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Research projects

What matters for 'good government'

OPI is commissioning research on topics related to what matters for 'good government' in collaboration with the Department of International Development at the University of Oxford.

Matt Andrews of the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University revisits the notion of 'good government'. Although a great deal of attention has been given recently to the measurement of government and governance quality, large questions stand regarding the theoretical concepts embodied in measures. Andrews' work examines the theoretical issues underlying aspects of these good government concepts.

Dirk Haubrich and colleagues from Nuffield College, Oxford explore the extent to which deprivation constrains the performance of local government in England, as measured by the centrally-administered Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). The work will shed light on the extent to which managers can be held to account for performance that is a function of factors beyond their control.

A limited competition is currently underway to fund work on how public policy influences the incentives teachers, pupils or their families have to produce good educational outcomes.

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The results of the research will be published in a special edition of Oxford Development Studies and presented at a conference in December 2007.

Corporate investments in public goods

OPI is preparing to launch a Practitioner-Research Community on corporate investments in public goods with funding from the ESRC.



"OPI's mission is to contribute to public policy by providing international comparative evidence about what works best in different settings and why."

Research projects continued

The PRC will revolve around meetings held in London, complemented by wiki and web support.

Meeting topics include:

- The architecture of corruption and business management
- The effects of disclosure on corporate and government behaviour
- Strategies for managing contracts when compliance is uncertain

Health Sector Innovations evaluation

The Global Development Network has commissioned evaluations of recent innovations in health sector financing and service delivery. The project is being managed by the India Development Foundation and OPI is supplying Tim Ensor to IDF to mentor two evaluation projects: one in Kenya and one in Malawi.

IDF partnership

OPI is developing a partnership with the India Development Foundation which shares many of OPI's interests. It is particularly interested in developing comparative research on Indian States and other South Asian countries. A number of ideas are being pursued related to the institutions and incentives governing provider behaviour in health and education. Soman Sethi, IDF Research Fellow, is analysing the extent to which market and non-market factors resulted in the very significant fall in anti-AIDS pharmaceuticals prices over the last five years.



How does disclosure affect corporate or government behaviour?

The NHS reforms and provider motivation

An application has been submitted to the ESRC to study the interactions of formal and informal institutions on clinicians' motivation and, in particular, whether the introduction of more formal regulations have undermined or reinforced the informal institutions of trust, ethic, professional reputation and altruism. The quantity of 'donated labour', (time worked in excess of contracted hours) will be tested as a proxy for worker motivation.

Health financing options in the Caribbean

OPI is working with colleagues in Jamaica to develop a practitioner-research community involving health managers and researchers to explore feasible strategies for achieving universal healthcare coverage in the Caribbean. The research will be based in the University of the West Indies led by Georgiana Gordon-Strachan. Seven Caribbean countries will participate. The overall project will be managed by Rae Barrett with research leadership from Tim Ensor and contributions from Di MacIntyre, Jerrett Myers, Gustavo Nigenda, Ravi Rannan-Eliya, Roger Hay and Stephen Yeo.

Research projects continued

Research Seminar Competition 2007

OPI has made an application to the ESRC with the ESRC Centre for Skills, Knowledge and Organisational Performance at the University of Oxford and the India Development Foundation for a research seminar grant to explore the strategies for reducing skill gaps in rapidly changing economies and the reasons for differences in success.

NORFACE Seminar Series on incentive-based health regulation

OPI is collaborating with the Oxford Institute of Ageing at the University of Oxford in a proposal to NORFACE, a partnership between several European research councils.

The proposal is for funding a European network of researchers on incentive based health care regulation. Key partners include researchers in Ireland, Estonia, Sweden, Germany, Finland and Norway. If the application is successful, the project will fund four-two day seminars in different NORFACE countries on the themes:

- Patient choice and competition
- Intrinsic versus formal incentives
- The boundaries between curative and long-term care
- Performance indicators

For further information on any of the projects contact OPI's Research Coordinator, [Jerrett Myers](#).



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Publications

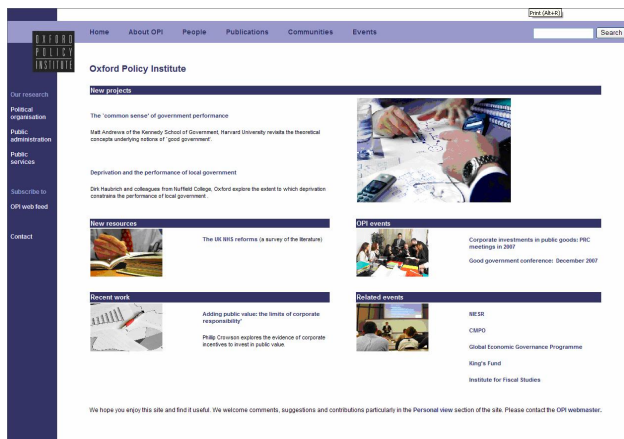
Phillip Crowson has written a monograph which explores the proposition that corporations are seeking to promote host countries' governance and public sector competencies. The article is available at www.opi.org.uk/publications/papers.shtml.



Web update

OPI's website, www.opi.org.uk has been significantly re-designed with new sections on:

- OPI research interests (political organisation, public administration, public services)
- People (trustees, fellows & associates, staff)
- Publications (working papers, policy briefs, workshop reports, personal view, newsletters)
- Events
- Communities (Corporate investments & Caribbean health network)



While several sections are currently under construction, we invite you to check out the site and would appreciate feedback sent to the [webmaster](mailto:webmaster@opi.org.uk).

Personal view

A section on the OPI website is dedicated to brief (4–5 page), informal commentaries on issues of interest to OPI. This section is intended to be a forum for sharing knowledge on forward-looking and sometimes controversial approaches to public policy.

If you would like to make a contribution, please send a submission to the [Editor](mailto:editor@opi.org.uk).

These papers can be accessed on www.opi.org.uk/publications/personal_view.shtml.

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