing and management structure should reflect the policy principles and research approach, following the conventional wisdom in organizational theory that 'structure follows strategy'. What this boils down to is that the stakeholders should be represented in the steering committees and that both partners should have an equal say and equal influence in decision-making and in the allocation of funds to research projects.

Consultative processes were started in the form of a series of activities, meetings and workshops. These included the following steps: 1) establishing a national working group of key persons from the various sectors and groups of stakeholders involved; 2) conducting a national agenda-setting workshop under the auspices of the national working group, with the aim of producing a national research agenda and recommendations for a management structure and implementation mechanism for the joint programme; and 3) conducting a programme-development workshop in the Netherlands aimed at discussing with the Dutch research community the ideas put forward by the developing-country partners regarding policy and the organizational framework for the joint programme.

Working along these lines proved to be a difficult and sometimes lengthy process, because of the interactive working methods used and because of the new roles for the actors involved—above all the new role for the Dutch researchers. But the process also showed that the process itself is important, and that helping developing countries to design their own national policies, institutions, and structures for research should be an integral part of the effort right from the start.

The programme proposals which resulted from these studies were submitted to the relevant Dutch government departments for funding in the spring of 1998. NEDA, the Development Assistance Directorate of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, welcomed the proposals and provided funds for the 'pre-implementation phase' of both partnership programmes, which is now underway. This phase is conducted under the joint responsibility of the Council and its partners in Ghana and the Philippines.

The health research initiative (Ghana-Netherlands partnership programme)

⁷ The health research programme was designed in close cooperation with the Health Research Council of the Netherlands (RGO).

The Ghanaian-Dutch programme of health research for development is aimed at improving public health and the provision of health care in Ghana, and is based on the objectives of Ghana's own medium-term health strategy. The programme is designed to introduce an innovative, coherent approach to research which has the following main features:

- Research should generate knowledge in support of the current and future changes in the health sector and, more in particular, should contribute to solving the priority health systems issues defined in the medium-term health strategy. These include: access to health services, quality of health services, efficiency in the use of resources, linkages in the health sector, and health-financing and health-technology assessment.
- Research in three fields will be integrated: biomedicine, health care, and social sciences related to health.
- The research process will feature the participation of Ghanaian government organizations, private health-care institutions, NGOs, and local communities.
- Support will be given not only to research projects but also to activities aimed at building research capacity and strengthening institutions. These include training, the establishment of networks and field stations, and various communication projects through which the research findings will be disseminated and applied.
- An equal and genuine partnership will be promoted between the Ghanaian and Dutch researchers.

The programme itself will be preceded by a pre-implementation phase. At this time the research needs will be specified in further detail, taking the five cross-cutting health systems issues as a point of departure. This will be done in close cooperation with the various parties who will be involved locally: researchers, policy-makers, health workers, NGO staff, and community representatives. The pre-implementation phase will also be used for setting up the programme's organizational structure. Meanwhile, a Joint (Ghanaian-Dutch) Programme Committee (JPC) has been established, which is responsible for steering the programme. The committee has six independent members: three from Ghana and three from the Netherlands, representing the various stakeholders and disciplines involved.

The action plan for the pre-implementation phase runs from February to December 1999. It will be implemented under the principal responsibility of the JPC and within the framework of the agreement between RAWOO and the Minister for Development Cooperation. The Health Research Unit of the Ministry of Health will serve as the secretariat of the JPC.

More information can be found at the RAWOO website, or contact Paul Smits at the RAWOO secretariat: 31 70 4260332 (tel) or email: apsmits@rawoo.nl

Box 8 A bird's eye view of health issues in Ghana

The total population of Ghana was estimated at 16.5 million in 1994. Ghana has one of the highest population growth rates in the world. Its population almost doubled between 1970 and 1994. If the country keeps its current growth rate of 3% per year, the population will be 19.5 million by the year 2000. The high level of fertility in Ghana produces a youthful age structure and a high dependency ratio. Present average life expectancy is 56 years. This average is heavily influenced by high infant and child mortality rates. Life expectancy for those who survive the first five years is 63 years. 45% of one-year-old children are not immunized, and national immunization coverage for the main child-killer diseases is 70%. Unlike the fertility rate, the death rate in Ghana has steadily declined over the years. The morbidity pattern has not changed significantly over the years, with the population suffering the same diseases--such as malaria, tuberculosis, respiratory and gastro-intestinal infections—and the same nutritional deficiencies. Non-communicable diseases like diabetes and cardio-vascular diseases are also beginning to assume significance, however. The emergence of new infectious agents such as HIV adds to the growing public health burden. Malaria continues to be the disease most commonly reported. It is the leading cause of mortality in children under five years. It is also a significant cause of adult morbidity, and the leading cause of work-days lost due to illness. The number of reported cases of tuberculosis has continued to rise, and there is an increasing risk of tuberculosis combined with HIV infection. Acute respiratory infections in children under five are second only to malaria in causing morbidity and mortality. Childhood malnutrition continues to be a major cause of ill health and death, especially among the poor. Ghana also faces a number of serious reproductive

health problems. Many adult women die from complications of pregnancy, childbirth or unsafe abortion, and the rate of HIV infection is increasing rapidly. The indicators for health and health-care delivery in Ghana show a strong correlation with the spread of poverty. Rural Ghana, in particular northern Ghana, records the poorest health in terms of the indicators. For example, only 11% of the population of the three northern regions have access to health facilities; these regions also record the highest child, infant and maternal mortality rates in the country. Factors beyond the health care system which contribute significantly to the relatively slow improvement of the health status of the population include poverty, the poor nutrition of vulnerable groups, low literacy rates especially among women, a high population growth rate, and limited access to safe water and sanitation. Ghana is faced with the challenge of reforming its health sector against the background of increasing demand as a result of high rates of population growth. The Medium-Term Health Strategy, issued in 1995, defines long-term goals for improving the health status of the population as part of a wider strategy to reduce poverty. The policy document provides a framework for guiding reform and delivery in the health sector. The overall objective of national health policy is to improve the health status of all Ghanaians. More specific objectives include increasing access--in both geographical and financial terms--to basic health services, especially in the rural areas; improving the quality of health care; establishing a health system effectively oriented towards delivery of public health services; improving efficiency in the health sector; fostering closer collaboration and partnerships between the health sector and the communities, between public and private sectors, and between allopathic and traditional providers of health care; and increasing efficiency in the use of resources. The three most important challenges facing the Ministry of Health are: decentralization of health care to the district level, which requires shifting resources and responsibilities to the district level and involving communities in the process of health reform; financial reform so that health services recover some of their own costs; and setting up a health insurance system (Ghana Health Service).

Box 9 Who are the stakeholders in the Ghana programme?

There are three major groups of stakeholders in Ghana: health researchers and their organizations, the health sector, and the users--the beneficiaries of health care services in the local communities represented by NGOs and community-based organizations. The Health Research Unit (HRU) of the Ministry of Health was established as a central body to address the broad needs of the Ministry with respect to using and stimulating research in relevant priority areas. The HRU runs three field stations, which are placed so as to correspond to the three ecological zones of the country (i.e., the northern savanna zone, the central forest zone, and the coastal zone). The most important universities and institutes conducting health research (in its broadest meaning, thus including biomedical, health-systems, and socio-economic research) are the following: University of Ghana, Legon; Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research; University of Cape Coast; University of Development Studies, Tamale; and University of Science and Technology, Kumasi. The health sector consists of health policy-makers and programme managers at national, regional and district levels, public and private, and allopathic and traditional health care providers. The three major NGOs related to health care and health research are: Integrated Social Development Centre, the Centre for the Development of People, and the Christian Health Association of Ghana. Apart from the Ghanaian stakeholders, there are international donors and researchers from the North who also have a stake in the research programme.

Box 10 Joost Ruitenber, RAWOO member and director of the Central Laboratory of the Netherlands Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service, Amsterdam, the Netherlands

‘Cooperation and exchange of ideas and concepts on research in a multicultural context is essential in a world in which interdependency is a prerequisite for a common development. The Council is a forum for formulating and examining new concepts relevant for research-based developments. The actual presence of Council members from the South has a profound impact on the level and colour of the discussions held in a constructive and personal mood. Research on health issues is discussed in a broader cultural framework. Health is more than a technical subject, it is part of the way of life. The current discussions on how to develop a coherent Ghanaian-Dutch health programme based on a balanced partnership is a good example of the style the Council has developed. Listening to the many new and old ideas about health care, and examining the possibilities they offer at all levels, is a real challenge. The key words are “access to”, “quality of” and “efficiency in” health care linked to an affordable system. Selected technologies will be based on these applicabilities. Most important, however, is the way choices and selections will be made in close cooperation with partners and the end-users of research.

A science-driven medical technology policy is possible only when results are recognized as a solution to existing needs. A health research programme should be based on societal priorities. The Council, with its balanced and multidisciplinary composition, serves as an excellent sounding board for discussions of novel approaches for linking research to development issues. Interactive approaches--both within the Council and in the formulation of

new ideas with partners in the South--are very stimulating and will undoubtedly prove to be highly efficient. It is important that the Council is able to show that these novel approaches will indeed lead to sustainable development in the South and will also stimulate new approaches to selected issues in the Netherlands. Sharing experiences and formulating solutions for a healthy society on a global scale is a very fascinating and challenging objective!

The biodiversity research initiative (Philippines-Netherlands partnership programme)

During the preparatory process of developing the Philippine-Dutch research programme, a common understanding and consensus emerged with regard to the programme's geographical focus and overall objectives. The programme will focus on the island of Mindanao, in particular on Mount Malindang and its environs, and is designed to introduce an innovative, coherent approach to biodiversity research which has the following main features.

- Support will be given to biodiversity research that is needs-based and relevant for development. The results of such research should contribute to the conservation and sustainable use (or managed utilization) of biodiversity resources in Mount Malindang and its environs.
- The various stakeholders, including the people who are directly affected, especially in the local communities, will be directly involved in the process of identifying problems, setting the research agenda, and implementing the research programme.
- Knowledge generated through the natural sciences will be integrated with knowledge generated through the social sciences, the economic sciences, and the humanities.
- Support will be given not only to research projects but also to activities aimed at strengthening capacity both in terms of human resources and institutions for planning, conducting and managing biodiversity research at the local level. These include training, the establishment of databases and networks, and various communication projects through which the research findings will be disseminated and applied.
- An equal and genuine partnership for biodiversity research will be promoted among the three groups involved: Mindanao researchers (local level), researchers from Visayas and Luzon (national level), and Dutch researchers (international level).

The programme itself will be preceded by a pre-implementation phase, during which the details of the programme will be worked out in close cooperation with the local partners—with the researchers, policy-makers, NGO staff, and community representatives who will be involved. The pre-implementation phase will also be used for setting up the programme's organizational structure, and for establishing the Philippine-Dutch programme committee that will provide leadership. The action plan for the 'Pre-implementation phase of the Philippines-Netherlands Programme of Biodiversity Research for Development in Mindanao: Focus on Mt. Malindang' will run from January 1999 to December 1999. It will be implemented under the principal responsibility of the national Philippine Working Group (PWG) and RAWOO, within the framework of the agreement between the Dutch Minister for Development Cooperation and RAWOO. The SEAMEO Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) will serve as the secretariat of the PWG.

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Box 11 A bird's eye view of biodiversity issues in the Philippines

The Philippines is considered 'a biodiversity hot spot'. It has an extraordinarily high rate of species diversity, and a high percentage of species are endemic. There is, however, severe danger that a substantial part of this rich natural repository will be lost as a result of human activity. In the forest ecosystem, for example, 5% of the world's plant species are present. Of the more than 8,000 species identified in the Philippines, 3,200 are unique to the Philippines. A high percentage of the forest fauna are endemic to the Philippines: 45% of known vertebrate species and 50% of known insect species. The main threat to the forest ecosystem is, quite predictably, deforestation. The freshwater ecosystem incorporates 14,000 sq. km. of wetlands, which are of international importance. Early indications suggest that there is generally a high degree of biodiversity in the freshwater ecosystem, with many species confined to only one of the 78 lakes in the country. Perhaps best known are the threats to the coastal and marine ecosystem posed by pollution, dynamite fishing, overfishing, and land

reclamation. The coastal regions and territorial waters of the Philippines cover 2.2 million sq. km. and contain coral reefs which in terms of biodiversity rank second only to the Great Barrier Reef. They also contain mangrove forest and seagrass covers. The condition of all three of these is very poor; a mere 24% of coral reefs are in good or excellent condition, while only 33% of mangrove forest and 20% of seagrass cover remain. The species of marine plants and animals that have been found number 4,951, of which 145 are under threat, including the dugong or seacow. As regards agrobiodiversity, 10 million hectares of land are under cultivation. Of this, 42% is farmed on a small scale by traditional farmers and is characterized by a high degree of biodiversity. Low diversity characterizes 24% of the land under cultivation. The main threats here include agricultural land conversion, monoculture, intensification and pollution--in one word: commercial farming. A last, but by no means minor, threat is the loss of traditional knowledge of agricultural methods. There is a very clear correlation between high biodiversity and the presence of small-scale farmers. An integral part of the biodiversity picture in the Philippines is the existence of 60 indigenous minority groups, who together account for 7% of the country's 70 million people. These indigenous groups live mainly in the remote uplands and highlands, areas that are particularly noted for their high degree of biodiversity. Indigenous knowledge and practices have been documented as part of an effort to protect natural resources and conserve biodiversity. The practices themselves are not protected, however. This cultural diversity cannot be separated from natural diversity. The conservation of biological diversity has to be pursued through the direct involvement of communities and indigenous peoples.

Box 12 Percy Sajise, Director of SEARCA and chairman of the Philippine Working Group on Biodiversity Research

The Philippines-Netherlands Biodiversity Research Programme was born out of a common desire by the Philippine (groups of scientists, government and nongovernment researchers, and policymakers) - Dutch (RAWOO, members of the scientific community and policymakers) partners to design and implement a long-term South-North research programme on biodiversity conservation for sustainable development. This programme is uniquely anchored on certain commonly agreed basic principles, which can provide opportunities for forging new relationships between South-North based on mutual trust and equal footing. In these new relationships, research agenda-setting is primarily generated by partners from the South, research can become more directly relevant to sustainable development needs, and communities and various stakeholders participate and "own" the research agenda.

The basic working principles, which serve as cornerstones of the biodiversity research programme, are: partnership, participatory, community driven, multi-sectoral, interdisciplinary, and location-specific.

Application of these working principles in this research program is expected to generate cutting-edge impacts on developing new methodologies, strategies, approaches, and results that will make biodiversity research more directly relevant to sustainable development. It is also expected to forge a real South-North partnership and, in the process, leave behind strong institutions that could sustain efforts in biodiversity conservation, especially in the Philippines.

This new research paradigm for biodiversity conservation was initiated in the Philippines for at least five reasons: 1) The Philippines is a biodiversity "hot spot.", 2) The Philippine Agenda 21, where biodiversity conservation is a major component, was recently approved, 3) The Local Government Code supports local autonomy and devolution of power, 4) Community-Based Resource Management has been adopted as a national strategy for resource management and 5) Experience in interdisciplinary research work exists among some members of the scientific community.

The Biodiversity Research Programme's starting point is Mount Malindang, Zamboanga Peninsula, Mindanao Island, Southern Philippines. The choice of Mt. Malindang was based on the fact that Mindanao is the region in the Philippines that has been least studied in the past and yet has very high potentials for strategic biodiversity conservation. It also is a representative of current conditions prevailing in other parts of the country, namely: high biodiversity level, culturally diverse, and biodiversity is under constant threat because of development activities and population pressure.

A 10-member working group consisting of sectoral representatives from the academe, nongovernment organizations, government and policymakers, regional organizations as well as multi-disciplines (ecology, forestry, economics, agriculture, wildlife biology, marine biology, and social science) coordinates the research programme at the national level. The secretariat role has been assumed by the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEAMEO SEARCA) because the research fits into its mandate and it has a less bureaucratic system for administrative and financial management. On the other hand, a Mindanao Consortium of interdisciplinary and inter-institutional group of scientists does the actual implementation of the research programme. The participation of both Filipino and Dutch scientists is coordinated both at the national level (through the Philippine Working Group, which will be later transformed into a joint programme Steering Committee consisting of both Dutch and Filipino partners) and at the Mindanao Consortium level, directly with the various research teams (upland, lowland, and coastal ecosystems).

Breaking new grounds to establish a new research paradigm for development especially in biodiversity conservation in a setting where poverty is common and which involves inter-cultural (between South-North), interdisciplinary, multi-sectoral (community, local government, Mindanao-national scientists, NGOs, public-private, etc.) and participatory strategies is not easy.

In research agenda-setting, for example, the initial perceptions and priorities of South-North scientists were shown to be different. The participatory process takes a longer time and requires patience and understanding among various stakeholders. Inter-institutional interests are quite strong and need to be welded into a common set of higher goals and objectives. The interdisciplinary process requires a strong and tested methodology, which may not be commonly available, in order to control the tendency of one discipline to dominate the others. Also, participation is often put under pressure by target-oriented and time-bound goals and "power" rests with the one who is deciding. In many instances, partners have to be reminded to have patience in understanding the Filipino way and the Dutch way of doing things.

Recognizing these difficulties, the Research Programme started with the Pre-Implementation Phase (PIP) designed to provide an opportunity to extensively conduct a Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA), stakeholders' analysis, and consultation and information campaign about the programme. The PIP also offers the window of opportunity for Dutch and Filipino scientists to understand each other's perspectives, concepts, methods, and cultural backgrounds. It will generate the long-term Research Programme for Biodiversity Conservation in Mt. Malindang and in Mindanao.

The PIP stage also offers the opportunity to assess the most appropriate organizational and management setup for the long-term research programme. It will promote multi-stakeholder "ownership" of the program. 21

Though not an easy task, breaking new grounds in establishing research more relevant to development must be done! The Philippines-Netherlands Biodiversity Research Programme has so much at stake that it cannot afford to

Box 13 Johan Bouma, RAWOO member and specialist in Soil Sciences at Wageningen Agricultural University, the Netherlands

‘Science and scientists have a rather hard time in our western society today. Politicians want to see results yesterday rather than tomorrow. Increasingly, emphasis is put on market forces, whereby researchers become intellectual workers with specific “tasks” that should be fulfilled, no questions asked. The next likely step: no cure, no pay. University budgets are reduced. Within our ranks, John Horgan wrote a book called “The end of science, facing the limits of knowledge in the twilight of the scientific age”. His point is that all major discoveries have been made by now. Remaining activities imply application of existing knowledge. Of course some of us feel that now, more than ever, we need some kind of independent scientific conscience in this commercialized world, and that academic researchers are eminently suitable to fill this role. We are, to a certain extent, role models for our colleagues in developing countries, where research systems are being built up and organized. If at all possible they should learn from our mistakes and avoid them, as is well expressed in the “leapfrogging” concept of development cooperation. RAWOO deals with scientific research in and for developing countries and has found an attractive formula now for directly involving their scientists in our deliberations. As we struggle to define new ways to be more effective as shapers of our societies, not only are we in a position to share knowledge and expertise, but we also stand to learn from our colleagues from abroad and their vision of the world. The former Minister for Development Cooperation, Jan Pronk, emphasized four areas of major concern for collaborative research between North and South. Among them are sustainable agriculture and biodiversity. I am involved with both areas within RAWOO. When examining research issues in both fields, we find that little progress has been made with a top-down, western-oriented research approach with little involvement of local stakeholders. Even though such a view was controversial only a few years ago, it is now broadly accepted. Still, many questions remain as to how interactive processes can be effectively realized in practice. In the areas we are studying, we emphasize the need for joint definition of research problems and joint implementation of the research itself. We need to create learning environments which are of benefit to all parties involved. For sustainable land use, RAWOO co-sponsored a meeting on eco-regional research, where we defined procedures that could result in what we called “truly interactive research chains”. These procedures are now used as a guideline for international eco-regional research. For biodiversity, contacts were established with researchers from the Phillipines and a pre-implementation phase of a major research project on biodiversity is now in progress. There will be many visits back and forth before a final programme outline is realized. There are no easy answers and no standard solutions. Discussing these issues within RAWOO is rewarding even though the busy schedules of everyone involved results in a slower rate of progress than some of us would like. Still, the effort is highly worthwhile, since we increasingly must take into account our common “global village”, where problems are no longer restricted only to some citizens, but where “we are all in this together”.’

7. Exploring new research areas and cross-cutting policy issues

With a view to exploring the need for new research, the Council put two issues on its agenda: globalization, and conflict and development. Furthermore, it decided to tackle the cross-cutting issue of South-North research partnerships. Three working groups were formed, consisting of Council members, for addressing these issues. The issue of consumption and production patterns was added only recently as a possible new area for exploratory work.

Globalization

In 1997, RAWOO launched a process of exploring the need for research on globalization as it is perceived in developing countries.

To start with, RAWOO undertook three surveys of the globalization literature: one general survey, one on the economic dimension of globalization, and one on the cultural dimension of globalization. These three surveys showed that views on globalization as seen from countries of the South were not well represented in the abundance of scientific material on the subject which has been produced since it became popular at the beginning of the 1990s. It was therefore decided that views in the South would be gathered first-hand by means of a workshop in Tanzania, attended mainly by Tanzanian participants. The Council hoped that the one-country approach (with a few participants from other African countries) would offer an

opportunity for a fruitful discussion of what globalization means for a particular country, and a clear indication of what kind of research is needed in order for a country like Tanzania to deal effectively with globalization.

Professor Semboja, a RAWOO member from Tanzania, accepted the Council's request to organize the workshop and found the Tanzanian Chapter of the Society for International Development (SID) prepared to share the task with him and his team at the Research on Poverty Alleviation project. They brought together an outstanding group of participants from many sectors of Tanzanian society, who together possess considerable experience in the various aspects of globalization. The workshop 'Local Perspectives on Globalization' took place on 10-11 September 1998 in Dar es Salaam.⁸

Box 14 Local effects of globalization in Tanzania

Participants in the workshop argued that in Tanzania as well as in other parts of Africa, globalization is leading to rapid changes in behaviour and attitudes, to cultural confusion, to stagnation in culture, and to a rise of global religions, particularly the fundamentalist branches of those religions. People have the impression that they have lost control over their destiny. External factors--such as low prices for Africa's exports; large payments on external debt; barriers to the free flow of labour (which prevent Africa from benefiting from the remittances of workers who would have migrated to rich countries); and the domination of the World Bank, WTO and IMF by the rich countries--restrict Tanzania's (and Africa's) ability to benefit from globalization. In the opinion of the participants, a number of internal factors also restrict this ability: faulty government policies, high transaction costs for investors (because of the lack of infrastructure, the erratic availability of water, etc), the inability of government officials to obtain a good deal for their country in international negotiations, a lack of skills in advanced marketing and other aspects of business, a deteriorating knowledge base (less money for schools), weak democratic institutions, and the lack of a national development vision. As a result of these negative factors, there is very little foreign direct investment in Africa and in Tanzania, and most of what does come is of a predatory nature: investment in sectors which require little capital and give quick results. Gains in employment in the private sector have not been able to offset losses in the state sector, where government enterprises have been forced to close under liberalization policies. There is a brain-drain to countries of the North.

Participants agreed that the state should play a prominent role in devising ways to benefit from globalization. Government policy for dealing with globalization would include:

- phased and controlled integration into the world economic system;
- collaboration with countries in the region;
- economic policies similar to those pursued by successful countries in East Asia;
- heavy investment in education and training.

The workshop participants had a number of suggestions for research on the effects of globalization:

- the experience of countries and groups which have been relatively successful in dealing with globalization: the countries of East Asia, the Chinese in East Asia, and the Asians in East Africa;
- how different sectors of Tanzania deal with globalization: small farmers, the plantation sector, the Maasai, and groups of women who have successfully prevented the formation of large plantations in their region;
- the utilization of human capital ('brainpower') and the prevention of 'brain-drain' under conditions of globalization;
- the creation of an enabling business environment, and the role that multinational corporations, foreign direct investments, national capital, and the capacity of the state play in this;
- compatibility between national and international legal regimes in the globalization process;
- the place of regional integration in the facilitation of production and trade.

At the end of the workshop, a five-member committee was formed to formulate a Tanzanian research agenda that will elicit local perspectives on globalization and elaborate on what was discussed during the workshop.

⁸ See Report on the Workshop 'Local Perspectives on Globalization', Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 10 - 11 September 1998 jointly organized by REPOA, SID (Tanzania chapter) and RAWOO.

Information on how globalization is viewed from the South was also gathered at a conference of rural sociologists from all over Latin America, which was held in Mexico in November 1998. The information can be summarized as follows:

- In all of the countries represented at the conference, sociological research is being done on the effects of globalization on the rural sector at national and local levels.
- Globalization in the rural sector was narrowed down to the clash between open markets on the one hand and peasant agriculture and indigenous cultures on the other.

Conference participants expressed a need for research on how best to strengthen peasant and indigenous organizations and their economic basis.

At the moment of writing, preparations were underway for a workshop in Bolivia which will be similar to the Tanzanian workshop.

More information can be found at the RAWOO website, or contact Eduard Jansen at the RAWOO secretariat: 31 70 4260336 or email: ejansen@rawoo.nl

Conflict and development

The end of the Cold War in the early 1990s has not brought the hoped-for end of conflict. Although there have been fewer conflicts between countries, internal conflicts are affecting the lives of more and more people. The Council, rather than automatically defining conflicts in a negative way, prefers to look at them as possible cases of justified resistance against oppression, inequality, etc. This brings to the fore the fact that an end to conflict can be attained in a sustainable way only if the causes are addressed and proper policies are developed. The end of violence through agreement to a cease-fire, the signing of a peace treaty, or the installation of a new government does not automatically mean that the underlying causes have been removed. Therefore, 'post-conflict' situations, or rather 'post-armed-confrontation' situations, require the careful attention of those who would foster lasting peace.

With this as its starting point, the Council is exploring the possible contributions research and capacity-building can make in relation to post-conflict development. A meeting was held in December 1998 with stakeholders from four countries that are in a post-armed-conflict situation: Guatemala, Bangladesh (Chittagong Hill Tracts), Papua New Guinea (Bougainville), and South Africa. The meeting brought together people from various backgrounds--mediators, representatives of one of the formerly warring parties, practitioners in conflict resolution, and researchers--most of whom were from the South. For two days they first discussed the background of the conflict and the main issues presently faced in their respective countries. After this they discussed how research (either new or existing) could perhaps help them to face these issues. The meeting provided ample evidence for the merits of pursuing this line of inquiry (see box 14).

Box 15

Main conclusions of the Expert Meeting "Post-conflict development"

- Research should be viewed in the broader context of 'knowledge': access to existing knowledge, exchange of knowledge and sharing of experience, generation of new knowledge, and enhancement of the capacities for conducting it.
- The process of peace settlement is as important as the outcome, since it is vital that needs and interests are identified.
- The capacity of the state, local government and communities to deal with conflict needs to be strengthened.
- In the process of identifying needs in relation to research and development activities, the involvement of local actors is vital, and specific attention must be given to the gender aspect.
- There is a need for both strategic and action-oriented research which is tied to local initiatives and development needs.
- It is essential that local research capacity be built. Local actors need to be empowered to undertake research and to access existing knowledge.
- Knowledge and experience generated in a specific location can be very relevant for others as well. South-South exchanges can produce valuable input for policy and practice.

The participants concluded that follow-up by RAWOO along the lines of the meeting's conclusions would be very welcome. The Council has concluded that bringing together various stakeholders and starting with a discussion of problems and issues is a good way of identifying the knowledge that is needed for good policies and practice.

The meeting was only a first step towards identifying research needs; it was meant more for assessing the contribution that research might make to better policy-making and practice. It brought to the fore a wide range of topics which need to be understood more thoroughly, such as traditional land rights and practices, indigenous leadership and identity, the meaning of reconciliation at different levels, and the effects of psychological trauma, frustrated youth, and hidden violence. The exchange of knowledge and experience can also give actors in the peace process useful insights into negotiation processes, reconciliation processes, and issues of autonomy and truth. At the moment RAWOO is working on follow-up activities. More detailed consultation will take place in a number of countries as the feasibility of a South-South-North programme is explored.

For more information, please see the RAWOO website, or contact Marijke Veldhuis at the RAWOO secretariat: 31 70 4260333 or email: veldhuis@rawoo.nl

Box 16 Meghna Guhathakurta, RAWOO member and specialist in International Relations at the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

'When I was first asked to become a member of RAWOO, I was excited. I was excited because having been a student of international development and relations, I saw an opportunity to acquire more practical experience in this field. But more importantly, it is a field in which I have been particularly involved in my teaching career as well as through my activism in various democratic and social movements. For a long time I have been involved in development research using a multidisciplinary approach. As member of RAWOO, I therefore found myself among a group of like-minded people. Also my activism in pro-democratic movements, and particularly the women's movement in Bangladesh, has given me an orientation which I have sought to adopt even in my academic career, as I try to discover new methodological and analytical tools which will help research to become more amenable and relevant for common people. In this respect too, I found I had many things to share and compare with my colleagues at RAWOO. Finally, RAWOO opened up a space for me in which to engage in dialogue with "Northern" academics while putting forward a "Southern" perspective. This last feature was particularly important when I became member of the Conflict and Development working group where we sought to find a niche for a RAWOO perspective among the existing body of work being done in this field. We deliberated and came to the conclusion that it would be appropriate for us to focus on regions which have undergone or are undergoing a period of recovery, reconciliation, and reconstruction following the conclusion of an agreement to end violent conflict. An "expert meeting" followed, where people from four different regions of the South who have developed a special understanding of the processes of peacemaking and reconstruction following violent conflict were brought together to deliberate on the needs and problems of post-conflict periods and the role that development cooperation and donor agencies and countries can play in this process. A follow-up to this fruitful discussion is currently being planned.

My past two years at RAWOO have been exceptionally rewarding, stimulating and energizing, and I can very honestly say that I have learned a great deal. This has been possible because I have felt that despite the difference in cultural environment and historical context, I have enjoyed a space in which to interact with others on my own terms, while expressing my own ideas, in an atmosphere of cordiality. I still have to understand the effectiveness of the RAWOO perspective, its unique engagement with problems of development research, and its relevance in the actual policy process of the Dutch government, but that too I suppose is not something to be merely deliberated on but to be worked through.'

Box 17 Annemiek Richters, RAWOO member and specialist in Women, Culture and Health, Leiden University, the Netherlands

'In 1780 President John Adams wrote to his wife Abigail, "I must study politics and war, that my sons may have the liberty to study mathematics and philosophy in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music' When we read that according to the International Federation of Journalists at least 47 journalists were killed on assignment in 1997, and in 1998 more than 30, we see that we have not progressed much since 1780. I do not know how many painters, poets and musicians were killed in these years, but I am sure that they too outnumbered scientists. One wonders how many scientists are indentured servants, contract labourers, serving those in power, without any regard for social and moral standards, willing to set aside their academic, intellectual and humanitarian mission to look for the truth and only for the truth--in order to remain in the good graces of those with power, prestige and money.

As a medical student I was trained to identify the causes of human suffering from a biomedical perspective and if possible to relieve that suffering. I was not told, however, that it is also important that patients should feel my understanding of their suffering. As a practising physician I became aware of how difficult this is if one has only facts, figures, and diagnostic concepts to communicate with. This problem became urgent when I worked as a physician in developing countries. Even more than in the Netherlands I felt like a veterinarian, ignorant of the culture, experience, and languages of my patients, practising medicine without much communication and interaction. Aware that fragmented knowledge does violence to the truth, I decided to go back to university to study anthropology, sociology and philosophy.

That was in the seventies and eighties, when "justice" was the buzzword of the times--"justice" for all those people suffering from discriminating cultural and socio-economic structures and institutions. In sociology I learned to detect the structural causes of injustice. I learned that it is important not only that justice is done, but that victims see that justice is done. Studying philosophy, I was taught to see beyond the facts, figures and scientific concepts in order to understand feelings that could never be translated into figures or words.

During my studies of both medicine and social science, I met many people who travelled all over the world and could describe, explain and comment with authority on what they had seen and heard about suffering and injustice. But at the end of the day, the "bottom line" was that they could not tell me much about when and how they had made people feel their solidarity with their suffering and their longing for justice. My irritation at this was caused by the fact that at that age I was not yet sufficiently aware that for any aspect of life, you first have to live it before you can talk or write sensibly about it.

When after some time I was honoured with a professorship in the field of Women and Health, I was finally able to integrate medicine and social sciences and see medicine as justice, and justice as medicine. Now it was my turn to travel all over the world, and to describe, explain and comment with authority on what I had seen and heard about suffering and injustice. But although I do not feel myself an indentured scientist or contract labourer--within the circles of those in power who have no regard for social and moral standards--I now too have problems relating theory and practice in order to relieve suffering and injustice in an emancipatory way. Often I have to comfort myself by quoting Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen, who said, "It is better to search vaguely in the right direction than exactly in the wrong direction."

Putting hope over experience, I always take this quotation with me to RAWOO meetings, where we critically discuss what could be the right direction and what is obviously the wrong one. Aware that interventions usually protect interests and not people, I argue in these meetings that the more precise our mutual knowledge is about the various kinds of connections in the world, the better we can agree about the moral issues at stake. But I admit that this theory cannot easily be proven right in a world without certainties. Usually the vision thing collides with reality. In such cases I remind myself that one should not define science by its subject matter or method, but by its purpose. There may be no certainties in the world, but the world is always full of possibilities.

Faced with necessities and possibilities in matters of suffering and injustice, I see it as important in RAWOO activities to point out, without risking my life, that man's ability to do science has far outstripped his capacity to fathom its implications, and that what we need most for the future is not more scientific breakthroughs, but humanist ones.'

South-North research partnerships

As we saw in section 5 of this report, linking researchers in the South and in the North is one of the key elements of the three-pronged RAWOO approach to harnessing knowledge for development. The reason

for advocating such links is based on the premise that partnerships between the South and the North have an added value and may be beneficial and rewarding for both partners. While this may be true, there is increasing evidence, particularly voiced by the South, that South-North research partnerships can be problematic because of the inherent inequality between the partners (see also section 4). Against this background, the Council decided to put the issue on the agenda and to look into the possibilities for analysing the problems at hand and for developing policy responses, recommendations and best practices tailored to the various actors and partners involved: aid agencies and research donors, research councils, science organizations, research institutions, and individual researchers. A RAWOO working group, chaired by Professor Chandan Mukherjee, was established to undertake the necessary preparations and to present a report to the Council. After some initial preparatory work, the committee commissioned a study, which was conducted by Dr. Jack Spaapen of Sciquest, aimed at reviewing the existing literature and documentation on North-South research cooperation and partnerships.

The Spaapen study will serve as input for a roundtable expert group meeting to be held in Trivandrum, India, in 1999. The aims of this meeting will be to review existing experiences with North-South research partnerships; to analyse obstacles, issues and constraints; and to seek ways of overcoming obstacles and of influencing policies and practices of South-North research partnerships.

For more information, please see the RAWOO website, or contact Ed Maan at the RAWOO secretariat: 31 70 4260330 or email: emaan@rawoo.nl

Consumption and production patterns

Under this heading, RAWOO is addressing global production and consumption patterns from a North-South perspective. In a speech entitled 'Sustainable consumption: joint and different interests', delivered on the occasion of the presentation of UNDP's Human Development Report 1998, the Dutch Minister for Development Cooperation, Eveline Herfkens, requested attention for this issue by questioning whether the South can benefit from measures aimed at sustainable consumption in the North.

With a view to exploring the issue, the Council has commissioned a study aimed at making an inventory of ongoing and past research in this field, taking into account the following dimensions and perspectives:

- environmental and socio-economic dimensions of globalizing consumption and production patterns (Northern and Southern perspectives);
- linkages to trade, capital, and policies for science, technology and innovation;
- effects on employment, income distribution, and issues of poverty and equity;
- donor policies (e.g. the impact of EU policies on consumption and production patterns in Africa);
- institutional and governance dimensions.

The report concludes that the concern of developing countries in relation to efforts to shift consumption patterns in Northern countries have not been adequately taken into account. The underlying relationships between consumption and production patterns are complex and require a substantial research effort, probably involving alternate approaches so as to ensure that methodological idiosyncracies can be minimised. The assessment of the research also suggests that new models of cooperation need to be developed between researchers, and between research in the North and the South.

As a follow-up to earlier discussions with the Development Cooperation Committee of the Advisory Council for International Affairs (AIV/COS), the report on the state of the field will serve as a basis for further consultations and decisions regarding the possible need for further research in this area.

8. Follow-up activities

Through the years the Council has learned that presenting recommendations to the government and other parties is not enough. Experience has shown that the Council must take active steps to ensure that

recommendations are actually taken up and implemented. For this reason, follow-up activities are part of the Council's work.

A European Union science and technology policy for development

In March 1997 a major international conference was held in Leiden, the Netherlands, under the title 'Research partnerships for sustainable development'. The conference was jointly organized by the Dutch Minister for Development Cooperation, Jan Pronk, and the European Commission. RAWOO provided input through its advisory report 'Towards a European science and technology policy for development', which was submitted to the Dutch government in June 1996. The report presents RAWOO's views on the development of a European Union strategy for cooperation with developing countries in the areas of science and technology. Minister Pronk replied to the recommendations as follows: 'I can be brief, because I endorse much of this excellent report and its recommendations.....' 'I would be happy to act as intermediary where possible.....' 'It, moreover, has an important bearing on the preparations for the European Conference on Research Partnerships for Sustainable Development. Your recommendations will constantly recur as a topic for debate in the process of preparing the above-mentioned conference, and will as such importantly influence the formulation of the recommendations drawn up by the conference itself.'

The Minister's response and the reactions from partner institutions in both Europe and the South inspired RAWOO to become actively involved in preparing the conference as well as in its follow-up. For example, the Council presented its report to the Programme Management Committee of the EU programme for research cooperation with developing countries; the Council sought a pro-active role by which it could influence policy-making and decision-making processes within the various EU bodies; and the Council advised the Dutch Minister for Development Cooperation to make available funds for the appointment of a Dutch senior research advisor in the Development Cooperation Directorate of the European Commission. The principal task of this adviser would be to develop mechanisms of coordination between instruments of development policy and instruments of research and technology policy.

For RAWOO it was encouraging to see that the resolution on research cooperation with developing countries, taken by the EU Research Council on 5 June 1997, reflected some of the key recommendations and proposals put forward by the Council in its advisory report (see box 17).

Box 17 Resolution of the EU Research Council of 5 June 1997

The Research Council resolution recognizes the strategic role of research and technology for sustainable development. It emphasizes the need for a policy dialogue on research needs and priorities involving the government, the research community and civil society in developing countries. It supports the view that an integrated approach entailing interdisciplinary collaboration is needed and that institution-building and strengthening of research capacities are keys to achieving ownership and long-term sustainability of research efforts in the South. In addition, the resolution stresses the need for an informal expert group on development research comprising experts from the Commission, member states, and developing countries. It concludes that the EU should continue its financial support for programmes of research cooperation with developing countries, particularly through two instruments: the Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, and the Development Cooperation Programme. Coordination between these two instruments should be enhanced.

Sustainable agriculture

In his reaction to RAWOO's advisory report 'A medium-term perspective on research for development', the Minister for Development Cooperation referred to his decision to offer financial support to the eco-regional approach to sustainable agriculture and natural resources management, developed by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). To this end the Eco-Regional Fund was established in 1995. The fund, which is administered by the International Service for National Agricultural Research (ISNAR)--one of the CGIAR centres--seeks to support initiatives aimed at developing methodologies for eco-regional research.

With the assistance of RAWOO, ISNAR convened an international workshop to review the progress of the projects funded through the Eco-Regional Fund and to share the experiences of the participating organizations in the various countries involved. The workshop was held in The Hague on 20-22 April 1998, at the ISNAR premises. It produced a number of proposals for making the fund more effective for the developing countries concerned.

The recommendations included:

- raising awareness in developing countries of the aims and conditions of the Eco-Regional Fund;
- addressing the uncertainty surrounding conceptual and methodological issues related to eco-regional research;
- adopting a five-step approach to the development of eco-regional research;
- establishing criteria for assessing the progress, quality and impact (usability) of projects;
- building capacities and capabilities in the South;
- exchanging between Southern partners information gained through experience with the approach, the interdisciplinary cooperation, and the operational issues ('toolkit') which eco-regional research entail.

RAWOO and ISNAR will look into possibilities for specific follow-up activities. RAWOO member Professor Bouma will act as liaison since he is also the chair of the International Scientific Advisory Committee of the Eco-Regional Fund.

9. Communication and dissemination

RAWOO lunch lectures

In 1990 RAWOO and the (former) Directorate General for International Cooperation (DGIS) took the initiative to start a series of lunch lectures in order to improve the dialogue between researchers and policy-makers. It was felt that development research and development policy were worlds apart and that bringing these worlds together would be beneficial for both. This was done by organizing lunch lectures in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which enable researchers to present to government officials the results of their research work and their ideas regarding its relevance for development policy, while at the same time enabling policy-makers to confront researchers with policy issues that are in need of research.

The lunch lectures are organized around key policy issues. In recent years the themes have been 'Culture and development' (1992), 'Good governance' (1993), 'Agenda 21' (1994), and 'Conflict and development' (1995). The lectures are published by the Council in the RAWOO series of publications.

Information and Communication Technology

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in developing countries was chosen as a topic for the 1996-1997 series of RAWOO lunch lectures because of its potential relevance for developing countries and because NEDA expressed an interest in gaining more insight into the potential opportunities and threats of the newly emerging ICT technologies for these countries. The eight lectures covered many aspects, ranging all the way from technical changes to changes in education and learning.

In November 1977, an international seminar was held in The Hague to explore the issues raised in the lectures with a wider audience of professionals and policy-makers, from both developing countries and the Netherlands. The lectures had brought out several important questions and challenges. For instance, which countries and people will be able to profit from the new opportunities offered by ICT? Will inequality increase? Will ICT offer opportunities for empowerment? Will local companies profit? Will cultural diversity diminish?

Guest speakers came from Jamaica, Zambia, India, South Africa, Peru, Ghana and the Netherlands. They spoke from the perspective of various organizations representing the UN, NGOs, the private sector, ICT networks, municipalities, and universities. They presented a similarly wide range of views on the conditions to be met and the policies to be developed if ICT is to benefit developing countries.

One of the conclusions of the seminar was that the question of demand is more important than ever. How can people at the local level--especially poor people-- benefit? How can we avoid their even greater social exclusion? The findings of the seminar were presented to the Dutch Minister for Development Cooperation at the time, Jan Pronk, and to the other guests who attended the official opening of the newly established International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD), which was held immediately following the seminar. The lunch lectures and the seminar proceedings have been published as RAWOO publication no. 18: 'Information and communication technology and development'.

Box 18 Some statements made during the RAWOO seminar ICT and development

'Information is not the same as knowledge, not to speak of wisdom.' (Arnoldo Ventura)

'Limited infrastructure is one of the major constraints in Africa, but wireless technologies will help.' (Mike Jensen)

'It is not always easy to combine commercial efficiency with universal accessibility.' (Swasti Mitter)

'....there is a need to sensitize policy- and decision-makers to the opportunities, the threats and the challenges posed to countries by the advent of ICTs.' (Aida Opoku-Mensah)

'Do not throw technology at us.' (Aida Opoku-Mensah)

'We have to rethink and reconceptualize our comparative advantages.' (Swasti Mitter)

'As long as we talk about information technology in developing countries there is something wrong. We should talk about information technology.' (Henk van Linde)

'Our municipalities often do not know what to do with ICT.' (Liliana Miranda)

'I strongly believe that ICT is a vehicle for alleviating poverty.' (Nii Quaynor)

'The cost of using ICTs is high, the cost of not using them is even higher.' (Arnoldo Ventura)

'In the global Information Society, the North does not have so much more to offer than the South.' (Luc Soete)

Utilization of research

In the 1998/99 series of lectures the topic 'Utilization of research' is being debated in a search for more insight into several questions:

- Through which mechanisms does research lead to changes in policies and practices?
- Does it help to involve the users of research in the research process?
- Is intensive interaction between researchers and potential users of research, through the development of networks, a good mechanism to stimulate utilization?
- Are the worlds of researchers and policy-makers too far apart in terms of their concerns, logic and 'language'?

Following a general introduction to the application of research to practice and policy, subsequent lectures are centering on experiences with research and research programmes for specific groups of users (for instance, small and medium-sized enterprises, and small-scale farmers).

Meetings and workshops

As an integral part of its research programming activities, RAWOO and its partners in the South conduct meetings and workshops to exchange views on research needs and priorities and to enhance communication and dialogue between policy-makers, researchers, and NGOs and practitioners from the South and the North.

In 1997 and 1998 various agenda-setting and programme-development workshops were conducted in Ghana, the Philippines and the Netherlands as part of the preparations for the Ghanaian-Dutch partnership programme of health research, and the Philippine-Dutch partnership programme of biodiversity research. A workshop entitled 'Local perspectives on globalization' took place in September 1998 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. In December 1998 an expert meeting on post-conflict development was held in The Hague, the Netherlands.

RAWOO website

Information about RAWOO and its activities has been available on the Internet since 1996. On its pages, RAWOO provides general information on its mission, the Council membership, and the secretariat and staff, as well as information about its research programmes, new topics, conferences, lecture series, reports and publications. In 1998 RAWOO applied for and was given its own address and domain on the Internet (www.rawoo.nl), and began to improve the structure and lay-out of the website. The Council recognises the potential of this new medium for disseminating its approach to research for development and for keeping a wide audience informed about its ongoing activities. In the coming years dissemination and communication through the Internet will be further enhanced.

Annex 1 RAWOO publications

General Recommendations 1:

Health and Illness in Developing Countries; research needs and priorities. January 1984 (*abridged English version*).

General Recommendations 2:

Energy for Survival; research needs and priorities. January 1984 (*abridged English version*).

General Recommendations 3:

International Dimensions of Development Problems; research needs and priorities. October 1983.

General Recommendations 3a:

Legal Aspects of International Dimensions of Development Problems; research needs and priorities. June 1984.

International Dimensions of Development Problems (Kijkduin seminars 24-25 March and 20-21 December 1983), edited by H.J. Mastebroek.

General Recommendations 4:

Food Security in Developing Countries, research needs and conditions. January 1986.

Working Paper 1:

Towards Autonomy for Women; research and action to support development process. June 1986.

Food Security in Developing Countries (Kijkduin seminar 28-29 March 1985), edited by A.P. Smits. October 1986.

Working paper 2:

Sustainable Land Use in Developing Countries; perspectives on an integrated approach. November 1988.

General Recommendations 5:

Industrialisation in Developing Countries, priorities and conditions for research. February 1989.

Industrialisation in Developing Countries (Kijkduin Seminar 29-30 October 1987), edited by A.P. Smits. September 1989.

Policy paper 3:

Solar Energy Research. July 1990.

Publication no. 2:

Criteria for assessing proposals for research in and for developing countries. August 1991.

Publication no. 5:

Development and strengthening of research capacity in developing countries. Conference on Donor Support, The Hague, The Netherlands 2-3 September 1993. Edited by Marijke Veldhuis. June 1994.

Publication no. 7:

A medium-term perspective on research for development. Research needs and Dutch research capacity. June 1995.

Publication no. 9:

Building up and strengthening research capacity in Southern countries. A study prepared for the RAWOO by Frits Wils. August 1995.

Publication no. 10:
Supporting capacity building for research in the South. Recommendations for Dutch policy. December 1995.

Publication no. 11:
Research capacity for sustainable development. Report of a field study in Ghana, Kenya and Kerala (India) conducted for RAWOO by Wesley Monroe Shrum, Jr. April 1996.

Publication no. 12:
Agenda 21. RAWOO/RMNO lectures on sustainable development. Edited by Frans Duijnhouwer and Marijke Veldhuis. July 1996.

Publication no. 13:
Towards a European Science and Technology policy for development. November 1996.

Publication no. 14:
Internal conflicts, security and development. RAWOO lectures and seminar. Edited by Bas de Gaay Fortman and Marijke Veldhuis. May 1997.

Publication no. 15:
Framework for a Ghanaian-Dutch Programme of Health Research for Development. March 1998.

Publication no. 16:
Developing a Ghanaian-Dutch programme of health research for development. Results of a questionnaire to identify relevant expertise in the Netherlands and willingness to cooperate with Ghana. February 1998.

Publication no. 17:
Framework for a Philippine-Dutch Programme of Biodiversity Research for Development. March 1998.

Publication no. 18:
Information & Communication Technology and Development. RAWOO lectures and seminar. August 1998.

Annex 2 RAWOO committees and working groups

Programme Study Committee health research (till January 1998)

Chairperson:

Dr E.J. Ruitenbergh, *member of RAWOO; director of CLB*

Members:

M. de la Bey, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs, DGIS/DCO*

Dr J.E. van Dam, *Ministry of OC&W*

Dr L. Muller (alternate Dr R.R. van Kessel-Hagesteijn), *NWO/WOTRO*

Dr E. Postel

Dr J.M. Richters, *member of RAWOO; Leiden University*

Dr M. Stegeman, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs, DGIS/DSI*

Dr A. Struyvenberg, *chairman RGO*

Dr H.A. Valkenburg (alternate Dr. E.C. Klasen), *NWO/MW*

Dr C. Varkevisser, *KIT*

Corresponding member:

Dr Duong Quynh Hoa, *member of RAWOO*

External advisor :

Dr I. Wolffers, *Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam*

Secretary

A.P. Smits, RAWOO secretariat

Programme Study Committee biodiversity research (till January 1998)

Chairperson:

Dr J. Bouma, *member of RAWOO; Wageningen Agricultural University*

Members:

R. van Akker, *Ministry of OCenW*

Dr W. Bergmans, *IUCN/Netherlands*

Dr L. Brussaard, *Wageningen Agricultural University*

Dr H. de Iongh, *Centre for Environmental Science, Leiden University*

H. Slot, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs, DGIS/DCO/OZ*

M. Vernooij, *Ministry of LNV*

Dr B. Visser, *Centre for Plant Breeding and Reproduction Research, CPRO/DLO (CGN)*

Corresponding member:

Dr M. Guhathakurta, *member of RAWOO*

External advisor:

Dr M.P. Lammerink, *Forestry Manpower Development Consultants*

Secretary:

A.P. Smits, RAWOO secretariat

Globalization Working Group

Chairperson:

Dr I.S.A. Baud, *member of RAWOO; University of Amsterdam*

Members:

Dr J.B. Opschoor, *member of RAWOO; Institute of Social Studies*

Dr E.J. Ruitenbergh, *member of RAWOO; CLB*

Dr J.M. Richters, *member of RAWOO; Leiden University*

Dr W.J.J. Schipper, *member of RAWOO; Leiden University*

Dr. J.J. Semboja, *member of RAWOO; Research on Poverty Alleviation, Tanzania*

M.L.E. Jansen, *advisory member RAWOO, Ministry of LNV*

Secretary:

E.A. Jansen, *RAWOO secretariat*

Research Partnership Working Group

Chairperson:

Dr C. Mukherjee, *member of RAWOO; Centre for Development Studies, India*

Members:

Dr J. Bouma, *member of RAWOO, Wageningen Agricultural University*

Dr M. Diouf, *member of RAWOO; CODESRIA, Senegal (as of January 1999)*

Dr A. Klamer, *member of RAWOO, Erasmus University Rotterdam (till February 1999)*

J.G. Waardenburg, *advisory member of RAWOO, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, DGIS/SBO*

Secretary:

E.E. Maan, *RAWOO secretariat*

Conflict and Development Working Group

Chairperson:

Dr. M. Guhathakurta, *member of RAWOO, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh*

Members:

J. de Milliano, *member of RAWOO (till April 1998)*

Dr J.M. Richters, *member of RAWOO; Leiden University*

S. Montaña Virreira, *member of RAWOO*

External advisor:

M. van Walt van Praag, *former secretary of UNPO (working group member as of January 1999)*

Secretary:

M.Veldhuis, *RAWOO secretariat*

Annex 3 Acronyms

AIV/COS	Advisory Council for International Affairs/Development Cooperation Committee
CEDEP	Centre for the Development of People (Ghana)
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CLB	Central Laboratory of the Netherlands Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service
CODESRIA	Council for the Development of Economic and Social Research in Africa
COHRED	Council on Health Research for Development
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (Ghana)
DCO	Cultural Cooperation, Education and Research Department (NEDA)
DGIS	Directorate General for International Cooperation
DSI	Social and Institutional Development Department (NEDA)
EU	European Union
HSR	Health Systems Research
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IICD	International Institute for Communication and Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISNAR	International Service for National Agricultural Research
ISS	Institute of Social Studies
JPC	Joint Programme Committee
KIT	Royal Tropical Institute
LNV	Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries
MMRPs	Multi-annual, Multidisciplinary Research Programmes
MW	Medical Research Council/NWO
NEDA	Netherlands Development Assistance (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIPAS	National Integrated Protected Areas Systems
NWO	Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research
OCenW	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
PAWB	Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau
PWG	Philippine Working Group
RAWOO	Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council
REPOA	Research on Poverty Alleviation Programme
RGO	Health Research Council
SAP	IMF/World Bank Structural Adjustment Programme
SAREC	Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation with Developing Countries
SBO/OC	Strategic Policy Orientation Unit/Research Coordinator
SEARCA	SEAMEO Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture
SID	Society for International Development
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	
UNCED	United Nations Commission on Environment and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNPO	Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization
UST	University of Science and Technology, Kumasi (Ghana)
WHO	World Health Organization
WOTRO	Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research/NWO
WTO	World Trade Organization