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In an article first published in the Spanish newspaper “El País” on December 31 2007 with the title “**Ten problems not solved in 2007**”, David Hayes, deputy editor of **openDemocracy**, listed “the impact of new technologies (the internet, mobile phones, social networks) on human experience, identities and life-chances” as one of the problems that would shape the course of human events in 2008.

Haynes added that “the spread of dynamic communications technologies makes people feel weaker and stronger at the same time. The instantaneity of information and opinion - especially via the relentless “24/7” news-cycle - routinely solicits a disempowering feeling of unmanageable overload that encourages dependency on unreliable or even extreme sources (...). Yet the same technologies that spur a retreat into enclaves of tribal agreement also increase people’s ability to expand their knowledge, find innovative ways of holding power to account, and develop their own enlightening channels of social connection and mobilization”.

This issue of *Glocal Times* is based on what Haynes describes as the positive aspect of the communication technologies contradiction. The five contributions presented were derived from an online discussion held early in 2007 as part of the networking facilitated by the Pelican Initiative, and they represent a case of best practice in terms of increasing people’s and organizations’ ability to expand their knowledge in an innovative way.

In “Research and communication: bridging the research-policy gap?”, Niels Keijzer, Wendy Quarry and Ricardo Ramírez introduce the lessons learnt through online networking as part of the online discussion of the same name, and give concrete examples of research’s influence on policy processes.

In “Linking evidence with policy and practice”, Andrew Chetley presents Healthlink Worldwide’s work to support the effective communication of research and discusses the difficulties implied in transforming sound research into improved practice and effective and workable policies.

In “Evidence-based advocacy in development practice: experiences from HelpAge International in Eastern Europe and Central Asia”, Catherine Hine describes examples in evidence-based advocacy from HelpAge’s programmes in Eastern Europe and Central Asia to show how policy

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change can be catalyzed when the voice of people living in poverty is prioritised above all others.

In “Strategies for impact and policy relevance”, John Young summarizes the lessons learnt through the implementation of the Research and Policy in Development Programme (RAPID), an initiative of the Overseas Development Institute, a British think tank.

Last but not least, in “Decision makers do want communication –but they may not want participation”, Wendy Quarry draws on the communication strategy for Afghanistan’s National Solidarity Programme to address the gap between planning and implementation in development communication.

I must thank Niels Keijzer, Wendy Quarry and Ricardo Ramírez for their readiness towards making this issue of *Glocal Times* possible and their enlightening use of e-mail correspondence as a way to collaborate at a distance.

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The next issue of *Glocal Times* will be published in late May, and include a series of articles by graduates from Malmö University’s Master course in Communication for Development. Until then, please let us know your comments and suggestions.



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