

Institution: University of Manchester

Unit of Assessment: 24b (Development Studies)

a. Context

Development Studies at Manchester seeks to secure impacts at the level of both organisational and social change, by directly influencing the strategies, policies and practices of a broad range of public and private agencies in ways which secure improved levels of wellbeing and social justice for marginalised and low-income groups. The key agencies that we seek to influence are governments, international development agencies, non-governmental organisations in the global north and south and also corporate actors. In some instances, our efforts have increasingly focused on directly shaping public attitudes and values (for example, the book *Just Give Money to the Poor*, the exhibition on conflict in the Imperial War Museum, and persuading Cadbury to convert part of its chocolate range to Fairtrade).

Impact activities are undertaken across the full range of our research interests, and particularly in relation to work on poverty analysis, poverty reduction and social protection; civil society and NGOs; governance; and, labour standards within global value chains. The relationships, reputation and methods developed within the Institute of Development Policy and Management (IDPM) over a prolonged period (established 1958), have placed Manchester in a strong position for public engagement and policy influence. More recently, our major research centres, including the Chronic Poverty Research Centre (CPRC, 2000-2010), the Improving Institutions for Pro-Poor Growth Research Programme Consortium (IPPG, 2005-2010), the Global Poverty Research Group (GPRG, 2002-2007), the Brooks World Poverty Institute (BWPI, established 2006), the Effective States and Inclusive Development Research Centre (ESID, 2011-2016), the Capturing the Gains programme (CtG, 2008-13) and Humanities and Conflict Research Institute (HCRI, 2009-), have proved to be particularly influential vehicles for securing impact, in tandem with the strategic efforts of well-networked and renowned individual scholars.

b. Approach to impact

All Development Studies (DS) research at Manchester seeks to create 'useful knowledge' raising the likelihood of improved human well-being for poor and disadvantaged people and groups. Our strategic approach to impact is based on a detailed understanding of our multiple audiences and the different international, national and local contexts in which they operate. Six key approaches to our work on impact flow from our contextual analysis:

- Our approach is both **systematic and contingent**, involving detailed planning at the start of research using theories of change and identifying clear pathways to impact but also seizing opportunities to influence as they arise. Our approach is thus both formal and informal, with researchers not only providing evidence in official spaces to parliaments, officials, local councils and companies but also communicating research findings in less formal settings including over a cup of tea with the Minister (or Minister's advisor) or equivalent, particularly where years of engagement has led to relationships of trust with senior policy actors (e.g. **Bebbington, Mitlin** and **Hulme** in NGO networks including SDI and BRAC; **S Barrientos** with Cadbury/Kraft/Mondelez).
- **Buiding strong relationships** with policy actors and practitioners is critical to achieving impact, and Manchester DS researchers employ a number of strategies to ensure that close associations are established and maintained. Leading policy actors from international agencies, national governments, companies and NGOs serve on the advisory boards of all our major research centres and projects, for example, Margaret Kakande (Government of Uganda) Duncan Green (OXFAM) and Celestin Monga (World Bank) in the Consortium Advisory Group of ESID and representatives from Tesco, M&S and Waitrose on CtG Advisory Group. IDPM has hosted 12 leading policy actors as Visiting Fellows, including leading social activists and senior World Bank analysts via the prestigious University endowed Simon Industrial Fellowships, such as Michael Edwards in 2009 and 2010, and Sam Maimbo in 2013.
- **Iterative**: policy actors and practitioners are engaged throughout the research process, from the establishment of the research agenda through data collection and preliminary analysis to uptake activities. Prior to undertaking research Manchester academics identify the key policy actors and influencers for their research, and frequently consult with key

Impact template (REF3a)

stakeholders at research start-up time to ensure the policy relevance of research and establish relationships. For example, the twelve-month inception phase for the ESID research centre involved visits to six bilateral and multilateral aid agencies on five continents to produce a research agenda closely attuned to the evidence-needs of policy actors, as reflected in subsequent invitations to support specific policy review processes (e.g. **Hickey** and DFID-Uganda, **Hulme** and UNDP/Government of Bangladesh).

- **Creative:** influencing policy actors involves developing a wide range of products that can showcase research findings in relevant and engaging ways. Central to this approach is partnering with specialists who can extend the outreach or amplify the power of our findings, including film-makers, museums, social media, advocacy agencies and popular writers (**A Barrientos**, **Hulme** and Hanlon, *Just Give Money to the Poor*). For example, CPRC employed an advocacy NGO (Development Initiatives) to help shape its impact strategy and broadcast its message to international agencies and a local research/advocacy NGO in Uganda to successfully shape Government policy on social protection. DS is developing within its support for impact the ability to simultaneously develop products to enhance general understanding, follow up with specific inputs to address national government and development agencies understanding, and research agendas that respond to the priorities of such agencies (e.g. the CtG Global Summit 2012 addressed by Rob Davies, Minister of Trade and Industry, South Africa involving panel debates between companies, trade unions, NGOs and government representatives web-streamed with over 1,000 viewings).
- **Evidence-based policy-making:** Manchester's DS cohort is committed to ensuring that its work provides the underpinning for policy review and development for a broad range of actors. This is reflected in the regular uptake of Manchester's research (e.g. **Sen's** work with IPPG directly informed Government of India's Planning Commission) and the direct role that 11 staff in this REF return play within influential policy committees and review processes, including **Mitlin** within SDI's board and for UNICEF post-2015, **Hulme** on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (UN, House of Lords, Southern Voices/TTI, SIDA) and **Agarwal** on the Sarkozy Commission chaired by Joseph Stiglitz.
- **Active use of strong institutional support** to centres and individuals: IDPM, the School of Environment, Education and Development (SEED) and the broader Faculty of Humanities provide increasingly high levels of support for impact activities and DS researchers draw heavily on this in order to promote a culture of impact. This includes the University's repository, *e-Scholar* (making outputs publicly accessible through open access), Faculty level communications officers (for radio, TV and newspaper links), SEED level services (IDPM Web Pages) and, for work on poverty and poverty reduction, BWPI's communications officer. At the Faculty level, staff benefit from the presence of an impact support team who increase the awareness of impact amongst academic staff; provide opportunities for researchers to translate research into practice; improve the user engagement/ involvement in research; increase our range of funded impact activities including pump priming impact generating activities through an annual Faculty competition; enhance levels of participation in prestigious external organisations and networks; and expand the scale and reach of our public engagement and media work. Uptake and impact activity uses low cost/no cost services from specialists (e.g. policy briefs from think tanks; conferences mounted by aid agencies) where appropriate. ESID, BWPI, and CPRC all have (had) dedicated communication/impact managers and support staff to strengthen monitoring and regular learning/re-design. Impact activities are recognised and incentivised within promotion and probation committees, and University promotion criteria explicitly place Knowledge Transfer alongside research, teaching and leadership.

c. Strategy and plans

The strategy of the DS UoA at Manchester has three distinct elements. The first is to maximise, within resource constraints, the impact of our research through careful planning and implementation of uptake/impact activities. The second is to create a culture of impact. Both of these involve drawing on the increased levels of strategic support and resources being made available to impact activities within the School and Faculty and on our recent success in gaining

major research centres and grants. Third, we also ensure that our research achieves high-levels of impact via our research-led teaching portfolio through which we are training the next generation of environmental managers, public policy professionals and practitioners. The focus here is not just on developing evidence-based approaches to public action but also ensuring that they understand and appreciate the values of social justice and have the knowledge and skills to practice and promote these goals through their professional and civic action.

Achieving higher levels of impact is a core part of the School and Faculty Strategy for the next five year period, and IDPM will continue to both push for and make active use of an increased level of support in this area. The School's Strategic Plan 2013-2017 states that we are committed to "developing the 'impactful' nature of our research" and to "engaging with practitioner, policy-making and public communities across our portfolio, to maximise potential for high-impact practices". We aim to build upon and improve the impact of our research, further 'mainstreaming' the impact agenda within our activities and fostering a culture of outreach and user engagement using the following strategies:

- a. The School has created the post of Deputy Director of Research (from September 2013) with a brief dedicated to impact. The Deputy Director will work closely with research clusters, projects and individual staff to ensure that impact opportunities are identified, pursued and monitored.
- b. Enhance the opportunities which already exist for research-related impact generating activities as part of the existing research leave arrangements (sabbaticals).
- c. From September 2013, our peer review system, which is mandatory for all major research applications, encourages researchers to 'think impact'.
- d. At School level an annual 'Impact Stimulation Fund' will be launched from September 2013, prioritising support for the impact activities of Early Career Staff. Support for impact activities will also be provided by the ESRC Impact Acceleration Award to the University of Manchester, value: £1.4 million, over 2013-2018.
- e. Ensure that impact activities are supported and rewarded within our mentoring and annual individual performance development reviews, our workload allocation model and our probation and promotion procedures.

d. Relationship to case studies

The cases are selected to illustrate the depth and variety of impact achieved by DS at Manchester. Each reflects one or more of the key strategic approaches outlined above:

- **Systematic and contingent:** this is best exemplified within the work by BWPI and CPRC in promoting *Direct Cash Transfers* (DCT).
- **Building strong relationships** with policy actors is apparent throughout each of our cases at both institutional and individual levels. In the case study of *NGOs*, this has involved longstanding relationships between DS researchers and civil society organizations.
- **Iterative:** gaining long-term research funding and establishing institutional capacity to support uptake work has enabled Manchester's DS researchers to engage with policy actors repeatedly over the medium- and long-term and not just in one-off instances. This is apparent in the *Cocoa-Chocolate* case-study (CC) which has developed from a one-off engagement with a particular company into an international policy influencing process.
- **Creative:** this includes working with filmmakers (*Build the Truce*, BTT); partnering with museum staff (BTT); collaborative writing with practitioners (NGOs) and journalists (DCT); mounting workshops with Southern and Northern think tanks and private corporations (CC); and, creating learning communities (NGOs).
- **Evidence-based policy-making:** the reputation achieved by Manchester's DS cohort on social protection (DCT) led to key researchers being invited to inform key policy reviews (e.g. DFID, UNICEF and ILO).