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Strategic communication and institutional links in technology research and development

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Abstract

The centrality of knowledge to strategies for poverty reduction is widely assumed, but gaps between its generation and use persist. In this article what is known about redressing these gaps, particularly between researchers and policy-makers, are drawn together with an emphasis on understanding the context, developing institutional links and engaging in effective communication. Three case studies about the positive and negative use of communication within the field of technology development are then considered. These cases – research into agriculture in Ghana by two European universities, a public–private–civil society coalition on agro-processing in India, and researchers advising a government road-building scheme in India – highlight not only the central importance of communication to scaling up the impact of research but also that very different strategies are required for different situations.