



## Communiqué from the IFORD meeting 2010

The International Forum of Research Donors (IFORD) held its seventeenth annual meeting in Bern, Switzerland on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> May 2010. IFORD 2010 was hosted by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

IFORD is an informal network of aid agencies, private foundations and multilateral organizations that provide significant funds for research, research capacity building and innovation related to international development. This year 18 organizations were represented<sup>1</sup>.

IFORD provides participants with a platform for sharing information about their organizations' strategies, funding priorities, and programs; learning from each other; discussing issues of mutual interest; and also exploring opportunities for joint activities.

This year's meeting focussed on increasing the relevance and effectiveness of investment in research for development. The topic seemed timely with regard to three particular drivers: First, with the shift from input-oriented to more outcome oriented policies there is an increasing pressure to justify expenditures vis-à-vis important constituencies and to demonstrate that the research funded, in particular by aid agencies, has an impact on development. Second, in the context of the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness, questions are being raised whether effectiveness can be increased through coordinated research funding mechanisms and if so in what areas more collaboration among donors would be needed. A third driver comes from the changing research landscape and the perceived necessity of increased international scientific and technological cooperation with a view to advancing joint solutions to global issues such as climate change, food and energy security ('global public goods').

At the forefront of the discussion were three issues of common concern:

- Monitoring and evaluating research investments in a more suitable way that address problems related to increased uptake and indicators of 'relevance';
- Facilitating donor co-operation in funding research for development through increased transparency;
- Effective research funding models and mechanisms in light of the diversity of objectives for research.

The next meeting of IFORD will take place in a year's time in South East Asia and will be hosted by AusAID. It will look at how research funding can help build and strengthen knowledge and innovation systems for development.

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*Note:* Further information regarding IFORD will shortly be available on the IFORD website ([www.iford.org](http://www.iford.org) under construction).

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<sup>1</sup> Australia (AusAID), Austria (ADA), Canada (CIDA and IDRC), Denmark (DANIDA), European Commission, France (AIRD), Germany (BMZ), Netherlands (DGIS), Norway (NORAD), The Rockefeller Foundation, Sweden (SIDA), Switzerland (SDC), United Kingdom (DFID), UK (UKCDS), Wellcome Trust, WHO, World Bank