



Research jointly supported by the ESRC and DFID

## **Joint Fund for Poverty Alleviation Research impact evaluation: a response from ESRC and DFID**

**March 2016**

ESRC and DFID welcome the publication of this impact evaluation, which provides a thorough and insightful assessment of the impact of the ESRC-DFID Joint Fund for Poverty Alleviation Research over the ten years since it began.

The funders share a continued commitment to supporting, reviewing and evaluating the impact of Joint Fund research. The lessons and recommendations from this evaluation provide valuable insights to support both international development researchers and funding organisations in maximising the impact of their work.

We welcome the use of ESRC's conceptual framework for impact assessment to inform the evaluation methodology. By recognising the complexities of the policy development process, and the multifaceted nature of social science impact, and by focusing on impact processes and contexts, the evaluators have been able to develop robust and credible accounts of the contributions of social science.

The evaluation provides a valuable addition to ESRC's impact evaluation portfolio, building on and expanding our understanding of impact, including the significant interplay between conceptual, instrumental and capacity building impacts. The evaluation supports our conclusions on the key determinants of impact, whilst highlighting specific factors that are important in a development context. Building relationships with research users continues to be one of the most important determinants, and is clearly supported by the involvement of in-country partners from the outset.

Other important factors identified in the evaluation also echo learning from previous work: the importance of understanding policy contexts, early stakeholder engagement, systematic monitoring of contributions and tailored communication to meet the needs of research users.