Effective use of research and evidence can play a crucial role in making more successful policy decisions. As a result, DFID is funding a programme of work to build the skills, knowledge and systems that will allow policy makers and practitioners in low and middle income countries to access, appraise and use rigorous evidence. The BCURE programme brings together a set of six strategically linked projects, spanning across Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia to improve development interventions through better decision making processes.

The BCURE Background

In the past DFID has focused on supplying and promoting high quality research, with less work done to ensure that there is a corresponding demand for evidence use by practitioners. However, emerging evidence suggests that there are significant gaps in the capacity of decision makers in low and middle income countries to use research effectively, which is hampering the use of evidence in practice.

In response, DFID launched the BCURE programme in 2013, which invests a total of £16 million in six projects over the next three years to develop the systems, skills and incentives that support evidence use. This will help to create an environment where research findings help to inform policy and practice decisions in low and middle income countries.

BCURE invests £16m over 3 years to develop the capacity for evidence informed policy making in low and middle income countries.

The Objectives of BCURE

The BCURE programme will look to work through a consortium of organisations, who will focus on building the capacity of practitioners in low and middle income countries to sustainably make evidence informed decisions.

Examples of the different outcomes that the separate projects hope to deliver are outlined below:

- Development of the African Evidence Network - a sustainable and engaging community for policy makers and practitioners
to discuss and share lessons on evidence use

- **Focusing on the high level decision making process** to improve evidence use by Cabinet Ministers
- **Working with civil service training programmes** to incorporate the use of evidence into the curriculum
- **Developing research and evidence frameworks** to encourage rigorous use of evidence in policy areas
- **Establishing open policy dialogues** between government and the research community to promote the use of evidence in decision making

How and where is it being delivered?

BCURE is being delivered through a consortium of different partners, with a specific focus on building the capacity and skills of locally based organisations in the countries where the programme is currently operating.

Each of the six BCURE projects is being delivered by a primary provider who will oversee the development of skills and capacity in key decision making institutions which are central to policy and practice in that country (see map above). The primary providers include the **University of Johannesburg** (UJ), **AFIDEP**, **Adam Smith International** (ASI), **Ecorys**, **Harvard** and **INASP** who oversee the VakaYiko project.

In addition to the in-country focus BCURE also supports two pan-Africa networks. The **Africa Cabinet Government Network** is supported by ASI and works with Cabinet Secretaries in 12 different countries to improve the use of evidence in government decision making. The **Africa Evidence Network** is a community of people who work in Africa and have an interest in evidence, its production and use in decision-making. It is supported by UJ and includes researchers, practitioners and policy-makers from universities, NGOs and governments.

How will it be evaluated?

Improving the use of research evidence in decision making is a relatively new area for donor support. As a result, the evidence base on what works is limited. In light of this, DFID are commissioning a three year study to evaluate the value and impact of BCURE. It is hoped that the results of this study will enable DFID and others to make better choices in the future, when deciding whether and how to support and implement capacity building programmes on evidence use.

Are there any links to existing DFID programmes?

DFID has made significant investments in building research capacity in low and middle income countries. Some of the specific programmes that BCURE stakeholders should be aware of include the following:

- Development Research Uptake in Sub-Saharan Africa (**DRUSSA**)
- Global Development Network (**GDNet**)
- Synthesising Research and Knowledge Systems (**SRKS**)
- Global Open Knowledge Hub (**GOKH**)

Please contact us on Twitter or visit the BCURE website if you would like information about the programme.

@DFID_Evidence