



Cape Town to host 2012 Global Health Research Forum... Focus is on going beyond aid in health...

The 2012 Global Health Research Forum (Forum 2012) entitled “**Beyond aid... research and innovation as key drivers for health, equity and development**” will be held in Cape Town, South Africa, from 24 to 26 April 2012. In line with the emerging consensus from the South, Forum 2012 will focus on a new world – one in which long-term development aid is no longer a main feature of global interaction and diplomacy. Low and middle income countries (LMICs) are finding better ways to achieve health, equity and development. A new attitude is required of true partnership guided by the countries’ development strategies. While there are still some uncertainties about all the ingredients needed to realise this world, it is now also evident that countries do have the capacity to use research, science and technology (S&T) and innovation to improve their health, equity and development – on their own and in partnership with the global world. It is in this regard that Forum 2012 will focus on three broad themes: ***investing, networking, and creating a supportive environment in research and innovation for health***. Forum 2012 will bring together change makers from different constituencies: government, research institutes, business, civil society organisations, international organisations, funders, and media. **With regard to ‘Investing in research and innovation for health’**, tens of billions of dollars are invested each year in research for health. How can these investments be made more efficient and effective, and how can they increase, particularly for low-income groups suffering greater burdens of disease? Because research and innovation outside the health sector often has more impact on health than health sector research alone, the second question is “how can we maximise the health and development impact of research and innovation in sectors such as water supply, sanitation, food security, road safety, environmental protection and others? To help answer these questions, Forum 2012 will bring together change makers to discuss the following items related to research and innovation in LMICs:

- Increasing national investments
- Alternative and innovative ways of financing and resourcing
- Beyond Aid – how can donor aid be transformed to support research and innovation capacity in LMICs
- Improving cross-sectoral action in global and regional international organisations in support of research and innovation.

On ‘Networking in research and innovation for health’, it is evident that the role of global networks and partnerships in S&T is increasing all the time, thereby facilitating the transformation of research into better health, health care delivery, transfer of technologies, pharmaceuticals, for example. Which networks and partnerships function well and why? How can we learn to function better and deliver more? We will focus on the following discussions related to research and innovation in LMICs:

- Improving the impact of Global Health Partnerships on national innovation systems
- Young people’s action – how will the next generation engage research and innovation for health, equity and development?



- South-South and South-North partnerships – in public, private and non-governmental sectors
- Optimizing the use of the web.

Lastly, looking at ‘Creating a supportive environment in research and innovation’, it can be argued that national policies, international institutions and agreements, and global financing mechanisms determine how successful countries will be in developing their national research and innovation. All sectors are influenced by these policies, institutions, agreements and mechanisms and – in turn – all sectors can help create the right governance and policy conditions that stimulate and support research and innovation. What policies work? Which countries are the most successful and how do they do it? Forum 2012 will focus on the translation of good practices into national policies and in particular the following:

- Accelerating technological innovation and technology transfer
- Accelerating social innovations
- Strengthening national research and innovation systems
- Communication to support impact on health, equity and development.

If you are a change maker in one of the three key areas referred to above, please join us on our website and at Forum 2012 next April (www.forum2012.org). E-mail: Celestino@cohred.org.