

Annex 5: Agency Presentations

5.1 Development Cooperation Agencies

5.2.1 DFID

Introduction

Under the International Development Act (Reporting and Transparency) 2006, the secretary of state is required to report every year on how *effective* the aid that DFID has spent has been in reducing poverty¹.

British Department for International Development (DFID) is currently working intensely with this issue of making aid spending more transparent and being able to document results to domestic taxpayers as well as recipient communities. On the June 3 2010, Prime Minister David Cameron wrote in the Guardian, that in terms of aid and its effectiveness he wishes to be able to document results and guide future efforts by documented knowledge about successes and failures. By asking the question: “What are the things that aid can best deliver and that make a real long-term difference?” he wishes to rationalise the prioritisation of aid².

Similarly, International Development Secretary Mr. Andrew Mitchell in his first speech in this capacity expressed intentions of creating a “watch-dog” function with the purpose of assuring taxpayers that the millions spend on aid has results³. Mitchell specifically said he wants to move away from looking at impact and get a clear focus on results instead.

Organisational aspects

DFID has an internal evaluation department (EVD) that carries out individual programme and project evaluations. EVD has an independent status. For the last five years the Independent Advisory Committee on Development Impact (IACDI) has overseen the EVD. IACDI has until the recent change of government functioned as the oversight body for British aid. The mandate of IACDI was to help DFID evaluate the impact of UK aid and give advice on the overall strategy, approach and priorities being adopted in its evaluation work. Furthermore it worked to assure the independence of EVD and the use of evaluation results to enhance delivery and impact of UK development assistance. The Chair of IACDI prepared an annual report to the Secretary of State. IACDI is now being closed down (discussed further below).

Following the recent change of government, and as a result of internal processes aimed at identifying the best way to optimize internal learning from evaluations and research intake, a complete restructuring of the evaluation and research functions is underway. Plans are now being realised of establishing an “external watch-dog institution” (it has no official name yet, this was the name used during interviews) that will oversee DFID’s work and report directly to the minister and parliament⁴.

¹ <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/About-DFID/Quick-guide-to-DFID/Who-we-are-and-what-we-do/>

² Guardian.co.uk, David Cameron: *Our Aid Will Hit the Spot*, Thursday 3 June 2010 22.00 BST.

³ BBC.co.uk, *Aid watchdog will reassure taxpayers, says Mitchell*, 3 June 2010 Last updated at 14:35 GMT

⁴ <http://iacdi.independent.gov.uk/>; BBC.co.uk: *Aid watchdog will reassure taxpayers, says Mitchell*, 3 June 2010; Guardian.co.uk: *David Cameron: Our Aid Will Hit the Spot*, 3 June 2010. Interview with Kerry Albright (DFID) and Paul Hailston (DFID).

The internal evaluation department will be split in two and then subordinated under the Research and Evidence division (RED) and the new watch-dog institution respectively. Subsequently, there will be no evaluation department in the Head office of DFID. A small team in RED will be supervising the evaluations carried out at country-level. There will be programme evaluations of all programmes, and what remains of the evaluation department will be a function to enable the “evaluability” (word used in an interview) of all programmes and to strengthen data. Furthermore, all future programmes will be designed so as to enable impact evaluations.

The new set-up in the UK is intended to meet the challenges of better evidence (research closer to operations), better preparation of evaluation, i.e. strengthening the data for evaluations (internal function); programme evaluation which will ensure learning from each programme and the an external oversight, which can reliably communicate to the public on the prudence of public spending on development assistance.

DFID is currently undergoing extensive organisational changes as a result of the change in management. The research and evidence division (RED) takes over elements of the present evaluation function. The organisational changes and the establishment of a division of “research and evidence” underscore the changed emphasis on research and establishment of the link between research and operations into practice. The research and evidence has topical teams for each of the above listed themes. The teams include 7-9 practitioners supported by between 1-4 senior research fellows (holding very senior positions in universities). The research division also has a management team, a research uptake team, a global outreach team (working with country offices) and a global statistics partnership team. The establishment of the research uptake team is an interesting new approach to tenure the linkage between research and practice. The team is established on the background that DFID is a good commissioner of research, but not very good at utilising the results, as it was put in the interview.

Research

DFID invests heavily in research aiming both at supporting the portfolio directly, and enhancing the utilization of research findings; hence, 10% of each research programme must be aimed at optimizing the utilization of it (research uptake). In fact, the research up-take was said to typically account for up to 30% of each research programme⁵. The increased utilisation of research and the fact that the research uptake is measured is a very visible way of demonstrating the increased importance of solid evidence, as a basis for operational choices.

The Research Strategy 2008-2011 sets out the priorities for research and has six overall priority areas (The focus areas are in line with the priorities in programming)⁶:

- 1) Growth
- 2) Sustainable Agriculture
- 3) Climate Change
- 4) Health
- 5) Governance in Challenging Environments
- 6) Future Challenges and Opportunities

⁵ Interview with Kerry Albright (DFID)

⁶ See <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.dfid.gov.uk/research/newresearch.asp>

The 2008-2013 research strategy presents 4 intended results that guides the management of the DFID funds for research:

- New policy knowledge created for developing countries, the international community and DFID.
- Existing and new evidence better informs decision-making about international development.
- New technologies developed and used in developing countries.
- Capability to do and use research strengthened.

The Research and Evidence (RED) division has started to commission Systematic Reviews. A pertinent question related to the portfolio is agreed on and then put out a tender to think tanks and universities to answer this question in the form of a systematic review. This initiative shows that DFID is getting very serious about methodological thoroughness and that more academic thinking will be internalised within DFID (as said in a DFID interview). On the DFID website these reviews are described as aiming to provide rigorous and timely assessments of the evidence base to the decision makers and thereby strengthen the internal capacity to make evidence-informed decisions. The tool is directly linked to the recognition that better-informed decisions increase impact and value for money. The systematic reviews also intend to make it easier for policy makers and practitioners to develop evidence informed policy.

RED has recently commissioned a consultancy to undertake a review of research uptake pathways and lessons learned across DFID's research programmes on health, education and agriculture.

Another initiative in DFID is the Research Into Use Programme, managed by the RED Agriculture Team⁷. DFID had an 11-year research strategy dedicated to agriculture until 2006 (2 billion Pounds). The minister has recently asked "how do we now know that it actually worked?" Accordingly, the team started looking at if and how the research findings could be traced and generalised. This work is ongoing.

DFID works very closely with the Overseas Development Institute (ODI). They work for example on research-policy dialogue (ODI). It was underlined that it takes a major and serious effort to strengthen the linkages between research and aid administrators. As one interviewee from DFID said: "you must never underestimate the amount of time you have to spend on changing mindsets"⁸. In the same interview with DFID it was also remarked that development practitioners are eager to commission new research, but it is difficult to get them interested in research uptake, which is a challenging fact in terms of research uptake in the longer run. Some academics in the UK are actually very excited about ring-fencing part of the research budget towards actual uptake (10%) – it has been more difficult to get the practitioners on board.

As a complement for the overall DFID approach to science and innovation the department has set aside 'up to' £ 1 Billion to support national and international research to supplement the funds set aside in country assistance plans and deals specifically with the *global pool of knowledge* about development⁹.

⁷ This programme's website <http://www.researchintouse.com/about/index.html>

⁸ Kerry Albright, DFID

⁹ DFID Research Strategy 2008-2013.

Until 2010 DFID issued an annual report presenting the DFID funded research projects and their findings – thereby demonstrating the impact of DFID funded research¹⁰. These reports have now been replaced by the online R4D portal, which contains over 5,000 research project outputs across all themes in the form of peer-reviewed articles, summaries, reports, papers, and case studies. The overall purpose of the R4D portal is to make research findings widely available – both internally in the organisation and externally with all possible stakeholders. An inter-active profile is attempted, as an example the R4D Admin System allows users to submit new documents and revise the details of existing documents resulting from DFID-funded research. This is particularly aimed at DFID-funded researchers or program implementers.

DFIF employs a number of senior research fellows who provide the scientific leadership for DFID's research priorities, trying to enhance the relevance of research and maximise its impact on development policy and practice.

M&E

In 2007 DFID The Independent Advisory Committee on Development Impact (IACDI) was established to help DFID evaluate the impact of UK aid. It also advised DFID on the overall strategy, approach and priorities being adopted in its evaluation work, and assured the independence of the evaluation function in DFID and the use of evaluation results to enhance delivery and impact of UK development assistance. The Chair of IACDI prepared an annual report to the Secretary of State. This report, the Secretary of State's reply, and all decisions and publications were then made available on the IACDI website. Following the Minister's plans to create an Independent Aid Watchdog¹¹, the IACDI will be replaced by this new entity by 2011¹² which means it is difficult to know how these functions will look in the future.

In 2009 DFID launched its first Policy on Evaluation: "*Building the evidence to reduce poverty*", endorsed by the IACDI. It sets out the lines for how DFID will increase the investigation and communication of the results of its work overseas, through more extensive and rigorous evaluation processes, also ensuring that lessons are learned for the future. The policy sets out an approach to evaluation focused around four pillars:

- Increased independence in evaluation
- Working increasingly in partnership not in isolation
- Driving up quality of evaluation
- Creating a genuine culture of learning

The evaluation policy that governs evaluation at program and project level is developed by the IACDI – the current is titled: *Building the evidence to reduce poverty: The UK's policy on evaluation for international Development*. This policy sets out a mandate for DFID's Evaluation Department as well as the evaluators commissioned by all parts of DFID. DFID's centrally commissioned evaluations must be fully independent, while their decentralised evaluations must conform to international principles of impartiality.

Communication

¹⁰ See "DFID Research 2009–2010 - Providing research evidence that enables poverty reduction"

¹¹ Please see reference to Minister Mitchell's plans as outlined in his first speech, above.

¹² <http://iacdi.independent.gov.uk/>

DFID has a web-based public database that aims to communicate widely the results of British aid through micro-level case stories. Moreover DFID have different initiatives in terms of communicating research findings that are funded by them.

Until 2010 DFID issued an annual report describing the research projects that DFID currently funds and findings from research that DFID has funded in the past. It demonstrates the impact of DFID funded research¹³. However, these reports have now been replaced by an online portal called Research4Development, which contains over 5,000 project outputs across all the DFID research themes in the form of peer-reviewed articles, summaries, reports, papers, and case studies. An inter-active profile is attempted, as an example the R4D Admin System allows users to submit new documents and revise the details of existing documents resulting from DFID-funded research. This is particularly aimed at DFID-funded researchers or program implementers.

The R4D has a pillar that is focused on communications: The R4D Communications Corner offering advice on communication of policy and research issues and providing a platform for sharing progress and achievements. A companion blog, R4D Podium, invites DFID researchers to contribute significant communications work or challenges.

Knowledge management

DFID has set up a Knowledge Sharing Strategy, which mainly focuses on ICT aspects. It is stated that: “The purpose of DFID’s knowledge sharing effort is to maximise our collective knowledge resources to help meet the MDGs and our PSA/SDA targets. The challenge is in two inter-dependent parts: (i) how we develop a learning culture; and (ii) how we share knowledge externally in ways that deepen and broaden our engagement with key development partners.”

With this strategy the aim is to mainstream knowledge sharing in DFID and focus it on mission-critical information that reflects DFID’s ‘Knowledge value system’ – access to information from and about research is a key part of this. These systems are built on ICT systems: InSight & Quest.

DFID has a part of its website that is build up for internal knowledge sharing and there are various strategies employed in order to motivate and give incentives for knowledge sharing among staff.

However, when interviewing ODI researcher Harry Jones – who is currently analysing the knowledge sharing experiences in DFID – it became clear that also in DFID the general notion goes: The best knowledge sharing is informal.

In line with this, Harry Jones & Enrique Mendizabal in their draft report on knowledge management experiences in DFID, presents the findings from interviews with DFID-interviewees, who commonly express scepticism towards the effectiveness of the ICT solutions and a common understanding, that the interpersonal knowledge sharing is definitively the most effective and the most used: *“The perception was that there are some good areas of the intranet and some good examples, but their quality was highly variable and with all of these, the general feeling was that you generally only get information from them if you already know what you are looking for.”* Then, later: *“The interviews strongly suggest that learning takes place primarily through*

¹³ See “DFID Research 2009–2010 Providing research evidence that enables poverty reduction”

interpersonal networks and contacts, usually within DFID as the first port of call, or within the country or epistemic community for CO staff.”¹⁴

5.2.2 USAID

Introduction

There are two interesting issues when looking at USAID in the context of this mapping. First, USAID is rethinking its evaluation approach and moving towards evaluation at micro level – at this level the findings are said to be more concrete and it is possible to dig deep and say what works and what does work, this also enhances the communication potential to a broader public is more meaningful (possible to tell the stories that are concrete and non abstract and aggregated). This approach evidently differs from the DFID attempts to proclaim broadly the impact of British aid.

The other interesting thing is USAID’s relation to the Millennium Challenge Cooperation (MCC), which is a federal agency also administering aid, but following strict guidelines. MCC works with poor countries, but only those committed to: good governance, economic freedom, and investments in their citizens. There is a selection procedure up-front based on a number of uniform criteria applied to countries before countries qualify for support from the MCC. USAID sees itself as the “mother agency”, which takes on all the more difficult development agendas, and having an Agency as MCC is only possible, if it indeed has a very narrow agenda and a mother agency, which can take over the more problematic agendas as well as those which are more political in nature.

Research

USAID supports applied and development research addressing both immediate and long-term strategic objectives. Research in USAID is a program activity and specific research on what works in aid is not commissioned. USAID supports research that is intended to produce knowledge that will offer solutions to specific development challenges, so this is very close to the portfolio.

Research progress and results are (as all other programme activities) monitored and evaluated on impact, quality, participation, coordination (with the scientific/research and donor community) and investment. In other words there are monitoring data on the research, just as there is for other programme activities. In many areas, research is assessed through a peer review process such as technical advisory committees and groups and a formal review through peer- reviewed publications. USAID works in partnerships with various higher education institutions. It does not seem as if USAID supports research related to the macro questions of development. As also said in the interview: Research is worthwhile when trying to answer the macro level questions. But what really changes minds is the micro level questions – it is at micro-level that change practice - when evidence is proven.

Evaluation

¹⁴ Jones and Mendizabal (2010 Draft).

USAID has a [website for evaluations](#) where policies and guidelines are downloadable and where evaluations can be uploaded.

USAID works collaboratively with the Department of State and its Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance (DFA) to encourage the planning, implementation and use of quality evaluations to inform foreign assistance efforts. Examples of joint efforts include the development of an Evaluation Glossary, Standards and Guidelines for Evaluating Foreign Assistance, and the establishment of evaluation communities of practice, including the Evaluation Interest Group (EIG) that meets at USAID on a monthly basis.

The US-Government (USG) Performance and Results Act of 1993 establish requirements for strategic planning and performance measurement for all USG agencies. USAID does this through a performance-measuring tool, which encompasses the tools used for assessing, learning, and sharing.

Performance measuring is the systematic process of monitoring the achievements of program operations; collecting and analyzing performance information to track progress toward planned results; using performance information and evaluations to influence AO decision-making and resource allocation; and communicating results achieved, or not attained, to advance organizational learning and tell the Agency's story. There is an important difference between their use of performance monitoring and evaluation, as these tools perform different functions:

- Performance monitoring reveals whether desired results are occurring and whether AO outcomes are on track. It addresses the “what” of performance. Performance monitoring uses preselected indicators to measure progress toward planned results at every level of the Results Framework continuously throughout the life of an AO. (More details on the PM process is found in the document “ADS Chapter 203: Assessing and Learning”.)
- Evaluation answers the “why” or “why not” of performance, as well as the “what else” question. It is used on a periodic basis to identify the reasons for success or lack of it, to assess effects and impacts, or to indicate which, among a range of program or project/activity alternatives, is the most efficient and USAID Evaluation typically employs a range of quantitative and qualitative measures in addition to preselected indicators and may consider both planned and unplanned results.

USAID is restructuring the evaluation department. Currently the evaluation department refers to the Director of Management Policy and Performance. Policy, sector and thematic evaluations are carried out in HQ, whereas project and programme evaluations are decentralised. All evaluations are subject to management responses, which is the way USAID accommodates the ambitions of utilisation of evaluations.

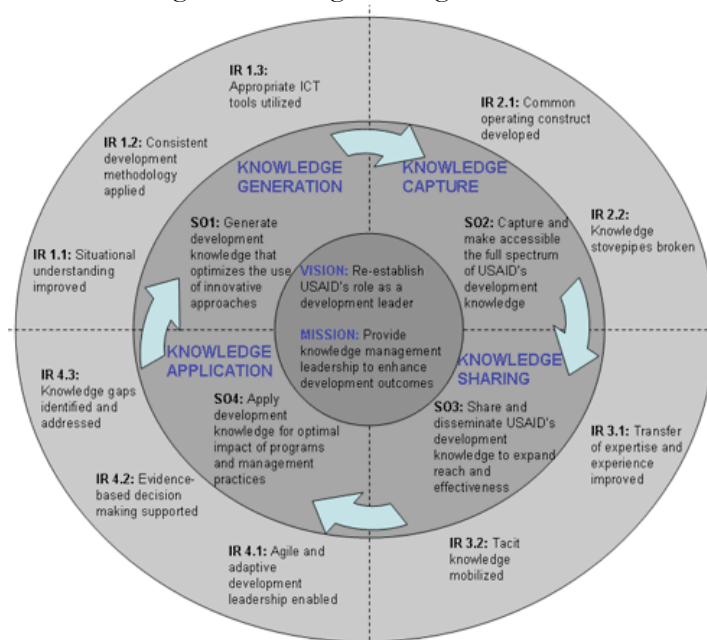
At the overall level, the office of the Director of Foreign Assistance (DFA) manages overall oversight of U.S. foreign aid, internal knowledge sharing and offers advice on evaluation and monitoring. There are plans to further strengthen the function of FDA.

Communication

USAID has developed an online portal with the purpose of "telling our story" both to medias, peers and 'the wider public'¹⁵. The "Telling our story"-website is focused on telling the country and/or sector specific results, and does not answer the question: Does aid work? This corresponds to USAID's prioritisations in terms of research and evaluations as described above – there is a clear focus at the micro-level when looking for results and effectiveness. USAID also believes in dialogues and has just tested an approach called structured dialogue, which takes up a particular issues and addresses a closed forum (say businessmen). This is not a lecture but a dialogue. The philosophy is that "person to person" dialogue is more powerful than policy briefs.

Knowledge Management

USAID has a section on their website specifically dedicated to their knowledge management programme: "USAID created the Knowledge Management Program to connect people with what and who they need to know to "work smarter" in concert with others to accomplish USAID's mission. KM helps people adapt to rapidly changing events, policies, and strategies by making information and experience easy to find and use for informed decisions and actions."¹⁶. USAID's Knowledge Management Program is based in the Management Bureau and a Knowledge Management Reference Group is made up of representatives from USAID Bureaus. The reference group meets on a monthly basis with sub-working groups meeting throughout the month. The purpose of the USAID KM Reference Group is to obtain Agency-wide input on USAID's Knowledge Management Program. The following is an illustration of the USAID strategic Knowledge Management framework:



Source: <http://www.usaid.gov/km/km.html>

The Knowledge Management Programme provides a couple of services in order to fulfil their mandate to provide USAID staff and partners with the knowledge and the contacts that will enable them to be more effective in their aid administration. One is the so-called "Knowledge Management services" which aims to move USAID from a "need to know"-culture to a "need to share"-culture, but providing guidance and facilitation on

¹⁵ <http://www.usaid.gov/stories/>

¹⁶ <http://www.usaid.gov/km/km.html>

knowledge management issues and initiatives. The other is a library, which is primarily thought as a resource for staff and partners, but it is also open to the public.

5.2.3 *World Bank*

Introduction

It is interesting to look at WB in contrast with the bilateral aid administering agencies, as it quickly becomes evident that a multilateral organisation has different prerequisites in terms of demands for results documentation and communication. But though WB is not under the same direct political pressure as the bilaterals, they are with their size and role in the global system of aid governance leading in terms of introducing new methodologies and ways of providing development assistance. The following is a presentation of the WB's approach and work within the areas also mapped in the bilateral agencies.

Research

The World Bank differentiates between the 'narrow' and short-term focused country- and sector specific studies at the one hand and on the other hand research that is focused on the longer-term and policy level. It is the latter that is classified as Research Activities. The objective of the WB research is to provide the development community and Bank staff with the analytical tools and research data necessary to generate more effective development policy.

The World Bank's research reflects the breadth and depth of development concerns in finance and private sector development, human development, macroeconomics and growth, poverty and inequality, sustainable development, and trade and international integration, all directed toward the World Bank's ultimate objective of reducing poverty in a fiscally, environmentally and socially sustainable manner. The best-known publication of the Bank's Development Research Group (DRG) is the annual World Development Report, often considered one of the most powerful reports on development on topics and approaches and directions of development assistance.

World Bank research, placed in the DRG – in contrast to academic research – is directed toward recognized and emerging policy issues and is focused on yielding better policy advice. Activities classified as research at the Bank do not, therefore, include the economic and sector work and policy analysis carried out by Bank staff to support operations in particular countries. Bank research aims to contribute to “the intellectual foundations of future lending operations and policy advice”. The DRG is free to take up any topic that is considered to be of importance for development as long as the topic is within the mandate for research.

According to the Director it is part of the mandate to be critical, so at times there are uncomfortable relations between the research group and other parts of the bank.

The DRG has about 80 researchers with a relatively independent status within the institution. In DRG every staff has to sell 30% of their time to operations. Often there is no “market” for the researchers to join operations, but the system forces researchers to be active and engage with other parts of the institutions. During the interview it was

emphasised that it is very important to have the link between research and operations in order to keep the institution's thinking as cutting-edge.

The clients of DRG are both internal and especially external: academics, governments, bank internally and advisers in the developing countries and networks.

A new way of doing business for the DRG is getting into the “wholesale” rather than the “retail” of research. The retailing is the usual finished products (study reports), while the wholesale mode covers the delivery of tools such as data and software. A great success is the distribution to researchers of a software called Adept, which enables the running of statistics of the raw data for poverty analysis. This has so far been inaccessible and very expensive, but the World Bank has bought the rights. The tool is then further developed and shared with researchers in developing country doing research. The technologies reduce the cost of entry into research. It also gives greater transparency on data and it is enabling for researchers in developing countries, who can then produce work that is much more robust.

Although other parts of the World Bank work to improve effectiveness and towards results orientation, the DRG maintains its focus on topics of development. As said in the interview: research needs to be driven by questions not by methodologies. The questions to be asked have to be the prerogative of the ‘chief economist’ function. The (subjective) interpretation is that it is not political agendas of what works and what does not work that should drive the research agenda of DRG.

The research is divided into 11 programmes (at another site, only 6 programmes are mentioned, those highlighted in yellow below, so maybe the other programmes are temporary and change over time?):

- Agriculture & Rural Development
- Climate Change
- Conflict
- Environment & Energy Research
- Finance & Private Sector Research
- Human development & public services
- International Migration & Development
- Living Standards Measurement Studies
- Macroeconomics & Growth
- Poverty & Inequality
- Trade & International Integration

Annual publication: “Research Highlights”

Timeline of important events related to research

1996: The Knowledge Partnership (strategy)

1998: World Development Report 1998-1999: Knowledge for Development

2003: Evaluation of Knowledge Sharing initiative

2006: An Evaluation of World Bank Research, 1998 - 2005

Key products series

- Policy Research Reports (PRRs). Results of World Bank research on development policy
- Policy Research Working Papers. 'Work in progress' findings encourage exchange of ideas on development

- World Development Reports. Annual World Bank reports on key development topics
- Research Books. Books on development economics by Bank researchers
- Global Monitoring Report. Annual Bank-IMF reports on progress toward the Millennium Development Goals
- World Development Indicators. The World Bank's annual compilation of data about development
- Global Economic Prospects. Annual reports (fall/winter) with global economic forecasts and topical chapters
- Global Development Finance. Annual reports (spring) with global economic forecasts and topical chapters
- World Bank Journals. World Bank Economic Review & World Bank Research Observer

Evaluation

Evaluation at the World Bank has two major dimensions: (a) self-evaluation by the units responsible for particular programs and activities; and (b) independent evaluation by the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG). These dimensions link to a system of organizational learning, use of external expertise and stakeholder participation- that, in combination, make the set-up unique among development organizations.

The Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) is an independent unit within the World Bank; it reports directly to the Bank's Board of Executive Directors. IEG assesses the portfolio in three main ways: what works, and what does not; how a borrower (recipient country) plans to run and maintain a project; and the lasting contribution of the Bank to a country's overall development. The goals of evaluation are to learn from experience, to provide an objective basis for assessing the results of the Bank's work, and to provide accountability in the achievement of its objectives. It also improves Bank work by identifying and disseminating the lessons learned from experience and by framing recommendations drawn from evaluation findings.

In discussing the linkage between research and evaluation at the World Bank, it was made clear although there is a lot of commonalities and increasingly a more scientific approach to evaluation, there are main differences, because the evaluations are demand driven – researchers can choose the topic and leave out things. Impact evaluations are similar narrow, so the IEG cannot as narrow as is the case in the impact evaluation methodologies.

The IEG has a partnership with Norad and the SWISS. As an example, IEG disseminates their results in Norway – while the financing from Norad goes to extra work IEG would otherwise not be able to do. Another programme is CLEAR, i.e. a capacity development initiative for monitoring and evaluation supported by DFID, SIDA, and IFAD. The aim is to build capacity and help establish M& E centres of excellence in developing countries.

The World Bank has initiated an interesting monitoring and evaluation programme, the Development Impact Evaluation Initiative (DIME). This is an operational programme, in fact it is a monitoring system, using impact evaluation methodologies, DIME has three objectives:

1. Increasing the number of World Bank-supported impact evaluations, particularly in strategic areas and themes;
2. Increasing the ability of staff to design and carry out such evaluations in close collaboration with government agencies in developing countries; and
3. Building a process of systematic learning on effective development interventions based on lessons learned from completed evaluations.

DIME is organised around thematic clusters that are coordinated across countries in different regions of the world. The WB uses this approach to allow for a comparative analysis of results in different settings and produces more robust estimates of program impact to inform future policy and program design.

The clusters are:

- Conditional Cash Transfers
- Early Childhood Development
- Education Service Delivery
- HIV/AIDS Treatment and Prevention
- Local Development
- Malaria Control
- Pay-for-Performance in Health
- Rural Roads
- Rural Electrification
- Urban Upgrading
- Youth Employment and Service Program

DIME was launched in 2005 and then reorganised in 2009: The intention is that impact evaluation should be mainstreamed across the portfolio as a decentralized system. It is part of the monitoring and evaluation system at the Bank, and will be based on common indicators for operations. At present impact evaluation covers 13 of the portfolio. The interesting aspect of DIME is that is established in order to stimulate a results based culture in the organisation, and it takes on a complicated and academic methodology and places it organisationally as a mainstream function in the interface between monitoring and evaluation. As a recent update of DIME to the Bank's Committee on Development Effectiveness: "With 170 completed and 280 active studies in 72 countries to date, DIME is the largest initiative in the world designed to systematically learn from experience on the basis of rigorous impact evaluation"¹⁷.

Communication

The World Bank is evidently focused more on communicating to peers than to the 'wider public', as their constitutional foundation differs decisively from bilateral agencies. However, the communication department in WB contains interesting structures and resources and will therefore be discussed in the section on communication *for* development as that is the primary focus. (The World Bank's many communication initiatives was not included in the mapping.)

Knowledge Management

¹⁷ Committee on Development Effectiveness: Development Impact Evaluation Initiative: A World Bank-Wide strategic approach to Enhance development Effectiveness, Report to informal meeting on 14th July 2010. Official use only.

The Development Communication Division (DevComm) in the WB supports the Bank's mission of reducing poverty by providing clients with strategic communication advice and tools towards more effective use of communication as part of development projects (including: strengthening clients' ability to listen to their constituencies and negotiate with stakeholders; empowering grassroots organizations to achieve a more participatory process; and undertaking communications activities that are grounded in public opinion research). Under DevComm, the Strategic Communication Learning Program (SCLP) was started in 1998, which offers courses and workshops in communication to Bank staff and client country counterparts. The courses use a variety of formats for delivery: face-to-face, distance learning, e-learning, and blended learning. The mapping did not go into details with this topic.

The World Bank Institute

The knowledge sharing programme of the World Bank is located in the World Bank Institute. <http://wbi.worldbank.org/wbi/>

The Institute focuses on four cross-cutting themes and three sectoral topics that are aligned with the World Bank's corporate priorities and responsive to country demand, including:

- Climate Change
- Fragile and Post-Conflict States
- Governance
- Growth and Crisis
- Health Systems
- Public-Private Partnerships
- Urban Development

Other knowledge-sharing initiatives

Knowledge for Change Programme (KCP)

- Knowledge for Change is a programme under the DEC (also where the research is embedded).

Researchers Alliance for Development (RAD)

- The Researchers Alliance for Development is an informal, action-oriented and multidisciplinary network of researchers and academics working on international development. Its objective is to contribute to innovative responses to poverty and development challenges by creating and strengthening direct interaction between researchers worldwide and the World Bank.

5.2.4 *Sida*

Introduction

Sida is interesting in the context of this mapping because they have endeavored to internalize the evaluation function and thereby chosen a different strategy around the dilemma between external evaluation departments where the results are not easily recycled back in to the portfolio and on the other hand giving up the evaluation department's independence. Sida has chosen the last mentioned, and has internalized the evaluations, thereby enhancing their utilization. A way to accommodate the dangers of not having independent evaluations department is then to have it overseen by an independent watchdog institutions (the SADEV – See below).

Research

Sida has an internal research department for research cooperation that handles all Sida's support to partner-country research activities, as well as Swedish research with relevance for developing countries and development cooperation. The overriding objective of the research cooperation – as decided by Parliament – is to strengthen the research capacity of partner countries and promote “development oriented” research. In the more detailed elaboration of the objectives of the cooperation, it is stated that the partner countries and their research capacity is central for the research cooperation. The objective of Sida's research programme is currently to: “Provide support to improve the ability of developing countries to run research programmes of their own, helping themselves. Sida provides support to research that can contribute to the solution of important development problems. Support Swedish research programmes that focus on issues related to development and development co-operation”.

A research committee that is appointed every three years by the Government oversees all decisions regarding research. The research committee has an overall role of examining Sida's work. Two of 11 members are Sida-staff. The research cooperation does not at present target effectiveness issues and the role of aid. It came across in the interview with Sida's research secretariat that the limited research on “the role of aid”, should also be understood as a reflection of the fact that there is very little interest in the research community to take this topic on, as there are topics of more burning interest for researchers. Secondly, if and when such research is taken on, it would seem natural that this research is financed from other sources than the development budget, in terms of credibility.

It was also said that, at a more general level there is an interest to link research results on topical issues of development closer to practice. In Sida it is found that research findings increasingly inform policies, though they often face the problem of different lead-times between research and operations. Nonetheless, the trend towards better evidence does give research a platform as a contributor to development approaches. Policy makers in Sweden show little interest in research as such, however, they are increasingly interested in the robust evidence that research methodologies can provide.

Evaluation

In the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), all departments carry out evaluations within their specific area. These evaluations are not independent. This is a deliberate trade off, and in this way internal learning will be enhanced. Moreover Sida has an internal department for evaluation (UTV), which reports directly to the head of the organization and carries out broad thematic and strategic evaluations. UTV works very deliberately with enhancing the utilization of evaluations (Please see under knowledge management below)

Besides the internal evaluation function, Sida's work is overseen and evaluated by an independent watch-dog function: The Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation (SADEV). This is a government-funded agency that independently initiates and carries out evaluations of international development cooperation. The overarching objective is to contribute to increased efficiency in Swedish development cooperation. SADEV evaluates topical and relevant issues related to international development cooperation in order to inform decision-makers. Looking at the list of SADEV evaluations, these are

often macro and strategic questions on “what works” and related to development effectiveness¹⁸.

Sida’s evaluation secretariat

The Secretariat for Evaluation is the institution in Sida responsible for evaluating development assistance. Sida’s evaluation system consists of three parts:

Evaluations commissioned or produced by the Secretariat for Evaluation, an independent function producing evaluations of wider scope, often in co-operation with other donor organisations.

Evaluations which UTV has considered to be of particular strategic importance for Sida, which are commissioned by Sida’s operational and policy teams.

Reviews of projects and programs commissioned by Sida’s operative teams. Focusing on the implementation and results of individual projects or programs in most cases, these reviews are intended to meet the management and reporting requirements of the responsible teams.

The Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation (SADEV) was established in 2006. It is a government-funded agency that independently initiates and carries out evaluations of international development cooperation. SADEV's overarching objective is to contribute to increased efficiency in Swedish development cooperation. The ambition is to evaluate topical and relevant issues related to international development cooperation in order to inform decision-makers. SADEV also aims at furthering partner countries’ capacity to carry out evaluations within the field of development assistance.

Communication

In terms of communication about results, this mapping did not find any particular initiatives with Sida besides a public website, which is however not immediately presenting information about overall results of Swedish development aid (similar to what DFID does). However, the website offers stories from the micro-level of projects and programmes.

Knowledge Management

In terms of knowledge management Sida has endeavored to do something that none of the other agencies has done: integrated the evaluation function in to the other departments, thereby giving up its independence, but enhancing its utility. However, besides this internal evaluation department (EVD), Sida has a watchdog institution externally (SADEV – please see above).

On utilisation-focused evaluations:

This approach is based on the idea you need to interact with practitioners from the outset in order to ensure evaluation findings are used and recommendations acted upon. As such evaluation is build around users and intended use, and is managed as a learning process (rather than mainly focusing on a particular product), targeting specific people rather than vague, passive audiences, or overall organisations.

At a ODI-hosted workshop, Joakim Molander (Head of EVD) described the evaluation process at SIDA as follows:

It begins by having conversations with all operational units in SIDA, as part of the annual planning processes – asking what are their knowledge needs, what would they like to know and how can evaluation help to answer that.

This generates a list of around 100 ideas for evaluations, from which the evaluation department choose 15 they will carry out. The ones which are not chosen to be carried

¹⁸ An interview with Joakim Molander, head of evaluation is planned (communication 1st September from Sida).

out are subject to decentralised evaluations, for which the evaluation department give feedback and advice.

The staff who proposed an evaluation which was chosen from the reference group for it. They must list the intended use and users. If there are not enough users then it is dropped. Otherwise, these intended users are then involved in drafting the ToR, and work with the reference group throughout.

The evaluation is framed as a learning process – for example, bringing people together to discuss issues and comment on drafts. Preliminary findings are discussed with users in order to decide on recommendations (although evaluators keep the right to make their own).

There is a management response system which has been evaluated and found to come up short if it is expected to be the tool to ensure lesson learning. They are now looking at having management response workshops.

5.2.5 CIDA

Introduction

There are three main factors making CIDA interesting in the context of this mapping:

1. As opposed to the other mapped bilateral agencies, CIDA has its research department placed external to the aid administration.
2. CIDA is working intensively to optimize the institutional learning in the organisation, and to this end it is launching a programme called “Knowledge the driving force @ CIDA”. It is therefore of interest to look at how CIDA is organizing and management knowledge.
3. The methods for external communication of results are well developed and provide some inspiration.

Research

Research on the effect of aid, and development related issues is placed with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). A Crown corporation, IDRC is guided by a 21-member, international Board of Governors and reports to the Canadian Parliament through the Minister of Foreign Affairs¹⁹.

IDRC fund applied research by researchers in developing countries on the problems they identify as crucial to their communities. Most supported projects result from direct exchanges between the Centre and developing country institutions. IDRC provide expert advice to those researchers. IDRC build local capacity in developing countries to undertake research and innovate.

¹⁹ Approximately 83% of IDRC's 2008/2009 revenues came from Parliament. This year, the Centre's Parliamentary revenues were CA\$168.8 million. This represents 3.9% of Canada's international assistance.

IDRC has 6 regional offices, but also works with different partners, university, research institutions and other. The IDRC Research Partnerships Challenge Fund seeks to catalyze new research consortia to tackle global issues or those of particular relevance to developing regions of the world. It does so through supporting larger-scale research programs in collaboration with Canadian and international funding agencies.

The IDRC supports research under four broad themes:

- Environment and Natural Resource Management (ENRM)
- Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D)
- Innovation, Policy and Science (IPS)
- Social and Economic Policy (SEE)

In the interview it was said that the key message on the link between research and practice is the importance of engaging those who have the specific knowledge on a subject and then engage them in producing and distilling what works and what does not work – rather than commissioning independent research²⁰. It was also said that the most simplistic question should be: “What is going on?” rather than “what works”? This points to use the information “at the bottom of the pyramid”, such as the project completion report, and have excellent databases, which have the results and information on the projects should be used better than is the case at present. The IDRC seems to be strong within the topical areas of their themes. A main focus of the IDRC is the partnerships within their thematic areas and the capacity building within the research areas. They do not work on the aid effectiveness and results agenda. IDRC operates with an internal results framework and has a well organised management information system, which can provide information on status of operations and if programmes seem to be working (regular reviews).

The IDRC also has focus on the development and accessibility of tools with the aim of strengthening research communities. One such tool is a project with The One World Trust, which has produced an online accountability database. It is an output of a three-year project, titled “Accountability Principles for Research Organisations”. The database is designed to support researchers, campaigners and research managers to think through the way they use evidence to influence policy in an accountable way. The rationale for the database is that research organisations are increasingly diverse – they are no longer just universities, but private companies, public institutes and non-profit think-tanks. The database provides an inventory of around two hundred tools, standards and processes, within a broad, overarching accountability framework. The database offers users ideas and tools which can be adapted to their circumstances, and which can help do anything from launching a comprehensive accountability review to addressing a specific process²¹.

Evaluation

Evaluation, internal audit, and results-based management play a fundamental role in demonstrating the integrity of CIDA programming and the value being realized through the Agency's involvement in development cooperation programs and projects.

“Results for Canadians: A Management Framework for the Government of Canada”,

²⁰ Interview with CIDA, July 2010.

²¹ <http://www.oneworldtrust.org/apro>

calls on federal departments and agencies to be values-based, results-driven, and aligned with the needs of Canadians. To this end, the delivery of the Agency's programs focuses on the achievement of results and the practice of due diligence and value for money in the use of public funds.

Measuring Results:

At the Agency level, CIDA has moved to align its results framework with the Millennium Development Goals and new approaches for aid effectiveness. CIDA has developed a framework of Key Agency Results, with the Millennium Development Goals and related targets as the overarching development results the Agency is seeking to achieve. These Key Agency Results are being integrated into CIDA's existing corporate planning, budgeting and reporting structure to ensure that, on an annual basis, Parliament is kept aware of CIDA's expected key results and targets and its achievements.

CIDA's challenge now, under the new program approaches, is to move the emphasis on results to the program and country level.

As CIDA moves to increased use of the program approach to cooperation, the Agency will move its emphasis on measuring results from a project level to a program and country level with a focus on the sustainability of these investments. Increasingly, these results will be directly linked to the attainment of the targets outlined in the Millennium Development Goals.

CIDA will also adopt a new way of doing performance assessments. Evaluations and audits will now be conducted at the program and country levels with the priority on assessing institutions and countries receiving the largest investments from CIDA.

Thematic focus of Evaluations:

CIDA focuses on three core areas, which are also focal areas for evaluation:

- Increasing food security;
- Stimulating sustainable economic growth;
- Securing the future of children and youth.

CIDA's evaluation guidelines – focusing on results:

CIDA has a "evaluation grid" that forms the outset for any CIDA-funded evaluation or evaluation of CIDA funded activity (appendix E1 in the evaluation guidelines).

In 1994, CIDA launched an ambitious corporate renewal, making a commitment to Parliament and Canadians to become more results-oriented and accountable. In July of that year, the Agency issued its "Policy for Performance Review", setting out a comprehensive framework for performance measurement and reporting. Evaluation was described as a key and integral element of CIDA's performance review system. In October 1996, the "Update of CIDA's Policy for Performance Review" provided clarification on individual roles and responsibilities and designated evaluations as a PKMB responsibility.

Performance review now functions as CIDA's broad continuum, corporate think tank and catalyst for institutionalizing improvements. It functions as an integral component of the management process, linking a wide range of learning opportunities to improving the effectiveness of development cooperation. PKMB performs a leadership role in performance management initiatives, cooperating with the operational and support branches and gaining from their expertise and experience.

Performance review is expected to:

- Provide work tools that enable CIDA's managers to better exercise their roles in achieving expected results
- Play a fundamental role in the Agency's transformation into a more results-oriented, transparent and accountable organization, and
- Serve as an essential contributor to CIDA's management renewal initiative, bringing a focus to excellence, knowledge, learning, teamwork and innovation.

The Performance Review System

The performance review system encompasses all functions and instruments used by managers and staff of CIDA to assess Agency development and operational results. This includes, in particular, evaluation, internal audit, and monitoring of policies, programs, projects, institutions and operations of the Agency.

All parts of the Agency play important roles in ensuring the relevance and effectiveness of the Performance Review system:

- Executive Committee, with observers from the Office of the Auditor General and Treasury Board Secretariat, serves as the Agency Performance Review Committee. In addition to its role as set out in sections 5.2 and 5.3, it sets priorities for, and approves the annual plan for, corporate-level performance review.
- The Performance Review Division, situated in Corporate Management Branch, is responsible for the evaluation and internal audit functions, which are grouped together but have clear and distinct roles. The Division prepares the corporate-level performance review plan. It reports the results of evaluations, internal audits and synthesis studies to the Performance Review Committee. It is responsible for maintaining methodological rigour and providing support to branches.
- Designated Branch Performance Review Staff, located within branch policy and planning units, support managers and staff in their performance review activities. They provide methodological advice that enhances the quality of branch-level reviews, review branch inputs to the corporate information system, and ensure the wide dissemination of review results.
- A Performance Review Network, comprising the Director General of the Performance Review Division, the Directors General of Policy and Planning in the program branches, and the Director General of Policy Development in Policy Branch, fosters methodological consistency across the Agency and provides program and policy input into corporate evaluations and audits.
- Following a period of implementation of this policy, consideration will be given to establishing an Aid Effectiveness Advisory Committee, comprising representatives from inside and outside CIDA, to periodically advise the President on aid effectiveness and policy formulation.
- The Agency Information Management System supports the performance review system by providing access to relevant information on all levels of performance review.

Communication

In order to better inform Canadians of the impact of CIDA's efforts, improved reporting mechanisms were announced on May 20, 2009.

The Report “*Development for Results - at the hart of Canada's efforts for a better world.*” Aims at telling the Canadian public how the \$3.6 billion was spent between April 2008 and March 2009 and highlight in which ways they have made a difference to the poor. This CIDA publication is one of the ways that CIDA endeavors to increase its accountability to the public.

The report is very easy to read, has lots of box-stories and intuitive maps and tables. As an example, the report contains the following fact-box:

In the period covered by this report, CIDA and its partners around the world made a real difference to the lives of people:

- 102 million people fed
- 3.5 million people taught better agricultural methods
- 75,000 small businesses launched
- 3 million people treated with antiretroviral drugs
- 70 million mosquito nets distributed

In terms of concrete tools, CIDA’s website also offers an [RSS-feed service](#), and has an online database with “[stories from the field](#)”

Furthermore, CIDA has a newsletter called ‘the CIDA Update’, which aims to distribute the latest news from CIDA and the international development community, as well as exclusive interviews with employees and personalities from the developing world. However, this newsletter is currently under revision and hence suspended.

IDRC offers newsletter subscription and there are videos, podcasts and slideshows on different issues that can be downloaded from their website. The media-section has editorials, slideshows, speeches, press releases etc.

Each month, a feature story under the heading *lasting impact* is published online, which tells the story of how IDRC funded research “has helped change the life of poor people”.

Knowledge Management and Learning

Cida Staff shares factual information about their programs/projects through their Agency Information System (AIS). Through various tools (i.e. a project browser and disclosure reports), this information is extracted from the AIS and shared with the public. Furthermore, the AIS is used for extracting information that will be part of DAC-reports and the like.

Knowledge management systems and strategies is not promoted very much on the CIDA website, and it is hard to come about information on it. The newest data found is from 2002, where the knowledge management secretariat in CIDA led a knowledge management initiative.

In 1999, the Government of Canada committed to become "known around the world as the government most connected to its citizens, with Canadians able to access all government information and services on-line at the time and place of their choosing."

The website “Government online” was created, and here citizens can find information on everything that the government spends money on – including aid projects ([see website](#)).

In the book “Knowledge management in theory and practice” by Kimiz Dalkir (2007: 129ff), there is mentioning of several knowledge management initiatives, systems and approaches. Specifically an extensive intranet, which feeds the extranet with information on results of development cooperation. However, it has not been possible to find further details on this via CIDA’s website. It is mentioned, that CIDA has documented 4000 cases of best practices on these nets, and that they work in an inter-active manner.

5.2 Think Tanks and Research Institutions

5.2.1 DCED

Introduction

The Donor Committee for Enterprise Development (DCED) is a coordinating and harmonizing body for donor agency knowledge sharing on private sector development (PSD). The committee was founded in 1979²², but has only had an actual secretariat functioning since 2005. Currently the secretariat employs 5 fulltime staff and a varying amount of short-term consultants. The work of DCED includes a wide range of knowledge-sharing activities, such as management of inter-agency databases at www.Value-Chains.org and www.Business-Environment.org. The three DCED sites²³ attract over 100,000 page views per month. Plans are now being laid to enhance the knowledge-sharing activities of the DCED.

DCED is currently (year 2010) piloting a *minimum standard measurement method* for PSD programmes and initiatives (see next section for more details). This standard is from the outset highly committed to **impact** measurement. DCED works closely with member agency staff on this – exploring overlaps and commonly developing the pilot. On the public the website²⁴ implementation guidelines, formats and explanations are available for downloading. The DCED also holds further information about methodologies for measuring the results of PSD, including the approaches currently used by different donors.

DCED furthermore holds information, guidelines and analytical work on PSD, such as PSD in conflict situations, value chain development, making market work for the poor (M4P programme), women’s entrepreneurship development, public-private partnerships and access to finance/microfinance²⁵.

²² Until 2005, the Committee was known as the "Committee of Donor Agencies for Small Enterprise Development".

²³ Including <http://www.enterprise-development.org/><http://www.enterprise-development.org>

²⁴ <http://www.enterprise-development.org/page/measuring-and-reporting-results>

²⁵ see general introduction here: <http://www.enterprise-development.org/page/knowledge-about-psd>

In terms of communication and sharing of lessons learned, DCED publishes a presentation of current results in private sector development, identified through their method²⁶. Focus is continuously at the impact level of initiatives and programmes.

Thematic focus

The DCED is engaged in thematic work, in line with the priorities of member agencies²⁷. In each case, the work of the DCED is guided by staff of member agencies particularly interested in the theme. For 2010 the thematic focuses are:

- Reforming the Business Environment
- Measuring and Reporting Results
- PSD in Conflict-Affected Environments;

Moreover DCED is currently doing some work on communication of development results. Jim Tanburn describes, how measuring and communicating results is not only about facts, figures and good arguments. It is very much about communicating results and needs in a way that evokes pictures with the target group – commonly known pictures. The development “business” has a problem in that it primarily evokes the picture of the starving child, which makes issues of sustainable development efforts – such as agriculture, small-scale entrepreneurship etc. – difficult areas to communicate to the public, and thereby to politicians. The challenge DCED is currently taking up is to find a language that can communicate development work more broadly than only as charity targeted poor, powerless people in desperate need.

Methodology: Measuring results – impact

The outset for the for DCED’s proposed minimum standard measurement method is that the logical framework approach (LFA) and similar planning instruments does not provide adequate tools for programme managers to measure results in PSD. The LFA tends to compile all the outcomes together into one box, for example – whereas they are usually sequential, happening in parallel etc. So logframes may work for programme designers and supervisors, but for managers, something more explicit is needed. Hence, the proposed new standard is aimed at the programme managers for their use in measuring their own results. This turns results measurement from an event into a process; credibility is assured through external certification of the measurement process used by the programme instead of asking a consultant to duplicate that process. Thereby, at the end of a programme, managers and evaluators will not have to ‘reinvent the wheel’ when results are being measured. and evaluators will not have to ‘reinvent the wheel’ when results are being measured. The Standard recommend that the findings of results measurement are fed back into implementation (Control point 8.6). In other words, the foundation of the results chain articulates the assumptions on which a programme is based (that specific outcomes and impacts will cascade from specific outputs) and the Standard then calls on programmes to validate those assumptions, and to adjust the approach if they prove not to be valid. In practice, this is often the greatest added value for programmes - for example if they find that a key assumption is not actually valid, during implementation. To ensure that the results reported are credible, an external auditor then audits the system.

²⁶ Please refer to: <http://www.enterprise-development.org/page/stories>

²⁷ the Committee includes among its membership bilateral donors, multi-lateral agencies (Development Banks, UN agencies and others) and private foundations

The DCED Standard ‘at a glance’:

1. Articulating the Results Chain
2. Defining indicators of change
3. Measuring changes in indicators
4. Estimating attributable changes
5. Capturing wider changes in the system or market
6. Tracking programme costs
7. Managing the system for results measurement

The DCED Standard recommends that all participating programmes adhere to a universal set of impact indicators²⁸:

- Scale (Number of target enterprises)
- Net Income (Net additional income accrued to target enterprises as a result of the programme per year and cumulative).
- Net Additional jobs created (a debated indicator)
-

The ultimate vision is that programmes and organisations complying with the Standard will be widely accepted as being committed to effectiveness and excellence. According to Jim Tanburn, Coordinator at the DCED-secretariat in Cambridge, the measurement standards are requested from the field offices of donor agencies. Thereby it has from the outset overcome a common obstacle often faced by Head-Quarter designed standards, that struggles to achieve the field offices’ buy in.

DCED resources on Measuring Results in PSD

- DCED. (2009) *Quantifying Achievements in Private Sector Development. Proposed Methodology for Control Points and Compliance Criteria*. Cambridge: Donor Committee for Enterprise Development.
- Herzberg, B. (2007) *Monitoring and Evaluation during the Bulldozer Initiative – 50 Investment Climate Reforms in 150 Days*. Washington DC: IFC.
- Klasen, S. (2005) *Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction: Measurement and Policy Issues*. Paris: OECD.
- Mbonu, O.J. (2006) ‘Economic Impact Assessment (EIA) Study of the Sierra Leone Brewery Limited in Sierra Leone’, lecture for the British Council Business Forum, November 2006, London.
- Tanburn, J. (2008) *Measuring and Reporting Results. The 2008 Reader on Private Sector Development*. Turin: ILO for the DCED.
- DCED (2010): *The DCED Standard for MEasuring Achievements in Private Sector Development*, Version V, 13 January 2010.
- DCED (2010): *A ‘Walk Throuhg’ The DCED Standard for MEasuring Achievements in Private Sector Development*

5.2.2 MCC

²⁸ The Standard allows for a certain degree of tailoring on these impact indicators so as to accommodate specific, contextual additions and modifications – for example incorporating development goals set out for the programme. Please refer to DCED (2010): *The DCED Standard for MEasuring Achievements in Private Sector Development*, Version V, 13 January 2010.

Introduction

The Millennium Challenge Cooperation was created by the U.S. Congress in 2004 and is according to their website: “MCC is changing the conversation on how best to deliver smart U.S. foreign assistance by focusing on good policies, country ownership, and results”.

One of the most comprehensive monitoring practices based on a results management approach is that of the MCC. It works with poor countries, but only those committed to: good governance, economic freedom, and investments in their citizens.

The MCC approach to Monitoring & Evaluations

There are two primary types of MCC grants: compacts and threshold programmes. Compacts are large, five-year grants for countries that pass MCC’s eligibility criteria. Threshold programs are smaller grants awarded to countries that come close to passing these criteria and are firmly committed to improving their policy performance.

As a federal agency, MCC is committed to the principles of performance measurement mandated under the US Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), and applies this same focus on results to its compact programming.

The MCC has a monitoring approach that starts with tracking performance on processes and outputs at the beginning of a Compact’s life and then continues to track high-level outcomes and impacts at the end to concretely assess how its activities have affected poverty and economic growth. Economic rate of return analyses are applied to estimate the aggregate estimated impacts, and details on the impact evaluations that are intended to measure the achievement of these results. Monitoring is integrated into all phases of Compact operations – from compact development through implementation. The diagram shows the cycle and how results that are tracked become part of a feedback loop that is used to improve performance during a Compact and to apply lessons learned to future Compacts.



MCC monitors progress towards compact results on a regular basis using performance indicators that are specified in the M&E Plan of a Compact. Lower level indicators (process and output level) and their targets are typically drawn from project and activity

work plans. Higher level indicators and their targets are often, though not always, directly linked to the economic rate of return analysis that was conducted to estimate the impacts of the investment and are drawn from the benefit streams of that analysis.

Every quarter each Millennium Challenge Account submits an Indicator Tracking Table (ITT) that shows actual performance of each indicator relative to the baseline level that was established before the activity began and the performance targets that were established in the M&E Plan. MCC also reviews this data every quarter to assess whether results are being achieved and integrates this information into project management decisions.

Data for performance monitoring and reporting comes from baseline and follow-up surveys, project implementers and other entities. MCC strongly supports comprehensive, quality data collection conducted by local resources and frequently uses Compact M&E funds to invest in surveys fielded both by private firms and national statistical agencies or other government entities.

Evaluating Compact Performance

Evaluation is a cornerstone of MCC's focus on results, and is key to measuring impacts during and at the end of a Compact. While monitoring a Compact's performance against indicators and targets is important, it is not sufficient to fully assess its effectiveness, particularly on poverty and economic growth. MCC therefore supports a variety of evaluation types to complement performance monitoring and deepen the analysis of data gathered to measure results at higher levels.

Generally, two types of evaluations are conducted:

- *Mid-Course Evaluations:*
The term "Mid-Course Evaluation" is used at MCC to describe a wide range of possible evaluations and assessments that draw on both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Mid-course assessments are not required for all projects. However, MCC may decide to conduct such an assessment as necessary. MCAs also sometimes conduct mid-course evaluations or special studies for a variety of purposes. Usually, these are to review progress during implementation, compile lessons learned and provide a qualitative context for interpreting monitoring data. Mid-course evaluations can also be used to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of implementation during the life of the Compact.
- *Final Evaluations:*
MCC supports final evaluations to systematically and objectively assess the design, implementation and results of completed programs and values them both for accountability and internal learning purposes. These evaluations are typically concluded after a compact ends, though design and implementation of these types of evaluations sometimes starts as early as the compact development phase. MCC always tries to use the most rigorous method possible when conducting final evaluations. Thus, wherever possible, MCC conducts impact evaluations to measure the changes in individual, household or community income and well-being and rigorously attribute them to project interventions. Where a rigorous impact evaluation is not possible, MCC uses other quantitative methods to assess these medium- to long-term outcomes.

Beneficiary Analysis:

MCC's project assessments to date have incorporated poverty and beneficiary-related considerations. MCC is currently producing updated guidance on Beneficiary Analysis to ensure that consistent practice is used to describe the beneficiaries of its projects. MCC makes every effort to publish its analysis on its website and meets with public groups and stakeholders who follow the issue of results-based aid and accountability in projects funded by the U.S. Government.

MCC's approach to Impact Evaluations

An impact evaluation measures the changes in individual, household or community income and well-being that result from a particular project or program. The distinctive feature of an impact evaluation is the use of a counterfactual, which identifies what would have happened to the beneficiaries absent the program. This counterfactual is critical to understanding the improvements in people's lives that are directly caused by the program.

MCC uses teams of independent professional researchers to carry out impact evaluations. These teams are selected in a competitive process that includes some of the world's most experienced and respected impact evaluation specialists. MCC's use of independent professionals is intended to ensure that the impact evaluations represent an unbiased assessment of the activities being studied.

5.2.3 CGD

Centre For Global Development - Independent research & practical ideas for global prosperity

Introduction

The CGD is a think tank for "independent research and practical ideas for global prosperity" based in Washington. CGD is known for its eminent research and influence and its researchers are among the best on international development.

On the Aid Effectiveness research programme:

The Center's work on aid effectiveness focuses on the policies and practices of bilateral and multilateral donors. It includes analyzing existing programs, monitoring donor innovations, and designing and promoting fresh approaches to deliver aid. CGD researchers also investigate how foreign aid and other aspects of development—such as trade, migration, investment, and climate change policies—undermine or complement each other.

Specific work includes:

- Research, analysis, and policy outreach on U.S. foreign assistance reform through the Rethinking U.S. Foreign Assistance Program

- Monitoring the activities of the U.S. Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) through CGD's MCA Monitor
- Comparative analysis of the three largest donor responses to the HIV/AIDS epidemic: the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; the World Bank's Multicountry HIV/AIDS Program (MAP); and the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) through the HIV/AIDS Monitor.
- The design and promotion of a "Cash on Delivery" approach to aid under which donors would pay for measurable progress on specific outcomes pre-agreed with recipient governments.
- Research on improving the effectiveness of health aid through CGD's Global Health Policy Research Network, including an initiative to close the "evaluation gap" and a major study of what has worked in health aid, Millions Saved.
- Research on aid in fragile states through the Engaging Fragile States project, and special analysis of the challenges confronting U.S. assistance to Pakistan .
- Design of a new analytical tool to assess and compare bilateral and multilateral donors on the quality of aid. In addition, the aid component of CGD's Commitment to Development Index includes indicators for both the quantity and quality of aid.

On Quality of Aid:

Building on the successful experience of the Center's Commitment to Development Index, which examines aid quality in addition to quantity, as well as on the work of the OECD-DAC, CGD is collaborating with staff at the Brookings Institution to develop and publish an annual assessment of the quality of the aid disbursed by official donors. The Quality of Official Development Assistance (QuODA) is intended for a broad audience including donor agencies, civil society, legislatures, and the public and aims to produce useful comparisons across donors. Even in early stages, a prototype assessment could help to catalyze interest in improving the supply and delivery of aid. The pilot assessment will be in 2010.

5.2.4 UNRISD

UNRISD

Introduction

The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) is an independent agency in the UN family conducting research within the social dimensions of current problems affecting development. The aim is to encourage debate and discussion, and to contribute to the policy dialogue on key development issues at play in the UN system and with its partners. UNRISD was created in 1963 as part of the first United Nations Development Decade, which emphasized a "new approach to development", in which "purely economic indicators of progress were seen to provide only limited insight and might conceal as much as they indicate". UNRISD strength was from the outset that they developed social indicators and thereby contributed to the development debate.

For more than 40 years, UNRISD has engaged exclusively in research on social development and remains the only United Nations organization that does so. The Institute is an autonomous organization within the United Nations system. It is associated with no single specialized agency, it is restricted to no narrow field of concern,

and its work is not bound by the bureaucratic or political constraints that frequently characterize many intergovernmental agencies.

Research

Current major areas of research (2005-2009)

- Social Policy and Development
- Democracy, Governance and Well-Being
- Civil Society and Social Movements
- Markets, Business and Regulation
- Identities, Conflict and Cohesion
- Gender and Development

The 2005–2009 agenda has three main objectives:

- To adjust research activities in response to global developments and scholarly debates, as well as gaps in knowledge that have emerged in the course of current research;
- To examine issues that are not being addressed adequately or sufficiently by research networks associated with the United Nations system;
- To consolidate key aspects of UNRISD's 2000+ agenda by expanding work under certain programmes, and by developing synergies between projects in related areas that had previously been carried out under different programmes.

How UNRISD Works

As an institution engaging in applied research in the field of social development, UNRISD's agenda reflects global trends, as well as the realities of countries in which it carries out research.

The director and research staff in Geneva are sources of ideas and proposals. As practising researchers, they read the works of colleagues and peers, travel extensively, and participate in networks which expose them to new issues and questions.

UNRISD holds international and regional meetings on its research agenda. These consultations are opportunities for UNRISD to integrate the valuable contributions of national researchers and international experts into its global agenda and to develop a closer working relationship with them.

Global conferences, such as Geneva 2000: The Next Step in Social Development, the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, inspire new research programmes and reinforce ongoing activities.

The UNRISD Board of Advisors, which has included academics, activists, ambassadors and individuals from the private sector, puts forth ideas for further elaboration.

Other United Nations organizations, governments, non-governmental agencies and research institutes provide important inputs that help to shape the research agenda. These influences and ideas are considered in terms of their relevance to the Institute's mandate and evaluated in light of current capacity. If they can be translated into

"researchable" questions, concrete proposals are developed. Once projects are approved by the Board, funding is sought.

The Institute believes that studies should be carried out by national researchers, allowing research themes to be adapted to situations on the ground and considered by those most knowledgeable on local conditions. From 1996 to 1999 over 60% of the research contracts awarded by UNRISD went to researchers and institutions based in the South.

UNRISD strives to overcome the limitations often characterizing research that adopts a narrow focus by building multidisciplinary teams.

Communication

UNRISD has generated new thinking on social development issues, often addressing crucial topics well before they are widely recognized as important. To ensure that its research findings reach a diverse audience, the Institute has developed an active and varied publications and dissemination programme, which includes the following:

UNRISD has published books with over 60 partners on five continents, including commercial and university presses, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and research institutes. In addition to English, French and Spanish, UNRISD has published in Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese and Russian.

UNRISD produces several different types of publications using its in-house capacity. This practice affords the Institute flexibility, allowing the publication of work that commercial presses might find financially risky as well as low-cost dissemination of research results to the developing world. UNRISD publishes books and monographs, Research and Policy Briefs, Conference News, Programme Papers, Occasional Papers, Briefing Papers, and UNRISD News.

UNRISD relies heavily on the Internet to disseminate its work. The UNRISD Web site includes the full text of many publications on social development, information on all past and current research projects, the Institute's work for global conferences and much more. The Web site is updated regularly.

UNRISD hosts international conferences that attract a large number of participants from the United Nations and its specialized agencies, governments, non-governmental organizations, universities and research institutes, as well as the general public.

Every year, UNRISD distributes thousands of publications free of charge to universities, libraries and research centres in developing countries through a network of depository libraries. As much of its work is carried out in the developing world, UNRISD attaches great importance to the availability of its publications in public access institutions in the South.

Utilisation of UNRISD Research

The comparative advantage of international organizations lies in the generation of ideas and norms for governance of the international system. UNRISD is able to bring knowledge from the global research community to the policy-making process.

A striking feature of development research and policy making is the gap between what is known in universities and research centres about basic problems and processes of social change, on one hand, and the capacity of policy makers to gain access to this information, on the other. UNRISD serves as a conduit of knowledge from sites where it is generated to sites where it may be used. The Institute produces results that are academically sound and address the concerns of policy makers, including governmental and non-governmental actors.

Examples on the impact of UNRISD research

The impact of UNRISD ideas over almost 50 years of its history has been acknowledged in the summary volume of the UN Intellectual History Project, 'UN Ideas that changed the world'. Other selected examples of influence/impact include the following.

Social policy and poverty reduction -- UNRISD research on social policy and poverty reduction highlighting of universal approaches to social protection and service provision has been taken up in the Report of the Secretary-General to the High Level Plenary Meeting, Keeping the Promise of 2015: A forward-looking review leading to concrete strategies for action to achieve the MDGs by 2015.

Social policy in a development context - At the regional level, this research has been used in the policy discussions of the Forums of Ministers of Social Development (organized by UNESCO; recognized in the UNESCO Programme and Budget 2008-2009); the UNICEF-ROSA Regional Policy Makers' Symposium on Social Protection as a Strategy in Transformative Social Policy (April 2008, Dhaka, Bangladesh); the Commonwealth Secretariat/Organization of American States High-Level Seminar on Economic Resilience of Small States in Transition ; the NORAD Conference on Comprehensive Social Policies: Fighting Poverty through Investing in Social Protection ; as well as in the report and policy note on Comprehensive Social and Employment Policies for Development in a Globalizing World (Stakes, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, and Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland). In addition to this uptake at the national level, these documents served as an input for discussion at the 45 th Session of the Commission for Social Development (February 2007). It also directly informed approaches to promoting 'health in all policies' by Finland and other governments and international agencies.

Financing social policy -- This UNRISD research formed the basis for a training workshop for the staff of the social development division at ESCWA in June 2007, and fed into an ESCWA social policy report (see UN-ESCWA 2008: Integrated Social Policy: From Concept to Practice). The continuing relevance of this work for ESCWA and countries in the region is also reflected in a recent invitation to present on "Opening up Fiscal Space for Social Policy and Protection" at the Workshop on "Social Protection and Security: Beyond Safety Nets and Minimum Protection Floors", Beirut 28-30 September 2010, with policy makers and practitioners from Lebanon, Oman and another Gulf State participating.

Gender and care -- The policy implications emerging from the project were written up and transmitted to DAW and many of them have been incorporated into the Report of the United Nations Secretary General , Equal Sharing of Responsibilities between Women and Men, including Care-Giving in the Context of HIV/AIDS. At the national

level, Federal Office for Gender Equality (FOGE) in Switzerland has decided to focus its activities on the care issue as its priority for the next 5 years; the UNRISD project on care has also served as the basis for a FOGE publication that aims to inform and influence the public debate on care issues, in both the political sphere and in the media. After a 10-year lapse, Statistics South Africa has decided to do a second time use survey; the first time use survey (2000) was analysed for the UNRISD project and the results published through both an UNRISD programme paper and edited volume. The South Africa-based researcher for the UNRISD project is the principal adviser for the 2010 survey.

CSR -- UNRISD gave the keynote address on CSR from a Development Perspective at the Forum of Social Affairs and Development Ministers for the Arab Region (November 2008, Amman, Jordan). Upon the request of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, (UNCTAD), UNRISD has contributed to the expert consultative group for the annual World Investment Report, and results from UNRISD research have informed the preparation of these reports. UNRISD research on business regulation has long emphasized the importance of strengthening grievance procedures. This approach is now being proactively promoted by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Business and Human Rights. UNRISD work has fed into this process. Finally, UNRISD has consistently maintained a critical perspective on UN-business partnerships and the UN Global Compact, warning of various limitations and unintended consequences of such initiatives and proposing alternative measures to ensure that they promote rather than undermine development and regulatory capacity. Through publications and direct exchanges with key policy makers and advisors, these points have fed into policy processes that are addressing some of the shortcomings of such initiatives.

5.2.5 *UNU-WIDER*

Introduction

UNU-WIDER is a UN research and training centre established in 1984 in Helsinki by the United Nations University (head-quartered in Tokyo). UNU-WIDER's research is at the cutting-edge of development economics: the Institute's numerous publications have significantly influenced debates in such areas as poverty and human development, food security, as well as conflict and development. UNU-WIDER's global reach is achieved by a resident team of research staff based in Helsinki who have extensive research and publication experience.

UNU-WIDER's funding structure, in which an endowment managed by UNU, typically covers more than half of the Institute's expenditures, secures the independence of UNU WIDER in researching aid, in contrast to think-tank and consultancy organizations which are typically dependent on donor funding. Moreover, this independence and authority of voice is further enhanced by the Institute's track record of 25 years of peer-reviewed research, and the Institute's ability to mobilize outstanding academic staff. One core strength of the Institute is its worldwide network, including its deep involvement with researchers from Africa and other developing regions. Based on the interview with the Director it appears that UNU-WIDER would need to strengthen its communication profile and capability, and steps to achieve this will be undertaken to ensure that its research on aid reaches the widest possible audience.

Together with external project directors they run networks of researchers ranging from Nobel Laureates to young development researchers. The Institute has a long-standing and good track record in engaging researchers from the developing world, and is now deepening its engagement with Africa through a partnership with the African Economics Research Consortium (AERC) on the issue of climate change. UNU-WIDER's senior staff has engaged extensively with Nordic aid agencies, DFID, and the World Bank through both projects in recipient countries and by offering advice on strategy. It has extensive contacts with senior policymakers in the developing world, particularly in Africa (including both ministers and central bank governors as well as senior staff at academic institutions).

Research

The Research Programme is reformulated every two years by the Director in consultation with the UNU-WIDER Board following extensive discussions with UNU-WIDER research staff, leading economists in the UN and elsewhere, and donor government representatives. Research projects are led by scholars (Research Fellows and External Project Directors) who elaborate the proposals before the projects are launched. Each project typically invites selected authors to write original research papers which are later presented and discussed at project workshops and conferences. In some cases, a more general 'call for papers' may be announced on the website.

Two large development conferences are organized each year in Helsinki, each of which brings together around 100 individuals to present papers and to discuss current problems on development issues. Participants are usually researchers and policy makers from the academic, government, and development communities. Special attempts are made to encourage researchers from developing countries and to achieve a gender balance at these events.

The research studies are published as WIDER working papers and made available in pdf format on this website. Ultimately, each project and conferences is expected to produce one or more volumes or special issues of a journal. The outcome also often includes a policy brief and an article in the WIDER Angle.

The research programme is financed in part from the UNU endowment fund, with additional support provided by external sources, including governments and foundations. The current programme receives contributions from the governments of Denmark, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Upcoming Research Programme

UNU-WIDER aims over the coming years to implement a collective body of research on the political economy of foreign aid that fulfils the following objectives:

- Brings rigorous, impartial research, to bear on the issue of aid and its effectiveness using UNU-WIDER's in-house expertise as well as its extensive network;
- Integrates the views and perspective of developing country researchers and

policymakers into the process of producing the research and disseminating its findings; and

- Disseminates the results of the research as widely as possible, in particular to developing country policy-makers, the donor community, and across the UN system.
- UNU-WIDER intends to pursue research on the following four sub-themes, each of which is comprised of a series of individual projects:
 - Aid Effectiveness – Examines the technical and methodological issues integral to assessing aid’s effectiveness at generating economic growth, reducing poverty, and achieving other development outcomes (such as peace and security).
 - The Changing Donor Landscape – Assesses the interaction between global governance and the international aid architecture (including climate change), the role and potential impact of new bilateral government donors and the increasing role of non-official aid (including the implications for fragile states).
 - Perspectives and Politics of Aid in Africa – Analyzes aid’s impact on Africa’s policymakers, politics, and institutions, including the perceptions of Africans regarding aid effectiveness and reform.
 - Prospective Changes to Aid in Africa – Considers both emerging threats to development progress in the region (such as climate change and state fragility) as well as potential opportunities for reducing aid-dependency (including the mobilization of more domestic revenue).

Given UNU-WIDER's track record in rigorous research, the research programme will have strong methodological foundations – thereby strengthening the robustness of its policy recommendations – and will draw upon economics, political science and other disciplines. It will be enhanced by other research programmes now underway in UNU-WIDER, including work on both climate change and food security. The aid programme will have a strong focus on Africa, given the intensity of the debate around African aid, but will also investigate other regions as appropriate (for example state fragility and aid in Asia-Pacific). As an example of rigour combined with policy relevancy, the programme includes a sub-project on analyzing the various intervening mechanisms through which aid should impact both growth and poverty, especially in Africa (an issue on which UNU-WIDER has an international reputation). This will lead to recommendations on how to enhance aid’s growth and poverty impacts in different types of economies (resource-rich versus resource-poor, landlocked versus coastal, etc.). The findings from this project could have important implications for both donor decisions over aid allocations as well as future scholarly research on the aid-growth-poverty nexus. UNU WIDER also sees itself entering the debate on evaluation methods, and its track record of rigorous research should ensure that its findings on evaluation are authoritative.

Communication

UNU-WIDER only publishes work arising from our research projects, and comprises a substantial catalogue of titles since 1985 (including the special issues of economic journals and commercially published academic books). Books and journals should be

ordered through your local bookshop or library, or direct from the respective publishers. All other publications can be downloaded.

Printed copies of WIDER Working Papers, Policy Briefs, Annual Lectures, and the WIDER *Angle* newsletter are mailed to libraries and institutes in developing countries and regions that do not have generally accessible Internet connections. They are also produced and mailed on request world-wide.

5.2.6 ODI

Introduction

The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) is a leading think tank on international development and humanitarian issues in the UK. ODI aims to inform policies and practice, which lead to the reduction of poverty, the alleviation of suffering and the achievement of sustainable livelihoods in developing countries. In ODI's own words this is done by "by locking together high quality applied research, practical policy advice, and policy-focused dissemination and debate"²⁹.

ODI is spearheading the international discussions on research's impact on public policy. The state of affairs of this impact as well as its importance for the quality of aid was recently tabled at a workshop hosted by the ODI with the World Bank: "Knowledge to policy: Making the most of development research. Annette Boaz³⁰, in a paper entitled "Assessing the impact of research on policy: A review of the literature for a project on bridging research and policy through outcome evaluation" has looked broadly at methods for evaluating the impact of research on policy outcomes. The review identified 156 UK and international papers and found a very wide range of formal and informal, qualitative and quantitative approaches being used, but very little analysis of their effectiveness at capturing impact or costs. It was also found that developing better methods to evaluate the impact of development research on policy and practice, and using the results to develop better approaches to maximise the value of future research is vital to improving development outcomes.

The RAPID Programme

Research is self-evidently the central part of what ODI does. An ongoing programme – the Research and Policy in Development (RAPID) Programme – works with the interface between research and development. The program is both oriented internally in ODI focusing on improving ODI's communication, but also externally by engaging partners of all kinds and trying to get them to use research more effectively in the policy process. RAPID works with NGOs and research institutions/think tanks across the world, helping them in a) making their research more relevant to policy makers and b) incorporating research in their policy-related work.

²⁹ ODI website.

³⁰ Joint Managing Editor of the journal *Evidence & Policy*. (Boaz *et al* 2008)

With this programme, ODI is trying to change the fact that research is often being produced, but not utilized by policy-makers because it is not appropriately communicated. One problem is, that whereas research is continuously re-inventing the wheel, and coming up with new findings that contradict what was previously said, policy makers can't change their mind every time something new comes up. Likewise, policy makers need information that is easily digestible – something researchers seldom provide.

Working with the link between research and policy making in development “For instance, the results of household disease surveys in two rural districts in Tanzania informed a process of health service reforms that contributed to over 40% reductions in infant mortality between 2000 and 2003.”

The RAPID team organise their research around five main factors that influence the ability for knowledge to play a role in policy and practice.

- Context is one of the most influential factors in determining the importance attached to evidence in social and policy spaces.
- Sectoral dynamics. Understanding how the relationship between knowledge and policy-making varies according to the nature of the sector is critical for designing appropriate knowledge translation and uptake strategies.
- Actors. Policy actors have different abilities to critically engage with knowledge and face varying opportunities and challenges when bringing evidence to the table during policy discussions.
- Innovative frameworks. RAPID recognises the value of engaging with a wide range of analytical approaches to influencing policy and practice, including the RAPID framework, complexity theory and innovation systems.
- Types of knowledge. How knowledge is generated is just as important as what is made of it. What types of information – scientific, participatory, or monitoring and evaluation data – are influential in policy dialogues in different sectors and at different policy levels?

Centre for Aid and Public Expenditure

The ODI Centre for Aid and Public Expenditure helps to shape and drive the agenda for international development assistance, as well as efficient and effective public spending for development at country level.

The centre works within 3 areas:

1. Redesigning and improving the international aid system

In this area the work is concentrated on promoting ways to improve the effectiveness of aid and development cooperation, approaching this issue from three angles:

- at the supra-national level by working to redesign the international aid system;
- at the level of individual development agencies by working to improve the way aid is delivered; and

- at the level of individual recipient governments by working to improve the way aid is received and managed.

Their work contributes to mechanisms to enhance transparency and accountability in the aid system.

2. Reforming public finance management

This programme is focusing on the following key areas:

- diagnosis of PFM system performance through tools such as the 'Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability' (PEFA) framework;
- development of recommendations for government-led and donor-supported PFM reform strategies in developing and transition countries, and in fragile states;
- reinforcement of accountability structures by strengthening actors such as official oversight bodies and civil society organisations that demand information on budget processes;
- evaluation of approaches to strengthen country PFM systems through aid modalities such as general budget support, sector budget support and joint trust funds;
- improved understanding of the political economy of PFM reform to assist policy makers in their choices and understand their specific impact across countries;
- new research under development aims to improve understanding of the relationship between PFM reforms and improvements in public sector performance and government service delivery.

3. Improving the effectiveness of aid delivery

The work of this programme involves analysing the factors that influence aid allocation at country and sector level to ensure development outcomes with focus on the effectiveness of the instruments and channels used to deliver aid.

Recent research projects has included assessments of the impact of the current global financial crisis on the availability of aid flows and allocation of funds in various countries and sectors. Furthermore they are developing new work on the impact of emerging donors (countries, vertical funds, and private foundations) in recipient countries to improve understanding of synergies with traditional donors to improve the design of aid instruments.

ODI on Knowledge Management and Learning

Under the RAPID programme, one focal point is knowledge management:

Effective use of information, knowledge and learning is central to bringing together knowledge, policy and practice. However, a large proportion of the literature on knowledge management (KM) is developed by, and aimed at, the corporate sector. Therefore, business rationales of organisational efficiency and financial profit strongly characterise much of the KM literature and recommendations.

Development agencies can benefit from these KM strategies because they also need to improve organisational efficiency. However, the overarching goals of poverty reduction and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which guide many development agencies, require that KM and learning in the development sector contribute not only to internal efficiency but also to issues such as improved responsiveness, partnership and policy influence.

A detailed study of knowledge and learning systems in 13 development agencies found a wide range of approaches being used with a variable degree of success. All organisations felt they could be doing it better, and even in the most accomplished of initiatives there remains a sense of dissatisfaction, due to the drive for continuous improvement that is at the heart of knowledge strategies.

The study found this ambition, rather than specific tools and processes, is crucial to establishing a successful learning organisation. There are many internal obstacles to change and it is vital to work within existing resource constraints towards specific, realistic and measurable goals.

5.2.7 FFA

Forum on the future of Aid is an online forum, hosted by ODI which is highly relevant for the new Danish research programme to keep updated with, as its core function is to host debates and knowledge sharing among south-based institutions in aid and development. The Forum on the Future of Aid is designed to encourage online dialogue and discussion on research and opinions about how the international aid system currently works and whether and how it could be reformed. The site presents research and opinions from the South and North about the reform of the global aid architecture.

Being primarily targeted at researchers, academics, practitioners and activists in the global south, it also encourages the participation and involvement of all international actors on the international aid scene.

The FFA seeks to facilitate virtual and face-to-face topical discussions between donor and recipient country organisations and experts, and disseminates their outcomes. This is organised through a few small, geographically balanced, self-managed networks of government and aid agency officials, think tanks and academics, and civil society representatives, which the Forum helps set up and maintain. It also offers the option of customised follow-up research and advisory services to all network members.

The initial costs of the Forum and some of its briefings and discussions are supported through a grant under the existing Civil Society Partnership Programme Agreement between ODI and DFID, which encourages consultation initiatives involving civil society in the South. Additional funding is sought from other international aid agencies.