



RENEWAL 3 REGIONAL WORKSHOP

Heia Safari Lodge, South Africa

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The Regional Network on AIDS, Livelihoods and Food Security (RENEWAL)

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International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)

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INTRODUCTION

Overview of RENEWAL

The Regional Network on AIDS, Livelihoods and Food Security (RENEWAL) is a growing regional “network-of-networks” in sub-Saharan Africa. Starting in 2001, and currently active in six countries (Malawi, Uganda, Zambia, South Africa, Kenya and Ethiopia), RENEWAL comprises national networks of food and nutrition-relevant organizations (public, private and non-governmental) together with partners in AIDS and public health. RENEWAL aims to enhance understanding of the worsening interactions between HIV and AIDS and food and nutrition security, and facilitate a comprehensive response to these interactions. RENEWAL is both a network and a process, with the process of network development being viewed as both a means and an end. The aim is to enhance and sustain impact through pro-actively establishing links between locally-prioritized research, capacity strengthening and policy communications. In the first two phases, RENEWAL initiated 17 studies in six countries in Africa, most of which are now completed, with some ongoing.

The Third Phase of RENEWAL (R3 for short) covers the four year period 2007-2010. The twin goals of R3 are to enhance understanding of the two-way interactions between HIV/AIDS and food and nutrition security, and to improve the effectiveness of food and nutrition-relevant policy and programming in the context of HIV and AIDS. Thematically and geographically, RENEWAL is scaling up. Activities will be intensified in the five hub countries of Malawi, Zambia, South Africa, Uganda and Kenya where fully fledged networks, coordinators and researchers are increasingly active, both in the field and in policy discourse. From this critical mass, links will be established and strengthened with other countries and relevant organizations in the region, including the SADC, NEPAD and the AU, and also elsewhere in the world.

Following an intensive consultative process at country level in 2006 and a systematic examination – both of the research knowledge available to date, and the major policy questions and challenges in the region, the RENEWAL action research agenda for 2007-2010 aims to extend and complement its past and ongoing work with a focus on the following three themes:

- AIDS, Agriculture and Livelihood Security
- AIDS, Community Resilience and Social Protection
- AIDS and Nutrition Security

Strategically, while the core pillars of locally-prioritized action research, capacity strengthening and policy communications will continue to ground RENEWAL, the network continues to evolve. A progressive shift in emphasis into more direct operationally-relevant research is a logical progression from RENEWAL’s early focus on mapping interactions and impacts. And now, in addition to mainstreaming an understanding of HIV and AIDS into agriculture, food and nutrition policy and programming, RENEWAL is increasingly engaging directly with the international AIDS community – in this case to demonstrate the relevance of mainstreaming food and nutrition considerations within a truly broad-based response to the epidemic.

Purpose of the Workshop

The main purpose of the RENEWAL Regional Workshop was to further develop and finalize plans for action research to be initiated during the third phase of RENEWAL (2007-2010).¹ The research planned for the third phase includes both nationally prioritized research -- similar to that undertaken in the previous two phases -- and regional projects that transcend national boundaries. The weighting of this particular workshop was on the regional projects, as more nationally focused research will emerge through a process led by the National Advisory Panels. The workshop also provided an opportunity to debate critical current issues with regard to AIDS, livelihoods, food and nutrition security, to review RENEWAL's past and ongoing work, and to develop new collaborations around the following three core themes of R3:

- Theme 1: AIDS, agriculture and livelihood security
- Theme 2: AIDS, community resilience and social protection
- Theme 3: AIDS and nutrition security

These three themes emerged from an intensive consultative process during 2006 which involved a series of national stakeholder roundtables in the five hub countries of RENEWAL (Malawi, Uganda, Zambia, South Africa and Kenya), along with several meetings with donors and at IFPRI. For each of these themes, one priority “flagship” research project was identified and draft concept notes developed and presented and discussed at the workshop.

The three flagship projects within each theme are as follows:

- Theme 1: Regional Evaluation of the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS)
- Theme 2: Community Resilience and Social Protection
- Theme 3: Evaluation of the Livelihoods Support Program of TASO (The AIDS Support Organization, Uganda) building on past RENEWAL 2 work in Kenya.

This workshop report focuses on the key issues and discussion related to each of the three action research themes and projects under development, as well as the remaining two core pillars of RENEWAL -- capacity strengthening and communications. It concludes by summarizing key generic issues for RENEWAL to address and the next steps in the process. This report, the three research concept notes and workshop presentations are available on www.ifpri.org/renewal.

ACTION RESEARCH

In response to the mandate to develop a regional perspective on the challenge of AIDS, food security and livelihoods that can influence policy and interventions across the hard hit countries of Southern and Eastern Africa, three research ‘flagship’ research projects have been identified under each of the three thematic areas detailed in the RENEWAL 3 framework. These flagships are all regional and operational in design, ensuring that the outcomes can reach as wide a set of beneficiaries as possible, thus helping to maximize the impact of this research over the coming years. Each of these flagships is discussed under the relevant research theme, with a summary of the key issues that emerged from the workshop’s

¹ RENEWAL 3 is grateful for funding by Irish Aid, SIDA and USAID which has made it possible to prioritize research projects under the three action research themes and to implement both the capacity strengthening and communications strategies of RENEWAL 3. Reflecting RENEWAL’s dynamics and responsive character, further funding will be sought to support additional important work at the regional and local levels over the life of the network.

consultative process. Theme leaders will now develop fully fledged research plans based on these deliberations, and in further consultation with participants and other stakeholders.

Theme 1: AIDS, Agriculture and Livelihood Security

AIDS is exposing the fragility of people's livelihoods - a fragility that derives from multiple sources of vulnerability. Poverty, malnutrition and hunger are interacting with the virus and its impacts. This theme focuses on keeping track of the nature, magnitude and sources of vulnerability - so that responses are appropriate and effective in the context of high or rising HIV prevalence. The following research areas as priorities under this theme:

- Tracking the dynamics of interactions (longitudinal data)
- Monitoring and evaluation of interventions and innovations e.g. Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools.
- AIDS and fishing in the Great Lakes region²
- Exploratory work on AIDS and environment.

The flagship project identified under this theme is a regional evaluation of the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS). The concept note developed for this project and the presentation made are available online at www.ifpri.org/renewal. In addition to the in-depth discussion of this project at group and plenary sessions, the keen interest in tracking dynamics through the use of longitudinal data and AIDS and environment resulted in these two themes being discussed as well at the workshop and are highlighted below, after the more detailed discussion of the JFFLS.

1.1 Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS)

Why RENEWAL and the JFFLS? FFLS has received considerable attention amongst national governments and development agencies, amongst others, as a promising intervention to engage with the full spectrum of long-term HIV and AIDS risks and impacts for children directly affected by the pandemic. Evaluating the JFFLS would entail a detailed understanding of the interactions between HIV/AIDS, agriculture, livelihood security, with a particular focus on children's livelihoods and life skills.

The evaluation will be objective, independent and regional. Its objective is to answer the following question: *Does the JFFLS achieve livelihood security and empowerment of beneficiary children, through knowledge exchange in HIV affected communities?*

Research questions

This objective will lead to research question at three levels: *package, process and impact*. A temporal dimension will be included in these questions as some can be and have to be answered immediately and others (like impact) can only be answered through a longitudinal evaluation.

Package questions discussed during group work:

- What is the content of the JFFLS (from different stakeholders perspective)
 - AIDS component, gender component, agricultural component, life-skills component?
 - Does the mix of components relate to the needs assessment and the local context?

² RENEWAL will be a partner on this project to be led by WorldFish.

- Cost Benefit analysis:
 - Different entry points
 - In terms of money and quality delivered
 - Compared to different approaches that are trying to reach the same goal
- The realism/appropriateness of the package, in terms of resonance with the context, needs and implementation

Process question discussed during group work:

- What mechanisms/systems are in place for sustainability, ownership, maintenance of indigenous knowledge, relevance, quality assurance, participation of other stakeholders, needs assessment
- How were the entry points selected?
- How were the children selected?
- How successful was the knowledge sharing process
- How well do parties work together in the JFFLS

Impact question discussed during group work:

- What is the perceived and measured impact at different levels: children, schools, peers, parents care givers etc, extension services, communities, national impact?
- What are the unintended consequences?
 - Substitution for conventional schooling
 - For traditional knowledge transfer systems in communities (JFFLS are based on the assumption that knowledge transfer worsens when parents die, but is this assumption correct in all contexts?)
 - Stigma and discrimination
 - Over burden and over stretching the time and skills of the JFFLS facilitators (i.e. extension officer spending a lot of time on the JFFLS and less time in providing extension services to farmers).
- What change has occurred in the livelihood security at different levels – beneficiaries, households, peers, community etc?

All the research questions need to be finalized with stakeholders and a certain level of flexibility in the research design is crucial to account for contextual and programmatic variances at different sites. Other key questions will be asked at all times to ensure that comparisons can be made across countries and across sites.

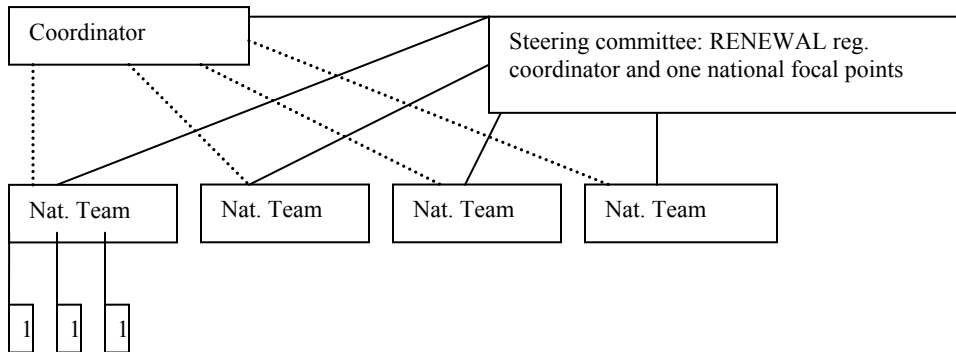
Methodology

Three reinforcing processes, with clear and tangible deliverables along the line:

1. Review and analysis of context. Deliverables are clarification around the package, context and stakeholders M&E toolbox developed for this specific study.
 2. Field Work. Deliverables: enhancements of the research capacity of the country teams to evaluate, understanding of the facilitating and constraining factors in the JFFLS.
 3. Analysis and knowledge translation (cross cutting and continuous) Deliverables: evaluation of the package, process and impact and translated into different vehicles for communication.
- Temporal dimension: immediate (benchmark study), and over time (longitudinal)
 - Mix between quantitative and qualitative proper PRA, most significant change method and a diversity of creative methods for data collection

Team, budget and funding option:

- National teams: mixed multi-disciplinary teams with social, education, agriculture, HIV/AIDS, nutrition/health skills. Include regional coordinator, and a steering committee (one member of the national teams and regional RENEWAL focal point).



Stakeholders at national level, children, communities, FAO, government, staff, etc., all participate and have an equal voice in the process; this will ensure that the national teams are able to get opinions and inputs in a gender, sex, age disaggregated manner and can pay attention to the AIDS time line.

Budget will be phased. by deliverable, and informed by the initial desk study in the 1st process of the research methodology, now planned to take place in all 10 countries.

Funding options: AUSAID, RENEWAL, FAO, WFP, UNICEF, “neutral donor?” needed?

Key issues raised in plenary discussions

AIDS is creating an erosion of educational knowledge and skills, and children do not have access to this knowledge any longer in hard hit areas – JFFLS may be one solution to meet this challenge.

Getting the M&E ‘right’ for JFFLS is the key challenge, hence the need for this project and for RENEWAL’s central involvement as a driver and neutral party in the process.

The targeting of OVC is critical to the success of this project, and this issue should be linked to Theme 2 in which similar challenges are faced. Thematic coordination will also help to ensure that there is comparability between themes as far as possible.

One option on targeting may be to use the existing communities in which OVC live as the ‘entry point’ to livelihood support for JFFLS, rather than a mix-match of institutions and other entry points. If JFFLS can’t find its niche, the current process of JFFLS runs the risk of being yet another expensive ‘experiment’ which will not leave us with any real progress to solving the issues.

Is there scope to include the agriculture and life skills that JFFLS promotes in the existing school curriculum as one mechanism for cost-effective scaling up? This would require bringing a wide range of ministries on board (including education, agriculture and health). However, school curricula are overwhelmed already with the demands of general education, so this is not a simple process and may have limited scope to have the JFFLS encompassed in the school curriculum. Also, JFFLS are already designed to be complementary to formal schooling, not a competitor.

How can a flexible, context-specific set of questions allow for a comparative analysis of the findings? To deal with this design element, there will be a standardized set of common question modules (methodological toolbox will be developed, and will encourage local ownership, input and control).

Is there a temporal dimension to this study, a prospective design, to assist in the evaluation aspect of the research? A benchmark study and tracking of the same participants over three years will be done to address the need for a longitudinal approach in this evaluation.

Is there a conflict between the policies and objectives of ILO, FAO and WFP which needs to be managed, especially in relation to questions of child labour, exploitation, denial of formal education, etc? Such issues, questions and challenges must be front and central in the evaluation of JFFLS.

The educational aspirations (probable labor pathways) of the child must be understood, but if the means of achieving these aspirations are not available, are there ways in which the JFFLS can be effective in placing children on these pathways (or if not, this is a contextual constraint that should be recognized and not placed on the JFFLS as their responsibility)?

1.2 Tracking the Dynamics of Interactions (Longitudinal Data)

The aim of this group was to identify potential data sets and to explore the key questions that have a regional significance. Data sets identified include KwaZulu-Natal Income Dynamics Survey (KIDS), University of KwaZulu Natal, Agincourt DSS panel data, Malawi panel data (IFPRI), Ethiopia panel data (IFPRI), Zimbabwe (CARE), Zambia (MSU), Kenya (MSU; DSS), WFP CHS data (from 6 Southern-African countries), Afrobarometer (and other data sets) from the Centre for Social Survey Research (CSSR), University of Cape Town.

Research questions:

- *What are the impacts of AIDS at the macro scale?* There is an apparent dichotomy between the impacts and outcomes of AIDS on livelihoods at the macro and micro scales. Small sample, village case studies often show major adverse impacts of AIDS, but the macro analyses do not support this finding at the community and larger scale of measurement. What is accounting for this? Are macro impacts still going to be felt due to the time lag effects of AIDS epidemiology? Tracking macro outcomes is critical for policy and planning at levels other than the household and individual, for which there is ample evidence of negative outcomes for vulnerable groups.
- *Who is going to die from AIDS?* This question re-examines the wealth-poverty debate as a driver of HIV and AIDS. To what extent is wealth still the most important predictor of mortality; or is HIV transmission increasingly driven by poverty? In addition to wealth, gender is another critical variable which requires additional analysis. These findings will not only be directly relevant to understanding local level dynamics, but will also help to contextualize the macro questions posed above, with implications for national planning in all sectors.

1.3 AIDS and Environment

There is interest and scope in this theme at the regional level. Not only is RENEWAL engaged in research from its Phase 2 under this topic, but there are a number of other initiatives emerging, including a project lead by Michigan State University (Kenya), and the ongoing Southern Africa Vulnerability Initiative (SAVI, regional) which deals with land use and associated climate change in the context of multiple and overlapping vulnerabilities.

Research questions

- *What are the links between ARV/nutrition interventions, peoples' decisions with regard to natural resource management and conservation, and long-term land productivity and food security?* In this study, feedback loops from improved food security and nutrition to reduced HIV transmission and improved community resilience are potentially important. To date there is no empirical evidence on this relationship. DSS data are available in Kenya and South Africa providing the opportunity to conduct this study in more than one country using panel data. The potential of including Uganda as a third country is being explored, possibly linking with the Theme 3 activity described below.
- *What are the effects of conservation farming on the reduction of drought yield risk on drought-induced and risky coping behaviors associated with the spread of HIV?* Data exist in Zimbabwe where potholing has shown significant improvements in maize yields under drought and non-drought conditions over non-conservative techniques, with greater household level food and nutrition security as the result. However, no empirical measure exists for the impact of this farming method on HIV spread or AIDS impact mitigation through improved food security. This study will evaluate and analyze these potential linkages.

Theme 2: AIDS, Community Resilience and Social Protection

This theme focuses on the respective roles and potential partnerships between community and state in maximizing community resilience to AIDS, and ensuring effective state-led social protection for those members of the population who require such support. The major new R3 activities in this theme are:

- Community Resilience and Social Protection
- Collaboration with the Joint Learning Initiative on Children and AIDS (JLICA)
- Collaboration with the UN and Partners Alliance on OVC and Livelihoods

The first of these activities has been developed as the flagship under RENEWAL 3, whereas the second and third are already underway through established partnerships.³ The concept note developed for this project and the presentation made are available online at www.ifpri.org/renewal.

2.1 Community Resilience and Social Protection

Rationale for RENEWAL's role in social protection:

- Discussion on meaning of social protection, relationship to existing systems of social assistance, what is RENEWAL's role?
- Moving from 'project' approach to social protection to more systematic, sustainable approach (role of state? Non-state actors?)
- Provide common themes and research design support for partners interested in studying similar interventions
- Provide comparative, regional perspective

Criteria for selecting projects:

- Need to be able to address the Theme 2 research questions in the RENEWAL framework document.

³ The Early Childhood Development (0-4) Project being led by the HSRC was presented at the workshop and the presentation will be available online at www.ifpri.org/renewal.

- Research questions address all important themes except: 1) make gender issues and exploitation more explicit; 2) regional relevance.
- Address cross-cutting themes (similar to questions in RENEWAL document)
- Social protection must be more than just cash transfers because poverty involves not just a cash deficit but issues related to gender, power.
- Cash +: Health? ECD? Mobilization, education and rights? Psycho-social support?
- ECD South Africa and Cash Transfers + in Zambia

Additional cross-cutting themes:

- Compare institutional context in analyzing what works and doesn't regionally:
 - Funding mechanisms, procurement systems, capacity of delivery agents, strength of civil society institutions
- Learning from community responses

Broad research issues: Phase 1a

- Community studies
- How are communities coping in the face of AIDS crisis? How have their responses been undermined? Strengthened?
- What informal and community-based social protection currently exists at community level? What are local NGOs doing?
- What do people value? Want?
- Baseline household and community study for later impact assessment (pre-intervention)

Broad research issues: Phase 1b

- Institutional Study
 - Roles and relationships between government Ministries/departments, NGOs, agencies and community organizations for financing, procurement, implementation, training.
 - State or non-state? State may not be best at delivering, why not work with NGOs?
 - But can't just leave them out—need to bring them in and build capacity.
- Policy processes affecting program development and implementation
 - Institutional context, dissonance, compartmentalization, capacities, partnerships, strength of civil society organizations,
 - Evidenced-based policies?

Broad research issues: Phase 2

- How have formal interventions modified community and other local approaches (support/undermine resilience)?
 - How affected local social relations?
 - Behavior change?
- How have local practices informed/affected formal interventions (in design and practice)
- How can lessons from phase 1 be translated into policy?
- Follow up impact studies (indicators?)

Specific research issues:

- Gender-specific vulnerabilities
- Targeting (AIDS-affected or poor?)
- Cash or food or both?
- Appropriate level of benefits -- social minimum
- Testing alternative designs
- Impacts (economic and social, on adults and children)

Process issues:

- What is the role of this discussion group? Thematic reference group?
- Management structures?
- Feedback to communities (not just report back at end but at various stages along the way). Does RENEWAL have a protocol for this?

Importance of regional emphasis:

- Need comparability across projects
 - Not necessarily intervention design but answering common sets of questions in different institutional contexts
 - Standardization of designs
 - Can look at common interventions across countries, in later stage of RENEWAL
 - RENEWAL partners can look at similar questions in similar interventions in their countries, with design support from RENEWAL.
- Need to involve regional institutions in RENEWAL generally, and in its social protection theme. They are interested in this theme.
 - Follow up on 2006 Livingstone call for action, NPAs
 - SADC, East African Community, African Union, COMESA
 - Important to interact with these bodies, learn of their interests and have an audience there for our findings.
- NAPs involvement is crucial -- comment on the proposals, ongoing interaction.
- Ensure relevance of research and audience for results

Key issues in plenary discussions

Should we be targeting AIDS or be developing general, poverty focused programs which are AIDS sensitive?

Why are there tensions/competition between government, NGOs (local and international agencies) and CBOs – all three are needed for effective implementation and this is a tension that must be understood within the context of this research.

In targeting, one should be sensitive to AIDS related stigma as this has the potential to worsen the situation for beneficiaries.

Care-givers are now volunteers, but present a major component of the workforce and should be part of an employment strategy (which is being addressed with the HSRC in under this theme).

Need to think about a minimum social protection package to have an impact, at scale, and how will this be sustained.

This study cannot underestimate the political dimension and determinants of who is targeted and qualifies for entitlement.

In some cases up to 33% of the population may be on food aid, so social protection interventions will need to take cognizance of this existing and widespread support.

There may be a need to respond to the needs of the recipients – this would entail a demand driven, and therefore beneficiary-relevant approach in this study. However, there is a case for a more supply-driven, broader, regional approach to questions that are of regional relevance, which remains the focus of the Theme 2 flagship.

Studies focused on community responses to welfare needs in Zambia show across 4 communities that there is no ‘community response’ to needs as such – why are communities having such difficulties in developing informal social protection / response mechanisms?

Poverty may well explain why communities do not have much in the way of informal social safety nets – people (‘communities’) in Zambia have so few resources, that this is a major obstacle to endogenous responses (communities are destitute).

However, in contrast to this situation observed in these 4 communities in Zambia, there are cases of Zambian villages working together to share land, food and the care of sick people and children. These apparent contradictions may be the result of sampling methods – sampling must therefore be able to get at these kinds of informal responses that are in fact present. There may be some forms of community response that are ‘hidden’ and not well understood, so there may be a methodological challenge in this issue. What responses are we trying to understand: to AIDS or to changing livelihoods and food security? As there is generally not good information on AIDS incidence, the question is about changing livelihoods and how people are coping with that. The methodology must be able to capture the diversity of communities as they are far from homogeneous in many respects.

Is there a need to look at communities by *affiliation* rather than by *geographic proximity*, given that NGOs are largely responsible for mobilizing community responses? The transfer of knowledge, protection and rights are also forms of social protection, and may also be important in this context (although ‘fuzzy’). For example, in South Africa, there is an employment program as a social protection intervention.

Within the context of this study, are there certain conditions or thresholds under which social protection is humanitarian and therefore of a particular type, versus the need for a different package that is aimed at longer term, more general welfare transfers?

This research may help to inform the international response to economic assistance and development assistance in Africa (by the World Bank, IMF, donors, etc.) that is appropriate to the conditions and circumstances in recipient communities and contexts. Community knowledge is important to recognize and document in forms that can be used effectively.

Theme 3: AIDS and Nutrition Security

Nutrition security, as distinct from food security, has emerged as an important dimension in the prevention, care, treatment and mitigation of HIV and AIDS. A focus on nutrition security can help reveal opportunities for effectively linking health services with food and nutrition policy in the context of AIDS. To date there have been few attempts to link nutritionists with agricultural economists and/or program managers to investigate the broader issue of household and community-level nutrition security, policy and programming in the context of AIDS. Many of the nutrition-relevant responses to date have simply revolved around delivery of food aid, and within RENEWAL 3 there is now an emphasis on linking not only nutrition security with AIDS, but also with sustainable livelihoods.

The flagship identified for development at this workshop is the collaborative work with TASO, which focuses on the issue of moving from drugs to livelihoods amongst AIDS patients and people living with HIV in Uganda and finding ways to scale up the programs in a sustainable way. The concept note developed for this project and the presentation made are available online at www.ifpri.org/renewal.

First, the group discussed the following key overarching issues:

M& E indicators. Important to develop M& E indicators for measuring the effectiveness of various food and nutrition interventions integrated into ongoing AIDS care and treatment programs in several countries. Indicators of body composition changes including muscle mass would be useful in different populations (e.g. issue of obesity in Swaziland even among those on ARVs).

Policy dynamics: How do we influence policy in this area? Which should come first – the policy or concrete experience on the ground, to build on, and learn from? Why do so many policies gather dust on shelves? What is proper research question to ask to address implementation of policy – or the “know-do” gap? Need an analysis of policy and policy gaps in this area – but also the implementation environment that AIDS policymakers operate in (ie treatment-oriented). What are policymakers are most concerned with and how can we address those concerns with our research? This should be our starting point. The governments of Malawi and South Africa are particularly interested in work that will help integration.

Regionality: How to make work regionally relevant? Replicating research in different countries comes with formidable costs and logistics, and is often not necessary. Some ideas: aim for a best practices note on monitoring and evaluation practices, based on R3 research. Take stock of NGO-public institution partnerships and their operational protocols. Different partnership modalities were discussed. One way is to identify countries that have rigorous monitoring systems in tracking anthropometric data and partner with them. In some countries, RENEWAL would be engaged actively in conducting research with its collaborators, while in others RENEWAL may partner with collaborators who take the lead.

Country studies. The group discussed several possible studies outside of Uganda. Paul McNamara described the pilot study in India that will be quite similar to TASO’s work in tracking people receiving ART over time, with variations in food security and nutrition, to evaluate impacts on health outcomes. The pilot could be informed by the TASO work and others such as AMPATH. It follow a cohort of 400 patients, using 3 different food security indicators and medical records, stage of disease etc. The cohort will be followed every 6 months with survey. Key research questions include: How does food security as defined by literature affect care? What thresholds of BMI should trigger nutrition intervention? The partner hospital has realized patients need more than just medical care. Variation in the cohort can be used to statistically measure effects. There are ethical challenges -- the study aims to use variation in own food security status rather than giving food to some and not others. The study aims to measure nutritional status including micronutrient deficiencies and associations with food security indicators.

Other studies mentioned including the AMPATH work in Kenya on moving from short-term food aid to a fertilizer subsidy program, and interest in evaluating community nutrition programs in South Africa - a proposal exists for undertaking health interventions with social dimensions. A wheat flour fortification project in Bangladesh was mentioned -- can such an approach be usefully linked to ARV treatment?

Ethics of research: Do we allow nutrition to deteriorate to inform our knowledge or do we intervene, and when? Some possible solutions include a quasi-experimental design that can show dynamic changes over time even without a real control group. Surveys must be good enough to randomize over issues that can’t be controlled for e.g. people receiving interventions from different sources, but there is a need for more food than is available. Review existing clinical trials in the region and look at their design. Similar ethical issues to conducting nutrition surveillance and undertaking research on poverty.

Food aid: An issue of the quality of food aid and cultural appropriateness was raised, as this influences its use and ultimate effectiveness (while not an explicit study focus of R3, as there are other expert groups working on these issues, this is something to keep on our radar while studying any interventions with food aid.)

3.1 Evaluation of the Livelihoods Support Program of TASO (The AIDS Support Organization, Uganda)

A brief overview provided of how the collaboration with TASO evolved, as a background to the Theme 3 flagship concept note.

Study 0: Assessing TASO's existing database

Patients' information is entered into database when they enter into care, and patients are followed throughout the time they receive food. The database was not structured for nutrition but there is weight information and height is available retrospectively. Accuracy of weight measurements is dubious. There are two sources of food aid—WFP and Title II. Data contains: demographics, information on medical records, records of when people started getting food, weight, some have CD4, Hb. Potential for “before-after” studies of patients on treatment, tracking from the time of food receipt. Consultant required to work alongside TASO staff and assess value of database. Possibility of students from George Washington University. Need first to address the ethics of using TASO's database for research purposes.

Study 1: Developing an M&E framework for interventions that integrate sustainable livelihood programming (SLP) into ongoing AIDS care and treatment programs.

Study 1 will assess SLP with the intention of developing an M& E framework. This will include getting a clear picture of what could be expected out of SLP in this context; issues around sustainability; training and implementation; perceptions of impact from various perspectives with the possibility of quantitative assessments of food security.

This study was originally envisioned in the concept note as a retrospective impact assessment and cost-effectiveness study of TASO SLP program in 7 centers. But there was substantial discussion on whether this is a credible approach.

SLP: The target group, at TASO's seven centers, are those receiving ARVs and food aid. The effort is to introduce sustainable options as PLWA exit from food aid. TASO refers to this approach as “exit empowerment strategy”. Interventions include sustainable agricultural practices, agricultural inputs and seeds, fruit trees, training of trainers, carried out with TASO's partners. The intervention began in Feb 2006 and ended in July 2006. Households (that formed groups to support each other) were supposed to follow-up with each other. Two members from each of groups of 20 households were trained to train others. Other than the usual information that TASO collects, including poverty assessment based on which clients receive food aid, no project specific baseline data were collected. There was substantial discussion about the feasibility of a credible retrospective assessment of this SLP. Cost-effectiveness analysis would be a stretch. An assessment of the baseline information from TASO database (Study 0) will help understand what kind of impact is feasible to track.

Can R3 engage with a *prospective* program evaluation? For example, Title II with ACIDI-VOCA are starting a program soon in northern Uganda. Need to follow up with Food for Peace in Washington to see potential of partnership – e.g. adding in food security surveys relevant to our goals

The group also agreed there is value in investigating the lessons learnt from SLP under discussion, although it would not be a retrospective assessment or cost-effectiveness analysis.

Working towards an M&E system for sustainable livelihoods programs, several interesting questions could be addressed: What are realistic objectives of SLPs? Sustainability and impact? How well was SLP planned and implemented? What is really important to the clients participating in these types of programs? In what intangible ways did it affect the clients? What is the current food security situation of participants? Is there any long-term impact? What are the underlying themes that are relevant to the trainers and clients that can then be incorporated into future program and future assessments (interviews with clients, SLP partners and trainers of trainers)

Study 2: Cost-effectiveness of integrating alternate food, nutrition, SLP interventions into ongoing AIDS care and treatment programs

Study 2 will be a long-term comprehensive trial with multiple arms of interventions to assess the cost-effectiveness of various interventions to improve food and nutrition security of PLWHs and their households. The assessments will be at the PLWH level (in terms of ART adherence, quality of life, productivity, nutritional complications, health outcomes including survival), household level (changes in household food security, labor allocation, intrahousehold resource allocation issues?) and programmatic level.

Potential interventions – as arms of the trial -- include: food aid, cash, SLP, food + cash, fortification, Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF). Need to be clear about impacts to be tracked, over what duration, for whom etc. Validation of all the indicators, especially those with biomarkers is essential.

Other questions include: to what extent can the ongoing WFP study with TASO be used? How can we draw from AMPATH's work? The group agreed on the need for a person to be based in Kampala to coordinate this work.

Next steps

Searching for partners besides TASO -- possibilities are AMPATH, Mozambique study, South Africa Community nutrition program, among others. Need to undertake simple scoping exercise on alternative strategies being conceived to link nutrition interventions and ARVs -- critical to get our intervention arms right. Review Project Concern International's Zambia conference in Zambia for information on what is being tried.

Time frame: 2007 mainly for planning, followed by 3 years of implementation

Ballpark cost: \$400-600,000/year?

Theme 3 has elements/arms that straddle all the three themes. Need to take advantage of these overlaps.

Key issues raised in plenary discussions

How to get food and nutrition support into the *mainstream* treatment and care intervention as hunger is a major, widespread problem amongst the poor in the region.

Packaged food technology, locally produced, is working to scale by government in 60 centres in Malawi to address malnutrition – any evaluative study should not overlook food technology options in treatment (there is a need for evaluative research of this program which is currently weak).

Mixed food and cash support is provided in Malawi – does food get converted to cash in the case of Uganda as people respond to the need for mixed transfers which appear to be most useful for households?

If beneficiaries are doing this in Uganda, this practice would constitute important lessons on how to structure transfers with best effect for treatment and support (evaluation is required).

Selenium may be an overlooked and important micronutrient – refer to the work by medical geographer Harold Harvey at the University of Victoria, Canada which links selenium soil presence to HIV incidence.

A regional research agenda is very difficult in nutrition and food treatment and support because of the contextual variety.

Finding nutritional ways of ameliorating the toxic effects of ARVs is very important, and may be a worthwhile study to undertake under this theme. Similarly, there is a need to study the extent to which food and nutrition interventions delay the disease progression from HIV to AIDS. However, clinical work of this kind may be beyond the scope of RENEWAL.

An important research question is what is required to change the mindset of local people to understand and appreciate the nutritional value of local foods which are available but under appreciated and under used. This theme should not exclude the importance of locally available nutritional opportunities.

There is currently a need to identify which micronutrients are needed for the range of treatment and support needs, and then use local and accepted foods to meet those needs – rather than relying on donated food rations. This may help to create improved self-reliance and sustainability of interventions at the local level, with positive spin-offs for addressing food and nutrition insecurity in the general population

Land and/or tenure security is an issue in food oriented livelihoods programs that will inform this theme in general as well as the TASO evaluation.

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING AND COMMUNICATIONS

RENEWAL has developed explicit capacity strengthening and communications strategies for implementation between 2007-2010. Both presentations made at the workshop are available online at www.ifpri.org/renewal. The following points were raised in plenary discussions:

Capacity strengthening relates to researchers, professionals, policy makers, implementers and communities themselves. The capacity strengthening strategy as it stands addresses all but the last category – communities. One way to improve on this is to ensure that communities are involved in the research, not only as respondents, to ensure the research itself is a ‘development process’ for those involved. Communities will become empowered, along with the researchers themselves, ultimately ensuring better research outcomes, and better impact. RENEWAL can address the need for capacity amongst researcher teams undertaking projects in the region by linking appropriate expertise with the teams e.g. ‘mentoring’ researchers. This relates also to communications and the question of accountability. What is our accountability to communities with whom we conduct research? How do we communicate/feedback to communities? One idea is to develop communications material (e.g. JFFLS DVD) for diverse audience.

Communications and capacity development are linked in several ways, including the need to strengthen capacity of country networks to communicate effectively.

While policy oriented research is the strength of RENEWAL, there is a need to influence implementation at the CBO/NGO level. RENEWAL should be thinking of this two pronged strategy (to influence policy

as well as implementation at the grassroots). We need to highlight what is happening on the ground and encourage contact between CBOs. Fostering exchange at the grassroots, using lay publications to target CBOs, encouraging information-sharing, and communicating new methodologies and approaches (rather than “best practices” per se) are all important.

Communications and capacity strengthening will, as far as possible, be intertwined with research. PIs of research projects are strongly encouraged to build in these elements, for example, through involvement of country partners in proposal writing and analyses.

KEY GENERIC ISSUES

Both Regional and National

One issue that emerged during the workshop, particularly in the smaller breakout group sessions, was a perceived tension between the national and regional emphasis of R3. Although the R3 proposal gave equal weighting to regional and national projects, there was a perception by some that national priorities were relatively neglected. The deliberate emphasis of the workshop on developing proposals for the flagship projects for each of the themes might have led some participants to believe that R3 was all about big, regional projects with little interaction with the national priorities. This is absolutely not the case, as specified in the original framework document and R3 proposal. But this concern highlighted the need for RENEWAL to emphasize the clear focus on both nationally relevant (and nationally demand driven) research and the larger, regional (and to some extent more “supply driven”) flagship projects.

The regional focus of R3 revolves around generating operational knowledge on interventions that are regionally applicable – knowledge that serves an international public good. The national focus revolves around the national priorities articulated by the NAPs, especially during the February 2006 roundtable consultations. Both are fundamental to R3. This workshop focused primarily on the regional – but it will be followed by national consultations and support to national RENEWAL networks to initiate locally-prioritized action research, along with other activities.

In addition to work within the three thematic areas, a policy scoping study will be undertaken -- to judge the extent to which, and the way in which:

- the implications of the AIDS-hunger nexus are incorporated into development policies and plans (including food security and AIDS policy), and
- the experience in actual programming and actual impact, to the extent this is measurable.

This will involve three levels of work – country-level analyses, a regional analysis including policies and plans of SADC, EAC, AU, NEPAD, and an international analysis. Such an audit of existing policies will help reveal strategic links between research and policy and programming, at national and regional levels.

To ensure that R3 continues to engage the issue of the *regionality* of RENEWAL, a concept note will be developed around this issue focusing particularly on why it is important that RENEWAL continues to strengthen the regional focus and approach. This note will also specify the criteria for RENEWAL's engagement in work -- what lies within RENEWAL's scope, and what lies outside it -- and it will be linked to a clear "mission statement" for RENEWAL and a revised logframe. A draft of this will be sent to all participants in due course.

Maximizing Impact

RENEWAL is not engaged in purely academic research -- it is engaged in policy-relevant, actionable research geared to maximizing impact at the following three levels:

1. *National* - Need to influence policy and implementation agencies which require a certain set of communication methods: how do we use RENEWAL-generated knowledge – and other relevant knowledge -- to meet the disparate needs of agencies and government?
2. *Regional* - Need to influence political commitment and common policy at the regional level: how do we use RENEWAL knowledge to inform policy of regional bodies (such as SADC, AU and NEPAD)?
3. *Existing initiatives* – Need to engage with existing initiatives: how does RENEWAL influence, support and contribute to existing initiatives and interventions, led by others, to maximize impact and “value added”?

In addition to the three levels identified above, one request from policy makers at the workshop is for RENEWAL to provide information at various stages of the ongoing research process to policy makers, rather than waiting for the final report to be available before information is shared. Such an iterative feedback system is the crux of ‘inreach’ – a process of engaging with the NAPs in local consultation at the beginning, middle and end of the research process to maximize relevance and ultimately impact of the knowledge generated and the use to which it is put. R3 will continue to emphasize both continuous inreach and post-research outreach.

A further challenge for RENEWAL in increasing impact when dealing with AIDS is the vertical, sectoral set-up of policy and interventions – to what extent has RENEWAL been able to increase horizontal integration of the various medical and non-medical approaches?

Inputs, outputs and outcomes for each project are important to help with monitoring of projects as they get implemented, and to ensure that the appropriate links are made with RENEWAL more broadly in terms of cumulative impacts. RENEWAL has developed an impact assessment protocol which will be put to use to systematically track policy impacts.

Maximizing Synergy

How are the three RENEWAL 3 research themes going to be linked to inform national as well as regional understanding and responses, and to exploit the clear synergies? Some options are as follows:

- flagships are regional (or multi-country) in design thus allowing common methodological and thematic approaches where relevant.
- have theme members ‘cross’ to other themes as appropriate and encourage regional learning.
- RENEWAL is facing questions of ‘how far’ to go on certain aspects of the research (for example, clinical work) which needs to be delineated as one way of defining thematic scope.
- need to have clear indicators of activities, outcomes and impacts that are applicable to all research activities under RENEWAL 3 – a common and clear framework is required. One option is a logframe for each flagship project that can be integrated with the larger RENEWAL logframe.
- proposals could be reviewed by RENEWAL/IFPRI research managers before finalization and implementation to ensure that links are identified and made explicit
- a methodological library (tool pool) to be developed to improve connectivity between activities under RENEWAL 3.

CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

- Regional and national duality – given the geographic scope of the epidemic and widespread, chronic food insecurity, there is an imperative to work at the regional level with the aim of making an impact across the region. Regional and local levels of research and action need to be balanced and linked, in a coordinated and effective manner.
- Operationability and impact – the focus must be ultimately on action, and on impact.
- Dealing with complexity – efforts to learn across sites and at the regional level are constrained by contextual complexities within which RENEWAL works, thus challenging conventional methodologies.
- Relevance – research must remain relevant to the challenges posed by AIDS in a context of chronic food and nutrition insecurity.
- Quality – research must at all times be of the highest quality, ensuring that the findings are credible and can contribute to an evolving evidence base that is linked to action.
- Capacity – while AIDS erodes capacity at all levels, RENEWAL will continue to implement its capacity development strategy to help off-set these losses and improve the ability of people and organizations to generate evidence -- as well as the capacity to use such evidence.
- Sustainability – RENEWAL not only aims to enhance the sustainability of people’s livelihoods in the region through its work, but to also ensure that the network itself becomes self-reliant beyond 2010
- Ownership – of both the RENEWAL network and of the research that is undertaken
- Scale and speed – there is an urgency to develop responses at scale that are based on sound evidence. Scaling up can occur on several dimensions – quantitative, functional, organizational, political etc – but it is most important to retain a focus on scaling up the *impact*, not the project or program per se. Yet time is required to generate this knowledge base, to use it to inform action, and to begin to match the scale of action with the scale of the epidemic. This tension between scale, speed and quality must be recognized and continually managed.

The following activities will take place after the workshop:

- Revisiting RENEWAL’s “mission” to define scope of its activities: what’s in, and what’s out?
- The logframe and generic indicators will be reviewed and updated for R3
- Impact assessment protocol – RENEWAL 3 will further refine its draft impact assessment protocol in relation to the external and internal evaluation processes being set up (external evaluation to take place in late 2007-08).
- Theme proposals – the three flagships will be developed as fully fledged implementable research plans, led by theme leaders, taking into consideration the outcomes of the working groups and plenary sessions.
- National Advisory Panel meetings in all countries will be held in June 2007, with the regional coordinator and director present, to focus on national-level activities in context of R3.
- Additional proposals (both regional and country specific) will be developed.
- Policy scoping – R3 will undertake an audit of regional and national policies and plans to help make the strategic links between research and policy and programming, at national and regional levels and to identify policy and implementation gaps and bottlenecks.

WORKSHOP AGENDA

12 March

Session 1: Introduction *Chair: Stuart Gillespie*

9.0	Objectives of workshop	
9.10	Self-introduction	All participants
9.40	RENEWAL: origins and evolution	Stuart Gillespie
10.05	Brief highlights of past research	Suneetha Kadiyala

Session 2: Country perspectives *Chair: Bruce Frayne*

11.0 Brief country updates and discussion
(South Africa, Zambia, Malawi, Kenya, Uganda)

Session 3: Looking ahead to RENEWAL 3 *Chair: Sam Bota*

14.00	Theme 1: AIDS, agriculture and livelihood security	
	Scene-setter (15 mins)	Scott Drimie
	R3 concept note (15 mins)	Josee Koch
	Discussion (15 mins)	

15.15	Theme 2: AIDS, community resilience and social protection	
	Scene-setter (15 mins)	Stephen Devereux
	R3 concept note (15 mins)	Michelle Adato
	Discussion (15 mins)	

16.00	Theme 3: AIDS and nutrition security	
	Scene-setter (15 mins)	Suneetha Kadiyala
	R3 concept note (15 mins)	Christine Nabiryo
	Discussion (15 mins)	

13 March

9.0	AIDS, Agriculture and Food Security: The Next 25 Years	Thom Jayne
9.45-17.0	Thematic breakout groups (see additional note)	

14 March

Session 4: Other initiatives *Chair: Margaret Akinyi Wagah*

8.30 OVC and Partner Alliance, WorldFish, CARE, Concern Worldwide, RAISA

Session 5: Theme group feedback *Chair: Albert Chalabesa*

11.00 Themes 1 and 2 feedback to plenary
(25 mins presentation, 20 minutes discussion)

Chair: Peter Atekyereza

13.30	Theme 3 feedback to plenary plus discussion	
14.15	Capacity and communications	Bruce Frayne/Noora Lisa-Aberman
14.45	Conclusions and next steps	Stuart Gillespie
15.0	Meeting closes	

PARTICIPANTS

Theme 1: Agriculture and livelihood dynamics

Bruce Frayne, Theme 1 co-leader	IFPRI, Nairobi
Scott Drimie, Theme 1 co-leader	RENEWAL South Africa
Thom Jayne	Michigan State University, USA
Josee Koch	FAO Regional, South Africa
Stephen Muliokela	Golden Valley Research Trust, Zambia
Eric Kenefick	World Food Programme, South Africa
Isaac Malasha	WorldFish, Zambia
Wayne Twine	South Africa
Leah Berkowitz	CARE Regional, South Africa
Susan Amoaten	Concern Worldwide, Mozambique
Samwel Otieno	RENEWAL Kenya
Albert Chalabesa	Ministry of Agriculture and RENEWAL, Zambia
Futoshi Yamauchi	IFPRI USA
Sam Bota	Bunda College and RENEWAL Malawi
Renaud DePlaen	IDRC, Canada
Goulda Downer	USAID, USA
Nkandu Luo	Luo and Associates, Zambia
Chiara Brunelli	WFP Rome
Stephen Porter	VSO RAISA
Francis Byekwaso	NAADS Uganda
Mary Oduka	Irish Aid, Uganda

Theme 2: Social protection

Michelle Adato, Theme 2 leader	IFPRI USA
Miriam Altman	Human Science Research Council, South Africa
Stephen Devereux	Institute of Development Studies, UK
Petronella Masabane	UNICEF South Africa
Petan Hamazakaza	RENEWAL Zambia
Tim Quinlan	HEARD, Univ of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa
Bronagh Carr	Irish Aid, Zambia
Fiona Edwards	Concern Worldwide, Malawi
Davies Chitundu	SIDA, Zambia

Theme 3: Nutrition security

Suneetha Kadiyala, Theme 3 leader	IFPRI USA
Christine Nabiryo	TASO Uganda
Jonathan Gorstein	University of Washington, USA
Waza Kaunda	Kenneth Kaunda Children's Foundation, Zambia
Bennie Sikhakhane	Government of South Africa and RENEWAL
Margaret Wagah	Kenyatta University and RENEWAL Kenya
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