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# Preface

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This *IDS Bulletin* follows last year's *IDS Bulletin* on Climate Change and Development which set out why climate change is a significant new challenge for development (Vol 35 No 4, July 2004). The priority given to climate change during the UK's G8 and European Union Presidencies underlined the international significance of this challenge and also turned 2005 into one of the busiest years ever for climate-related policy. Further developments are now expected at the forthcoming meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol, scheduled for November 2005 in Montreal, Canada. As this *IDS Bulletin* goes to press Hurricane Katrina's impact on the USA Gulf Coast has focused minds still further on the links between natural disasters, climate change and the role of adaptation in helping poorer communities cope.

This *IDS Bulletin* aims to provide policy relevant research insights for a wide range of actors interested in climate change adaptation. It brings together results from a recently completed interdisciplinary research project, the Linking Climate Adaptation (LCA) Project, about how vulnerable communities might respond to the impacts of climate change. The overall goal of this project was to ensure that poor people *benefit* from adaptation processes, rather than bearing greater *burdens* by, for example, having the risks caused by climate change shifted in their direction. Funded by the UK Department of International Development (DFID), the purpose of the project was to provide a better understanding of how adaptation policies and institutional frameworks can support communities vulnerable to climate impacts. Although the project lasted for only one year over 2004–5, it resulted in the following outputs which are set out in this *IDS Bulletin*.

- A conceptual framework looking at notions of vulnerability and adaptation as well as policy and institutional frameworks relevant to communities impacted by climate change;
- Six case studies providing examples of community-led adaptations to recent climate variability;

- A synthesis article drawing together main policy relevant research findings from the case studies;
- A longer term research agenda to support community-led adaptation; and
- An article examining how the LCA Network might bring together geographically dispersed communities in developing countries undertaking adaptation with each other as well as with those engaged in formal scientific and policy responses to climate change.

As coordinators of the LCA Project, we are very aware that these outputs could not have been achieved in the short space of a year without a high degree of commitment from the eight participating institutions and 25 individuals involved in the project. We wish to express our deepest appreciation to our research partners: the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS), Development Alternatives in India, Zimbabwe Environmental Research Organization, Environnement et Developpement du Tiers Monde (ENDA-TM) in Senegal, African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) in Kenya and the Institute of Environment and Sustainable Development in Agriculture, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS). As they have borne the brunt of coordination, our thanks also go to our fellow research and support staff at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). Finally, we also wish to thank DFID Central Policy Department for sponsoring the LCA Project. We hope the results presented here will help the development and climate change communities link together to meet the shared challenges that lie ahead.

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