SUMMARY REPORT

The Think Tank Initiative Exchange 2015: Research Quality for Policy Engagement

February 18-20, 2015
Radisson Blu Hotel, Istanbul, Turkey

Prepared by Anna Zadrożna in cooperation with Gizem Türkarslan, İlker Kocael, Imren Borsuk and Sinemis Temel

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACBF	African Capacity Building Foundation
ACODE	Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment
AfriHeritage	African Heritage Institution
CADEP	Centro de Análisis y Difusión de la Economía Paraguaya
CSTEP	Center for Study of Science, Technology & Policy
CEPA	Center for European Policy Analysis
CPD	Center for Policy Dialogue
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EDI	Energy Dependence Indicator
EPRC	Economic Policy Research Center
Exchange	The Think Tank Initiative Exchange 2015
GRADE	Grupo de Análisis para el Desarrollo
ICTs	Information Communication Technologies
ICSSR	Indian Council of Social Science Research
IDRC	International Development Research Center
IIDS	Indian Institute of Dalit Studies
INESAD	Institute for Advanced Development Studies
IPAR-Senegal	Initiative Prospective Agricole et Rurale-Senegal
ISSER	Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research
LMICs	Low and/or Middle Income Countries
MISR	Makerere Institute of Social Research
NCAER	National Council of Applied Economic Research
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NORHED	Norwegian Programme for Capacity Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PASGR	Partnership for African Social and Governance Research
RAC	Research Advisory Committee
RBM	Result Based Management
SDPI	Sustainable Development Policy Institute
STIPRO	Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Research Organization
TT(s)	Think Tank(s)
TTI	Think Tank Initiative

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

Background to the Exchange:

The Think Tank Initiative (TTI) is a multi-donor program dedicated to strengthening the capacity of independent policy research organizations in the developing world. The program is managed by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and supports forty-three think tanks (TTs) in twenty countries in three regions: Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and South Asia. Through their research, TTI-funded institutions look for innovative solutions to some of their countries' most urgent problems.

Research quality is crucial for think tanks regardless of their regional or disciplinary interests, as it lies at the root of their credibility and reputation as legitimate contributors to academic and public policy debates. Nonetheless, there are many approaches to, and understandings of, research quality, which have been widely discussed in academic, professional, and public policy circles.

Having understood the importance and the challenges of research quality, TTI organized a comprehensive, extensive debate which brought together just under 200 TTs, donors, policymakers, journalists, and other research-to-policy stakeholders to explore perspectives under the theme of "Research Quality: Approaches, Outreach and Impact,". Exchange participants included representatives from TTs, universities, and other research institutions across Africa, South America, Latin America, and Europe; representatives from TTI; representatives from donor institutions including IDRC, Norad, ACBF, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network of the World Bank; representatives from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs); and representatives from the public and private sectors, among others.

TTI coordinated the planning and delivery of the Exchange, and the post-event follow-up. A Planning Committee, comprised of IDRC program staff and representatives of TTI-funded TTs, was formed to develop the agenda, and plan the various sessions for the event. The facilitator, Valerie Traoré (Executive Director of Niyel), also participated in the development process. The Exchange lasted three days and consisted of seven plenary sessions and thirteen parallel sessions. In addition, an Open Space for future collaboration was provided to think tanks for issues that they identified as important, and for the establishment of potential collaboration in the future.

The TTI Exchange 2015 e-forum[1], which ran for almost two weeks between January 26th and February 4th, provided a space for participants from TTI-supported institutions to share initial thoughts and experiences related to the theme of "research quality," and resulted in almost sixty contributions which provided for a stimulating and enriching debate. The R2A TTI Exchange page (a blog hosted by Research to Action) provided a space to showcase the blogs and video interviews that emerged from the Exchange. In addition, discussions, conversations, and live news items were followed on Twitter with the hashtag #ttix2015**.**

Objectives:

One of TTI's three main objectives is to facilitate and share learning about strategies for building and managing successful, sustainable think tanks with a wide range of policy research organizations and interested stakeholders. The aim of the Exchange was to learn more about what research quality means

[1]See "TTI e-forum final summary" by Valerie Traore (http://www.researchtoaction.org/2015/02/tti-e-forum-final-summary-part-one/)

to TTs, donors, and policymakers, and to explore different approaches and tools to strengthen research, engage with key actors, and increase the impact of TTs.

More specifically, it aimed to do the following:

1. Specify what research quality means for TTs in different contexts. Is research quality measured by the knowledge produced, or by the impact it has in different policy spaces and discourses?
2. Gather various methods and tools which allow TTs to ensure quality research while maintaining policy relevance. How to properly contextualize research and define methodology appropriate for specific case and context?
3. Identify potential arenas of capacity development and related support for research quality in TTs.
4. Promote networking and collaboration between TTs and other research to policy stakeholders.

Key Findings:

There is a general agreement among think tank representatives, researchers, donors, and policymakers that strong research quality is important for think tanks' outreach and impact. Nevertheless, there is no single definition of research quality—it can be understood in many different ways and is a concept that embraces not only research process and methods, but also the relevance and impact of research. Participants in the Exchange identified sets of practices that should be carried out, and fields that should be improved on, in order to assure strong research quality.

Contributions made to the e-forum mostly focused on three stages where research quality can be assessed: pre-research, the actual research, and post-research. In the context of research quality, this included ensuring appropriate stakeholder consultations and study design, ensuring that the product, or final output, is scientifically strong, and ensuring that the research is usable and applicable (e.g. it serves a public good, focuses on changing problematic policies, and/or fixes a problem). Other key issues for research quality that emerged during the e-forum discussion were: policy uptake of research, impartiality, collaboration, time management, fundraising, and capacity building.

Discussions during the Exchange delved deeper into these issues, and included the following:

- *Research quality can be approached from the perspective of the research process itself.* This idea is discussed in the sections "Research Quality for Think Tanks" and "Quality in Methods." Subsequent stages of research, summarized here as the model of a research cycle, contribute to the overall research outcome in different ways. These stages include: (1) recognizing the problem; (2) defining a research question; (3) choosing appropriate methodology and designing the research; (4) finding adequate researchers; (5) carrying out the research; and (6) preparing a relevant research output. Each research process is unique and immersed in the specific socio-cultural and political context. This process can follow many different paths, depending on the research problem, the discipline, research approach, research tools, and so on. Ensuring research quality is therefore a very complex process that has numerous challenges, such as: (1) access to data; (2) quality of data; (3) transparency; (4) overcoming bias; and (5) research ethics, especially protection of the informants, just to list a few.
- *Research quality for think tanks is also about fruitful interaction between research and policy*. This expands the understanding of research quality beyond the research process itself: quality is also determined by the impact of the research and its contribution to positive changes in society. This creates many challenges for think tanks. For policymakers, research quality is not only about think tanks' credibility and the quality of the research itself, but also research

relevance and readability, as it is elaborated further in the section "Research Quality for Policymakers." As Leonardo Garnier has argued "people act on the basis of beliefs, not knowledge; think tanks should therefore transfer knowledge into beliefs."

- *To appeal to policymakers and other stakeholders, research reports need to be translated in an understandable way*: their length, form and content need to be adapted to particular audience(s). Research quality is therefore not only about the content, but also about the packaging: to communicate effectively, think tanks should approach ideas "like a doll that you have to dress," as Dr. Roxana Barrantes noted, adding that different communities require different packaging, and different articulations of the same idea.
- *There are different ways of engaging with key audiences*: engaging communities in the process of research, publishing in peer-reviewed journals, data visualization, writing for different audiences through blog sites and social media, and engaging with the electoral debate. They can be seen as separate activities, as well as subsequent stages of the engagement cycle, from the grounded research to bottom-up engagement with the politics. These were discussed in details during five parallel sessions summarized in the section "Outreach and Engagement."
- *There are many ways to engage in quality assurance*, summarized here in the section "Quality Assurance Mechanisms." These include: recognizing the external context in which think tanks operate and adapting this knowledge to improve the internal context; ensuring research ethics, especially when doing research in conflict zones or on sensitive issues; peer review; and think tanks learning from each other.
- *One of the common challenges for think tanks is access to funding and resources*, which can significantly determine think tank agency. Another issue is impartiality, as think tanks are intertwined in multiple connections with donors, policymakers, and other stakeholders. The key recommendations for think tanks are to act transparently and to ensure credibility. One of the ways to empower think tanks' position at the local or national levels is to establish contacts with different stakeholders, and collaborate with other think tanks and research organizations.
- *There are also region-specific challenges*, which mainly come from the country's development, as well as from the political environment and socio-economic context. It is crucial for think tanks to properly recognize the environment and to address real, existing problems. In regions of political instability, think tanks may get support from international organizations such as TTI.

Recommendations:
Many of TT representatives expressed their interest in furthering the capacity of their TTs by developing methods and mechanisms which have been presented and discussed during the Exchange. Most of the participants believed that they can achieve quality improvement by <u>learning from each other, through cooperation, and through sharing stories about TTs (un)successful projects</u>.

The strongest interest was expressed in getting knowledge and experience in the following:

- Development and use of impact evaluation (IE) for policymaking;
- Developing knowledge and skills for data visualization;
- Learning about the mechanisms developed by experienced TTs to achieve impact during elections;
- Learning from each other how to establish dialogue with government and how to impact policymakers to verify their data and/or to make their data accessible. Also, to improve national/regional/global data in terms of transparency, credibility, comparability and accessibility;

- Learning from experienced TTs how to inform and influence public opinion and thus challenge policymakers' perspectives.

To strengthen their research quality and impact, TTs may follow the recommendations below:

- Give particular attention to current socio-economic and political contexts and capture socio-economic indicators which are crucial and credible for particular cases.
- Establish communication by cooperating with various different stakeholders, including policymakers, media, NGOs, and CS.
- Carry on regular external and internal evaluation; with regards to the latter, strong attention should be paid to transparency, credibility, and quality.
- Communicate research products in various forms and lengths to suit the context and audiences.
- Develop a long-term funding strategy.

The Open Space on the third day of the Exchange was a space for TTI-supported TTs to discuss "hot topics" for potential future interaction, networking, and collaboration. The future of these initiatives will belong to the TTs.

DAY 1: February 18, 2015 – RESEARCH QUALITY: APPROACHES

Research quality is quite an abstract concept which can be approached and conceptualized from different angles and perspectives. During three plenary and four parallel sessions, TT representatives, policymakers, and donors have taken up the challenge to unpack the term "research quality" through intense debates and discussions.

Opening Remarks:

Time: 9:00-9:30

Official welcome:	Ruth Levine (William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, US) Stephen McGurk (IDRC, Canada) Shekhar Shah (NCAER, India; and member of the TTI Exchange Planning Committee)
Introduction:	Peter Taylor (TTI) Valerie Traoré (Facilitator, Senegal)

Dr. Peter Taylor, the Program Manager, TTI (IDRC, Canada) opened the Exchange by introducing the main objective: to understand what research quality means to TTs and to develop and identify concepts, tools and approaches to help TTs improve their research quality. Another crucial issue was how research quality translates into outreach and impact in policy development. Dr. Taylor hoped that the TTI Exchange would enable the exchange of experiences and issues that concern the world of TTs. He noted that the TTI Exchange reflects the unique journey of all 43 institutions represented. This journey undertakes the task of developing capacity in foreign lands through cooperation and collaboration, sharing concepts, practices, methods, and tools to strengthen research quality and its policy impact.

Stephen McGurk, VP of Programs (IDRC, Canada), shared his experience of development projects in Syria. He suggested to not trust in appearances, and adjust one's approach consequently to changing conditions, saying that "those who lead you out of danger are not necessarily your friends or those who lead you in danger are not necessarily your enemies." He hoped that the TTI Exchange would result in developing common knowledge and understanding of what research quality is, how it can be improved, and what impact it can have in different settings and contexts. He observed the diversity of environments researchers work in, such as rapidly industrializing and newly developing countries in which the settings have changed dramatically. He stressed the importance of the impact that strong research can have on policy in such diverse settings.

Ruth Levine, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, gave a brief speech that highlighted the key objectives of the TTI Exchange. She stated that the TTI Exchange is a great opportunity to establish cooperation between researchers and intellectuals. She emphasized that research quality can be achieved only through common learning, collaboration, and cooperation, saying that "snowflakes individually are among one of the nature's most delicate things, but you can see their impact when they get together."

Shekhar Shah, NCAER, India, and member of the TTI Exchange Planning Committee, opened his speech by sharing his experience of working and he thanked donors for their generosity and trust in developing analytical capacities, research quality, and impact on policymaking in various countries. He emphasized the importance of sustainability of TTs and invited the participants to reflect on their own future plans and attempts. The TTI represents, in his opinion, the future of the Southern Voice initiative; he referred to the metaphor on snowflakes, saying that the TTI Exchange is the manifestation of the strength and impact gained through collectiveness. He distinguished three key principles of the successful work of TTs, which are: accountability, additionality, and addressability.

According to **Shekhar Shah**, accountability is about responsibility for the outcomes generated by TTs and transparency of research. Additionality means that TTs are complementing the work of governments, civil societies, and authorities. Addressability brings out the question of who is the audience of the knowledge produced by TTs, and what are the ways to communicate that knowledge in an appropriate way. Finally, he listed three main goals which every TT should aim to meet: relevance, quality, and impact. Research quality is therefore not only about the way in which research is designed and carried out, but also about its relevance to the specific problem and context. Moreover, the quality of the research is measured by its applicability and the impact it has on policymakers.

The key speeches were briefly summarized by **Valerie Traore**, who reminded participants about the e-forum and the TTI Exchange Twitter hashtag which had been created prior to the Exchange. She also invited the participants to share their experience and expectations from the TTI Exchange. In addition, Dr. Peter Taylor thanked the participants and emphasized that the main value of the TTI Exchange comes from its variety; it consists of the planning committee, the TTI members, rapporteurs, external evaluators, stakeholders, policy actors, and TTs supported by the TTI.

Fernando Masi, CADEP, expressed his hope that the TTI Exchange would allow TTs and research centers to exchange their experience and concerns regarding research quality and its impact on the policy making process. **Nicholas Awortwi**, PASGR, added that he hoped that the TTI Exchange would also contribute to understanding what research quality means and whether it is measured by its applicability, or according to academic standards.

Plenary: Research Quality for Think Tanks

Time: 9:30 – 11:00

Background:

The main objective of this plenary session was to share understanding and perspectives on what research quality means for TTs, building on the e-forum established prior to the Exchange. The speakers were invited to elaborate on how TTs should deal with different knowledge and approaches to research.

Moderator: Debapriya Bhattacharya (CPD, Bangladesh)
Panelists: Miguel Jaramillo (GRADE, Peru)
Ifediora Amobi (AfriHeritage, Nigeria)
Priyanthi Fernando (CEPA, Sri Lanka)

Debapriya Bhattacharya, CPD, Bangladesh, identified four key issues to be further discussed during the session which were: (1) quality differentials, (2) quality assurance mechanisms, (3) spillovers of quality research, and (4) incentivization. He invited the panelists to share their reflections on how to define and measure research quality and its relevance; Is research quality an outcome of individual or rather community work? Do TTs have a “gatekeeper” who assures research quality? His final question was the relation between research quality and funds: does strong quality research increase the chances for funding?

Ifediora Amobi, AfriHeritage, said that research quality is measured by the quality of its final output, for instance, a research report. He introduced the concept of the research value chain, which is composed of collaborations between TTs and various stakeholders, research methodology and frameworks, data accessibility and quality, as well as the final result of the analysis. Research quality is also measured by how it is received and valued by the "buyer." TTs should therefore maintain their research considering the quality of research itself, as well as sellability, credibility, testability, and value that the final research product has for its recipient.

For Dr **Ifediora Amobi** TT's competence is crucial to assuring high quality research which results from a professional research team, effective management, good communication within the team, and good communication between TTs and other stakeholders. TTs continuously work for their recognition by improving themselves and their relations with policymakers. Positive spillovers can contribute to TT's visibility and credibility and therefore increase funding opportunities.

Priyanthi Fernando, CEPA, stated that research quality comes from its relevance: research should address existing problems and needs. Moreover, TTs should create public awareness about existing issues and problems, which would help to reach and influence policymakers. Research is never truly objective or completely impartial. For Ms. Fernando a key quality assurance mechanism is the transparency of the research process: the research framework, objectives, and data.

Miguel Jaramillo, GRADE, agreed that research should be perceived as a process which consists of three subsequent stages: (1) determining the research question, (2) choosing an appropriate methodology and ways to gain relevant data, (3) content analysis. Quality assurance mechanisms should be applied at each stage of this process. In reference to quality indicators, Mr. Jaramillo recalled Thomas Khun, who noted that research standards were differently defined in different communities and varied across the time. Furthermore, strong research quality derives from its reception and impact. Thus, research should be designed in a way to engage policymakers, to bring their attention to crucial issues and problems, and to establish dialogue. In conclusion, research quality should always be always relevant to the particular context.

Furthermore, four key issues for research quality were discussed among all participants of the session. The following concerns emerged from the discussion in addition to previously highlighted points: (1) timeliness of research, which refers both to timelines of research and research being well-timed; (2) positive spillovers may have an impact not only on think tank credibility, but also on the society which may benefit from good quality research; (3) accessibility of funds and means may determine research quality; (4) policy influence should not be the main focus of TTs when designing the research, because it may bias researchers.

Findings and Conclusions:

Research quality commonly refers to the research process, which encompasses a chain or a circle of interrelated stages. Key aspects of the research process are: (1) formulating a research question; (2) choosing an appropriate methodology and framework; (3) selecting appropriate, qualified researchers; (4) research; (5) content analysis; (6) ways of presenting research outcomes.

Other issues that impact research quality are: (1) data accessibility and quality, (2) timeliness of data, and (3) timeliness of research.

To ensure strong quality research, all stages need to be carefully designed, planned, monitored, and carried out within the specific context of the research environment. A research problem should therefore be seen through and within a particular social and cultural context.

Research quality for TTs is also about impact. Therefore: (1) a well formulated research question should recognize and address existing needs; (2) a research outcome needs to be formulated and designed in a convincing, understandable way to reach policymakers; (3) a research outcome should suggest possible solutions.

Key elements for quality assurance mechanisms for research are: (1) internal and external peer reviews, (2) institutionalized gatekeepers, (3) quality benchmarks, and (4) systematic evaluation inside the institution.

There are positive and negative research spillovers. Positive spillovers may attract funds and human resources and therefore contribute to the credibility of the TT and its recognition in the research market. Another spillover benefit may be a positive impact on society.

Negative spillovers may also have positive impact: controversy around the subject can put a think tank at the center of the debate.

The main ways of incentivizing research are: (1) engagement, (2) dissemination, and (3) creating public pressure by increasing public awareness.

Plenary: Policymaker Perspectives on Research Quality

Time: 11:30-13:00

Background:

This plenary session aimed to identify policymaker perspectives of TT research quality, asking how they use quality research for decision making.

Moderator: Peter Evans (DFID, UK)
Panelists: Ajay Matur (Director General, Bureau of Energy Efficiency, Government of India)
Zitto Kabwe (Tanzania)
Paulo Gomes (Presidential Candidate, Guinea Bissau)
Leonardo Garnier (ex-minister of Education, Costa Rica)

It was commonly agreed that TTs can help to capture the complexity and specificity of certain problems, and provide relevant, sufficient solutions that bring positive change. The case studies presented were as follows:

- a TT helped to bring attention to energy consumption in India and provided parliament with solutions that contributed to 1% reduction in energy consumption;

- in Tanzania, HDR research results brought parliament's attention to the adverse effects of the initially planned poverty reduction through the gold mining industry;
- in Latin America, TTs played a role in the identification of a problem and proposed a solution to misconceptions in teaching methods, which resulted in reformed math education;
- in Guinea Bissau, the efforts of one single passionate TT worker lead the government to undertake environmental protection measures of the country's biodiversity despite the country's dire need of rapid economic growth and construction of infrastructure.

Engagement between policy makers and TTs is crucial for sustainability issues. The main role of TTs is to recognize problems and interests of the citizens and subsequently inform policymakers, suggesting possible solutions.

To establish and empower communication with policymakers, TTs should be able to attract policymaker's attention and provide them with clear, concise information. Reports prepared by TTs should be brief, and solutions proposed should be clear and achievable. The credibility of TTs is established through engagements with society, and proven reputation, which is crucial for being recognized by policymakers.

Policymakers are eager to cooperate with TTs, yet they have limited resources of time and attention. Some of the advice given by policymakers to TTs concerned the quality of the reports delivered by TTs. A proper report would be characterized by the following: concise summaries, good use and representation of the data, comprehensible language, clear conclusions which address the interests of the citizens, impact on the daily realities, relevance of the research, an interesting narrative that is high in research quality but also telling a compelling story.

The method and the narrative are important factors in the credibility of the research, but so is the messenger. In order to increase credibility, the methodology and use of data is crucial. There are three main pillars of TT activity and TTs can focus on one and outsource the other two in order to increase research quality: research, fund raising, and dissemination of information. Previous success and reputation are also key. In policy making, TTs also should have a role in influencing the types of questions that parliamentarians ask. Before policy makers make a decision that will impact the lives of millions others, it is imperative that they consult the experts, which should in turn reflect all sides of the debate.

The discussion that followed the debate was concerned with the following question: is the purpose of the research informing or impacting policy? Policymakers are themselves entangled within the complexity of national and international politics, which in some cases are contradictory or in opposition to their interest. TTs should be able to properly recognize and position themselves within this context. TTs should disseminate information in order to inform and engage society, which can subsequently pressure policymakers if they are resistant towards recognition of the problem.

Findings and Conclusions:

From the perspective of policymakers research quality is measured by TTs credibility, quality of the research itself, and readability of the research output. Policymakers are eager to cooperate and collaborate, especially with those TTs that recognize important social issues, properly problematize them, and suggest achievable, efficient solutions. Important for policymakers is that cooperation with TTs results in the implementation of positive changes. They are not interested in theoretical analysis, but in the usefulness of knowledge. Changing current policy is the most difficult task of all. If policy makers are looking for answers to certain questions, the chances for implementation become higher.

The way TTs communicate with policymakers may be crucial in determining the TTs impact. The message provided by the TT must not only be clear and concise, but also appealing. As Leonardo Garnier observed, “people act on the basis of beliefs, not knowledge; you have to transfer the act of knowledge into beliefs.” TTs should therefore master the ways in which they build their narrative on crucial issues and, as Paulo Gomes said, “be able to tell a story with the research.”

Parallel Sessions BLOCK 1: Quality in Methods: Exploring Tools for Research Quality

Time: 14:00-16:00

Different approaches to what research quality means as determined by research methodology and tools were discussed in four parallel sessions. The main concerns of these sessions was to provide and discuss practical approaches, tactics, and tools that strengthen the effectiveness of TTs, to identify implications of a TT’s context for the application of these approaches, tactics, and tools, and to highlight potential pitfalls and ways of minimising risks which may arise when applying these approaches, tactics, and tools.

1.A. Impact Evaluation for Policymaking

Background:

This session aimed to provide insights into how to ensure that an impact evaluation (IE) is policy relevant, and how to design a rigorous evaluation method to inform discussions on what works in development.

Moderator: Carolina Robino
Panelists: Miguel Jaramillo (GRADE, Peru)
Anil Kumar Sharma (NCAER, India)
Ibrahim Kasirye (EPRC, Uganda)
Beryl Leach (International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie), India)

Discussion:

The case study presented by **Miguel Jaramillo** (GRADE, Peru), aimed to measure the performance of micro firms in Lima after the transition from the informal to formal economy through some performance related variables. The conclusion, which derived from IE, was that having a license had no impact on performance indicators. This allowed GRADE to capture a problem of formalization from a broader perspective. In the second case, described by **Ibrahim Kasirye,** a randomized control trial (RCT) in the education policies in Uganda was carried out to address the question of improving the governance of schools and reducing the absenteeism of teachers.

The main concern of the session was how to design IE, and how IEs can be used to influence policy. IE is a very complex process and has many challenges, such as choosing the proper sample, and recognizing and controlling all variables in social settings. Reasonable comparisons between the intervention group and the control group, adopting mixed-method approach, systematic reviews, and evidence syntheses were listed among suggested ways of improving IE. **Beryl Leach** (3ie) noted that to be really useful for policy making, IE needs to be: relevant, i.e. it needs to help answer a specific policy question; contextual, i.e. it refers to the appropriate political context; clear in its message; feasible, i.e. it is affordable, doable, and timely. There are many ways to ensure policy relevance and usefulness, such as early and direct engagement with implementing agencies during the development of funding windows; requiring country nationals on the research team in substantive roles; having a preparation phase; and ensuring direct and ongoing engagement with researchers and other stakeholders. TTs can benefit from implementing IE because it may strengthen their credibility, relevance, and utility.

Findings and Conclusions:

Impact Evaluation is an important asset which improves TTs credibility and quality. Nonetheless, it has some limitations. Firstly, as a methodology, IE is costly and time consuming. Secondly, IE has limitations because of negative political interest. Finally, there is a question of IE applicability in hostile environments, or concerning problematic issues such as corruption or security. To assure the quality of IEs, they should reflect the institutional and cultural context. Moreover, the methodology should be transparent to allow comparisons and re-evaluations.

Numerous TTs representatives expressed interest in furthering the capacity of their TTs to develop and use IE. A follow up session was organized on Friday afternoon to explore opportunities for TT collaboration and learning on strengthening capacities on impact evaluation.

1.B. Simulation and Scenario Analysis: Research for Policy Analysis'

Background:

This session addressed the question of how "what if" analysis and construction of different scenarios can strengthen the quality of research for decision making.

Moderator: Dr. Samar Verma (Senior Program Officer, IDRC)
Panelists: Dr. Lykke Andersen (Senior Researcher, INESAD, Bolivia)
Dr. Anshu Bharadwaj (ED, CSTEP, India)
Dr. Ajaya Dixit (ED, ISET-N, Nepal)

Discusson:

Scenario analysis is a particularly useful tool to research highly dynamic and complex issues, such as the impact of climate change on various groups in a socially, politically, geographically and demographically complex environment. **Dr. Ajaya Dixit** (ISET-N) presented the case of Nepal, where careful scenario analysis resulted in the emergence of a Climate Resilience Framework, a conceptual framework that clarifies factors which need to be included in the diagnosis of climate vulnerability, identifies the entry points for responding, and supports strategic planning to build resilience to climate change.

One of the simulation tools is *SimPachamama*, created by INESAD for the participatory design of policies to reduce deforestation and rural poverty in Bolivia. As an agent-based simulation tool that mimics the behavior of a small community located at the agricultural frontier, SimPachamama helps to engage policymakers who can virtually test the potential impact of various decisions. Another stimulation tool is *Decision Analysis for Research and Planning (DARPAN),* created initially to explore the ways of fulfilling India's development aspirations and possible paths in a carbon-constrained world and thereafter developed by CSTEP to adopt a sustainable development approach. This stimulation tool/model takes into consideration (1) resource availability, (2) siting constraints, (3) transmission requirements, and (4) managing intermittency associated with renewables and creates range of possible scenarios.

Findings and Conclusions:

Scenario planning and stimulation models/tools are very useful to capture complex, dynamic issues with many variables and high uncertainty, such as climate change. These highly interactive simulation tools allow TTs to engage policymakers in empirical testing of various scenarios, rather than giving them policy advice. They provide policymakers with a range of particular solutions, but may leave policymakers confused about the plurality of possible scenarios. It is therefore important to perceive scenarios as scenarios, that is, as different ways of looking at what the future is likely to be. Another advantage of scenarios is that they help to distinguish specific factors, including political decisions, within very complex issues.

A further suggestion was made to broaden the applicability of scenario and simulation tools to other policy areas, such as health, public policy, and environmental policy, and to develop more detailed models which would allow policymakers to see the impact of policy changes related to tax, incentives or subsidies, and which would consider the diversity of particular settings.

1.C. Methods for Rigorous Synthesis of Evidence

The goal of this session was to explore three robust methods for synthesising evidence: systematic reviews, RAPID evidence assessments, and evidence gap maps.

Moderator: Dr. Antonio Romero (Senior Program Officer, IDRC)
Panelists: Martina Vojtkova (3ie, Evaluation Specialist)
Dr. Santiago Cueto (GRADE, discussant on systematic reviews)

Discussion:

The three key methods of evidence synthesis discussed by **Martina Vojtkova** are: (1) evidence gap map, (2) rapid evidence assessment, and (3) systematic review. Evidence gap map consolidates knowledge about outcomes by mapping systematic reviews and impact evaluations in a particular sector. The premise behind evidence gap map is to produce more objective knowledge by showing what evidence says in different contexts, without proposing recommendations which could reflect experts' bias. Rapid evidence assessment consists of getting the best of the available research on a particular topic within a restricted period of time to be directly used in the decision-making process. It is based on systematic research methods, including meta-analysis which consists of reviewing published articles in a determined area, but due to time constraints, it tends to be less exhaustive, helping to synthesize main findings. Finally, systematic review allows researchers to establish the overall balance of evidence on a particular empirical question, separate high and low quality evidence, and distinguish generalizable and contextual factors. The main challenge of systematic review is rigor in conducting research, but it is very useful because its outcome is deeply contextual.

Findings and Conclusions:

Evidence synthesis tools are important for evidence-informed policies and strategic research prioritization.

The main challenges in evidence synthesis stem from challenges in communicating them with policymakers who may have different priorities, needs, and urgencies than TT researchers. According to **Dr. Cueto**, it is important to go beyond the mechanistic view of evidence synthesis, broadening the traditional question “what works?” to include “how does it work?” and “in which contexts does it work?”

Other challenges faced by researchers doing evidence synthesis are: (1) lack of sufficient number of rigorous studies carried out in particular areas; (2) narrow view of science and research by national agencies; and (3) the need for contextual knowledge for policy-relevant issues.

1.D. Interacting with Data

This session aimed to explore state-of-the-art approaches for working with open, global/regional/national data sets for strengthening the quality of policy research and evaluating policy impact.

Moderator: Julie LaFrance
Panelists: Fernando Masi (CADEP, Paraguay)
Muhammad Asif Iqbal (SPDC, Pakistan)
Jody Heymann (WORLD Initiative, US)

Discussion:

There are many challenges that TTs face when working with national/global/regional data, mainly related to the questions of transparency, credibility, and availability. **Muhammad Asif Iqbal,** (SPDC Pakistan), distinguished four types of issues/problems with the reported data: (1) inconsistency, when government data are conflicting with or contrary to the data produced before; (2) classification and definitional, when common terms (e.g. youth; poverty) are understood differently across regions or discourses; (3) lack of clear information regarding methodology used for computation of indicators and mismatch of data at various levels of government; and (4) comparability of data, when data are not comparable because of different classifications, methods or definitions used. An additional concern with national data is politicization, transparency, and accountability.

When working with national/regional/global data, TTs should always verify them according to the concerns listed above. The role of TTs is also to improve data quality, consistency and comparability by verifying and correcting government data. TTs should also encourage discussions between policy makers and other actors, and inform and maintain public opinion by challenging, verifying and clarifying national/regional/global data. The work of **CADEP’s** *Observatorio de Economía Internacional* (OBEI), has resulted in the verification of the official data on economic statistics produced by the Central Bank of Paraguay (BCP). The UCLA World Policy Analysis Center (WORLD) has constructed datasets and maps on more than 1,000 laws and policies in 193 countries which allows cross-country comparison in terms of availability and transparency of national data, and political performance regarding economic security and development.

Findings and Conclusions:

When working with national/global/regional government data TTs should remain critical and attentive to data transparency, clarity, veracity, and accuracy. TTs should be particularly alert for inconsistent data, especially regarding data produced by different actors and in different years.

Researchers should also be attentive to classifications, methods, or definitions used in different contexts and discourses, especially in comparative studies.

The role of TTs is consequently to verify and correct government data, and to establish dialogue between governmental institutions and other stakeholders, in order to provide society with solid, accurate information.

DAY 2: FEBRUARY 19, 2015 - RESEARCH QUALITY: OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Film Screening: Research to Policy Processes

Time: 8:45 – 10:45

Background

During this plenary session, three TTs showed a movie documenting how TTs in India, Senegal and Bolivia have contributed to stronger policy responses to some of the most challenging social and economic problems in their countries. Each screening was followed by a discussion session.

Moderator: Sarah Lucas (William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, US)
Coordinator: Julie LaFrance
Panelists: Anshu Bharadwaj (CSTEP, India)
Ajah Mathur (Director General, Bureau of Energy Efficiency, Government of India)
Doudou Ndiaye (Director of Communications, CRES, Senegal)
Oumar Ndao (Head of Tobacco Issues Office, Health Ministry in Senegal)
Ibrahim Wade (Accelerated Growth Strategy, Senegal)

1. “*Securing Renewable Energy in India*”

The case study from India showed how CSTEP developed renewable energy research which enabled the Government of India to design and implement a mechanism which promotes energy efficiency (PAT), and led to the government’s announcement of the National Wind Mission. The biggest challenge when implementing renewable energy technologies is that they are expensive at early implementation phases. The Electricity Act, brought to government by CSTEP in 2003, resulted in price decreases in many states so the cost of wind electricity is currently almost the same as the coal-based electricity. The case from India shows how the connection established at a grassroots level between CSTEP and a multitude of stakeholders, including the government, manufacturers, industry associations, academics and nongovernmental organizations, resulted in positive change.

Questions from the floor:

- What hinders such countries like India to use solar energy to the maximum?
- What did you expected from the policy makers as a reaction and did you achieved that?
- How do you finance the consumers making use of this?
- Since this research center is an economic center, what was your role in this respect?
- Can you bridge your two stories and elaborate more on the continuous engagement process?

Answers:

Ajah Mathur explained that India started to use solar energy much later because it used to be very expensive: six times more expensive than coal. At the beginning, they planned to buy 1000 megawatts of solar energy and inquired about the price to establish the final price relatively low: six and a half rupees. They expect the solar energy to be sub-fined in the next round. The price of coal is increasing and the price of the solar energy is decreasing, hence parity is hoped to be achieved.

Referring to the continuous engagement process, he said that when the issue is technology integration, there are many stakeholders such as environmental stakeholders, electricity consumers, government, and so on. The key issue is how to engage all of them before putting forward a relevant policy. To the Bureau, TTs like CSTEP, are multipliers who have access to, and the trust of, the stakeholders. Thus they are very important because through them the Bureau can reach out to other stakeholders.

Anshu Bharadwaj noted that one of the things that CSTEP did was a potential assessment of how much power could be obtained from wind. CSTEP realized that wind power had greater potential than originally assumed, but could not achieve its desirable use due to the government interest in solar. It triggered CSTEP to engage with policy makers in order to improve wind energy use, which is still a work in progress.

The communication goals of CSTEP were to make the government see that there was a potential in renewable energy, which is in a long run cheaper, and is considered a cleaner technology. CSTEP managed to establish this dialogue thanks to the cooperation with other agencies and building trust with the Bureau by proving its credibility. During the whole process CSTEP remained as a neutral organization, which acted transparently, independently, and not for profit. CSTEP's ability to engage with the industry, as well as with the Bureau, was therefore grounded in the methodology, and in proving that "science comes from engineering, and can be trusted on both sides."

2. "Curbing Tobacco Use in Senegal"

The case study from Senegal documented CRES's engagement in research and outreach activities related to tobacco control which aimed to influence the government tax policy on tobacco products. The engagement with the government resulted in adaptation of the regional directive draft proposed by CRES and consequently in a tax increase on tobacco collectively among 15 ECOWAS member states which precluded tobacco companies from relocating to a low-tax country. The discussion evolved around the question of whether the increase in prices would translate into a decrease in consumption. The work of CRES, however, aimed to minimize consumption of tobacco also through mobilizing the religious authorities, civil society, and parliamentarians who worked on establishing law imposing fines on smoking in public.

Questions from the floor:

- How did you allocate resources for enforcement including those resources allocated regarding children's education and anti-smoking efforts?
- Do you really think this tax will stop an addict? Price increases may not necessarily bring a decrease in tobacco use.
- What were the arguments of people who resisted you? And what were your arguments in return?
- What was CRES's communication strategy?
- The research seems to be about taxation; however, CRES's efforts seem to be on health and education, what was the link?
- Who is the primary audience in this video, who are you primarily trying to reach?

Answers:

Oumar Ndao said that when it comes to the resources allocated for enforcement, Senegal has established an action plan, including implementation of a law to fight against tobacco consumption.

Because the governmental means were not sufficient, CRES proposed a law for additional support.

Doudou Ndiaye added that CRES organized numerous meetings with the key shareholders and government representatives to increase their awareness about the problem. As shown in the movie, CRES went to schools, which also required financial means. Some of the resources are allocated to the research, some to lobbying activities, and others to public awareness.

Oumar Ndao remarked that there are certain criteria and thresholds in the international framework of tobacco fight. Taxation is an essential part of this framework, which is well understood by the tobacco companies as low prices are a part of their marketing strategy. The increase in prices should be followed by specific regulations, like prohibition of tobacco use in public spaces. CRES has also encouraged the Ministry of Health to prohibit public commercials of tobacco. The best results can be achieved through developing a multi-faceted strategy, but still the taxation is the most important tool to decrease prevalence, because high prices translate into lower consumption.

Doudou Ndiaye said that many different groups opposed CRES's anti-tobacco campaign. The first opponent group was the tobacco industry. To monitor their activities, CRES conducted research into tobacco industry companies. Secondly, consumers opposed CRES's attempts to reveal the risks related to health and the economy caused by the tobacco consumption. CRES tried to convince the government that taxing tobacco companies is much more beneficial for Senegal, rather than not taxing them.

3. "*Alternative Mechanism to Reduce Deforestation"*

The case study from Bolivia examined how policy stimulation tools applied by INESAD helped to design a mechanism for reducing deforestation. Through incentivizing rural communities and identifying innovative and alternative solutions, INESAD contributed to solving the tension between economic growth policies and ecologic preservation. One of the biggest challenges for INESAD was to establish cooperation with the government which is in constant rotation.

Questions from the floor:

- Have you persuaded any policy makers at the national level, and what have been their reactions?
- If it is working in a small scale what happens? What are the challenges of scaling it up? Are the types of livelihoods actually adequate to get people out of poverty and keep them from reverting to deforestation while scaling them up?
- How far it is acceptable in the Latin American countries?
- What was the role of the community when coming up with the Joint Mechanism? How easy was it to make people understood what they were getting into?

Answers:

Lykke Andersen said that the Joint Mechanism is an alternative to REDD+ which had been rejected by the government. INESAD has been developing REDD+ and subsequently informing the government about the technicalities and the ways to make the Joint Mechanism more inclusive. The Mechanism has been already implemented as a national policy; it also got the support from Denmark of 40 million dollars, which was sufficient to start up the project. To make the project work at the national level, INESAD has been working with hundreds of stakeholders from the government, public, and NGOs. INESAD's strategy was to make the project internationally recognized which also helped it to obtain funds. Because agriculture is very profitable, all convincing alternatives to it are also very costly. Lykke Andersen hoped that the Bolivian experience with REDD+ will inspire other countries. Part of its success lies in the fact that the mechanism has been established with the cooperation of local communities who have actively participated in the project and expressed their needs.

Findings and Conclusions

Despite regional and thematic differences, three case studies brought up similar questions concerning implementation, impact, and research strategy, particularly scale of the research, primary audience of the campaign undertaken, role of community in the research and campaign, and regional relevance of the issues.

The way from research to policy impact is very complicated and is a multi-actor process during which sides with different vested interests have to come to a consensual solution. The case of India shows that to have an impact on policy with regard to global/national issues such as renewable energy, TTs need to have established credibility and be ready to engage with multiple stakeholders. Paraphrasing Anshu Baradwaj, what comes from the science can be trusted.

Policymakers chose TTs they work not only because of their credibility, but also their trustworthiness. This means that communication and interaction between TTs and policymakers have a strong influence on the outcome of their engagement. Storytelling, as was shown in the examples of the three movies, is one of the most effective ways of communicating the research outcomes to various stakeholders.

To establish and improve communication, TTs should address all stakeholders in the process, rather than in single point agendas, finding the most efficient channels of flow of information. TTs can remain critical as long as they are credible, with their research based on strong and clear evidence.

The process of TTs role can be summarized in the following steps: (1) identify crucial problems which require engaging with the community and other TTs; (2) cooperate with TTs, government, and other stakeholders; (3) implement; (4) feedback/evaluation.

Research is always contextual, grounded, and its relevance and impact can be understood and measured within a specific context.

Parallel Session BLOCK 2: Outreach and Engagement

Time: 11:15 - 13:00.

Five parallel sessions aimed to explore different ways of engaging with key audiences and their (dis)advantages in various contexts and for specific purposes. These were: (1) engaging communities in the process of research, (2) publishing in peer-reviewed journals, (3) data visualization, and (4) creating written forms, including blog sites and social media. These steps allow TTs to assure that their research is in line with the context, with the needs, and that it is grounded, and that the results of the research are credible and thereafter disseminated in efficient, attractive ways. The final step of building the research outreach is finding a proper moment for TTs to bring research into action, which was reflected in a fifth session on engaging with the public and creating impact during elections.

2.A. Data Visualization for Engagement

Background:

The aim of the session was to provide inspiration for TTs on how to use data visualization as a tool for disseminating research results and informing policy. This was done by presenting various examples of successful implementation of data visualization methods. The session consisted of a panel of four experts in the area of data visualization and it was largely interactive.

Coordinator:	Dr. Paul Okwi (Senior Program Officer, IDRC)
Moderator:	Wesley Grubbs (Pitch Interactive)
Speakers:	Kwame Owino (Institute of Economic Affairs, Kenya)
	Rodolfo Elias (Instituto Desarrollo)
	Andrej Nosko (Open Society Foundations) (as a replacement for previously planned Goran Buldioski - Think Tank Fund)

Discussion:

Case studies from Kenya, Paraguay, and Pakistan documented effective uses of data visualization. In the case of **Kenya**, graphic representation of data helped to clarify misrepresentations of business and data related stories by the press. Using data visualization techniques, IEA helped a newspaper agency verify many general and incorrect assumptions, by presenting data in a very simplified manner. The case from **Paraguay** was concerned with education mapping from a national to subnational level. The aim was to use data available at the global level to address local level issues, and to encourage local governments to identify problems and social issues and therefore design solutions to these problems. The example from **Pakistan** was an interactive visualization of a comprehensive study of people killed in drone strikes. In this case, visualization of data from two different sources, the state and that collected by private agencies on the ground, present a totally different picture to what was initially portrayed by the state. Data visualization enlightened the public through its ability to differentiate victims by age group, gender, and activity. Although it cannot be attributed to the effect of exposure through data visualization tools, the number of drone strikes has significantly reduced over time.

Speaking from the perspective of a graphic designer, an artist, who “like a cook, takes ingredients and mixes them so people can consume them”, **Wesley Grubbs** defined data visualization as a way of storytelling, comparable to literature, poetry, and art. As such, data visualization becomes a “subjective decision on what you are showing and how.” Moreover, images and graphics are emotional and evoke emotional responses, which makes them a very effective communications tool. **Andrej Nosko** noted that successful data visualization can be a very effective tool of communication with stakeholders, distinguishing a TT among other “knowledge producers” such as bloggers. Whereas written outputs are good for specific knowledge, visual outputs are more specific and help to address a wider audience.

Findings and Conclusions:

Data visualization was recognized as an effective tool, mainly because: (1) it allows TTs to communicate information clearly and efficiently to users, (2) it can bring new insight into data, (3) it appeals to emotions and feelings, and (4) it addresses a wider, yet still specific audience.

Effective storytelling/representation of data relies on: (1) being based on high quality, timely, reliable data, (2) identifying and adjusting to particular audience and specific context, (3) having relevant form and content, and (4) implementation: finding right graphic designer/artist.

One of the challenges for data visualization is access to, and knowledge of, relevant creative techniques and costs of hiring professional data-artists; still, low cost forms can be used despite high-tech expensive digital representations.

TTs should cooperate with each other to share their experience with data visualization; numerous TT representatives expressed their interest in capacity building in data visualization; next steps would include collaboration between them in this field.

2.B. Written Tools for Engagement

Background:

Three brief presentations by TT members focused on specific written tools, asking what they are, why they use them within their policy engagement strategies, and why they think they are valuable. The presentations were followed by policymaker Leonardo Garnier of Costa Rica who discussed how to attract policymakers' attention and interest.

Coordinator:	Maria Urbina-Fauser (IDRC)
Moderator:	Vanesa Weyrauch (Politics & Ideas, Argentina)
Speakers:	Dushni Weerakoon (IPS, Sri Lanka)
	Margarita Beneke De Sanfeliu (FUSADES, El Salvador)
	Susan Nicolai (ODI, UK)
Discussant:	Leonardo Garnier (Costa Rica)

Discussion:

The first example from **Sri Lanka** revealed how blog sites can enable a TT to reach out to a wider audience, and to engage with policymakers and various stakeholders including journalists, other TTs, and citizens. In the case study from **El Salvador, a** traditionally run institution transformed after adopting modern communication tools and methods. The change included digitalization and engagements with various digital platforms. The development progress project presented by **Susan Nicolai and Katy Harris**, (ODI, UK), aimed to transform complex research reports into synthesized, brief summaries which contained key facts and were illustrated with stories to "capture policymakers' imagination."

Blogs, other social media (e.g. Twitter), and communication tools allow for an up-to-date flow of information. Information published on blog sites can be linked to more detailed research documents, or to concise and brief information such as information on Twitter. To reach different audiences, TTs should develop various methods of narration, e.g. by including communication specialists in their teams, and writing on various blog sites to reframe their research in different ways.

Policymakers, in particular, are receptive to short, clear, appealing messages rather than long, exhaustive reports. **Leonardo Garnier** reiterated that "knowledge should be transformed into beliefs." He stressed that knowledge should be understandable to people from outside academia, and the form in which it is presented should be adjusted to a particular audience.

Findings and Conclusions:

TTs should develop different strategies, forms and ways of communication to reach various stakeholders. To bring their attention to particular problems, it is important for policymakers to get concise, brief, messages rather than detailed, extensive reports.

Digital media allows TTs to reach a wider audience than research documents and reports. Using digital media, however, can oversimplify the message. To avoid that, TTs should develop an information network that would link together various communication platforms and social media with more developed written sources.

Research documents/reports should be easily accessible and preferably downloadable directly from the TTs website.

Transforming research documents into a brief, appealing blog post or an article requires strong writing and communication skills. TTs may recruit communication specialists or establish cooperation with journalists and experienced bloggers.

People act upon their beliefs. To transform knowledge into beliefs, TTs should be convincing in what they write and how. Illustrating/starting a text with an appealing story brings life into the narrative and strengthens its reception. Similarly, data visualization, film, or photography can strengthen the message and make it more convincing.

2.C. Peer-Reviewed Publishing

Background:

The session focused on the peer review process as one of the research quality mechanisms when the quality is determined by the audience. The main concern was about what an academic journal editor, or a non-scholarly journal editor, would consider good quality research. The peer review process was discussed from the perspective of institutions that have undertaken various measures to promote peer-reviewed publication of their research outputs, as well as from the publisher's perspective.

Moderator: Dr. John A. Okidi (Senior Program Specialist, IDRC)
Speakers: Jonathan Stead (Director, Marketing & Communications, South African Institute of International Affairs)
Dr. Ravichander Annapoorna (CSTEP, India)
Dr. Elizabeth Laruni (Post-doctoral research fellow at MISR)

Discussion:

Peer-reviewing is one of the crucial criteria of research quality and TTs credibility. In some regions, however, access to data, knowledge, and peer review mechanisms are limited due to different factors such as inadequate internet connectivity. **Jonathan Stead** shared his experience in working at the South African Institute of International Affairs, focusing on the South African Journal of International Affairs and AfricaPortal. To enhance the ability and capacity of southern researchers to equally participate in the production of credible knowledge and scholarly debate, the African peer-review mechanism was developed. The mechanism consisted of three stages: (1) internal and external peer-review of all publications such as policy briefs, occasional papers, or research reports; (2) establishment of the opensource South African Journal of International Affairs, and (3) establishment of AfricaPortal which aims to disseminate policy research addressing policymakers. Dr. **Elizabeth Laruni** brought up the question of the tension between policy advocacy and research as well as the clash between nativist perspective and modernist outlook in the context of knowledge production and dissemination. She introduced the newly established MISR journal, which will serve as a platform to promote young African scholars and their engagement with the wider scholarly community.

Dr. **Ravichander Annapoorna** elaborated on peer reviews from a publisher's perspective, based on her engagement with the online peer-reviewed journal *Aditi*. Peer review has three main goals: (1) assessing the quality; (2) ensuring appropriateness for publication; and (3) ensuring systematically pre-defined review process. The main challenges faced by publishers are: (1) lack of qualified people who are eager to get engaged in a reviewing process; and (2) timeliness - publishing lasts longer when a peer review process is involved.

One of the challenges of peer review as the quality determinant lies in the availability of qualified reviewers and their willingness to engage in the review process. The main problem is that reviewers are typically not reimbursed for their work both in terms of financial means and recognition, which is due to the anonymity principle of journals. Consequently, this work is considered by many researchers as a burden.

Findings and Conclusions:

Peer review is a lengthy, demanding process, which requires cooperation between publishers, scholars, and reviewers.

To increase the quality and effectiveness of peer reviews, various mechanisms should be developed aiming to empower and encourage reviewers, whose involvement determines the quality of the review.

Other problems/challenges faced when aiming to produce good quality knowledge are: (1) plagiarism; (2) multiple submissions; (3) financial sustainability of open access journals; (4) language barriers and lack of native language journals; (5) absence of platforms for young researchers; (6) hierarchy of knowledge stemming from the colonization period in the South; (7) discrepancies in criteria applied by different publishers.

Cooperation is the key for better quality; this refers to the cooperation between and among TTs, researchers, scholars, publishers, and donors.

2.D. Think Tanks' Influence during Elections

Background:

Six TTs from three different regions (Latin America, Africa, and Asia) shared their experience and insights on the role of TTs during elections. How can TTs contributions to electoral debates, and what are the instruments that allow TTs to engage with electoral debates?

Coordinator: Carolina Robino (Senior Program Officer, IDRC)
Moderator: Enrique Mendizabal (Founder On Think Tanks)
Speakers: Orazio Belletini (Grupo Faro, Ecuador)

Fernando Masi (Paraguay Debate/CADEP, Paraguay)
Sanjay Kumar (CSDS, India)
Jean Mensa (IEA, Ghana)
Fernando Straface (CIPPEC, Argentina)
Javier Portocarrero (CIES, Peru)

Discussion:

TTs can be involved in the electoral process through: (1) researching and outreaching to influence electoral processes, and (2) researching on the electoral processes.

Case studies from **South America and Africa** showed how TTs can improve the electoral process by cooperating with various actors in the electoral process. Examples from **South America** also revealed how TTs can learn from each other by adapting proven mechanisms to their specific socio-economic and political environment.

In **South America**, the pioneer in electoral debate was **CIES,** who developed the project *Elecciones Peru 2006* to improve the quality of the electoral debate by focusing media, political party, and civil society attention on key public policies. They also encouraged political parties to develop government platforms based on sound policy recommendations. CIES' project included the following steps: (1) research; (2) challenging existing paradigms; (3) generating opportunities for dialogue among stakeholders; (4) strengthening the link between academia and the state; and (5) translating complex ideas for media and civil society. Inspired by CIES in Peru, **Grupo FARO in Ecuador** developed the project "Democratizing Politics Initiative." The main objectives of FARO's initiative were (1) improving the public debate on policy to enable a more informed vote; (2) promoting a dialogue among politicians from different political parties, citizens, and civil society organizations working in different sectors; and (3) informing the policy agenda of the new government and generating an instrument to monitor the fulfillment of campaign promises. Another model inspired by **CIES** was "*Technology of Influence project*" which **CIPPEC** implemented in Argentina, and the "Paraguay Debate" project by **CADEP**, which brought the political debate to mass media, contributing to it by providing a platform for discussion, providing training for journalists, preparing policy notes, and engaging the public in political debate. Furthermore, **CADEP** organized post-debate sessions with the elected candidates, and launched a new project to monitor the programs and projects of the new government.

Projects by, and inspired by, **CIES** brought significant improvement in the election process by establishing effective relations with various actors, including the state/government, political parties, donors and partners, international audiences, civil society, mass media, journalists, and the public.

In **Africa, IEA-Ghana** have been successfully improving electoral debates in Ghana since 2000, and hosted the first presidential debate in 2012. Given the lack of developed electoral mechanisms and professional, independent media who could hold the presidential debate, the impact of IEA was significant, including: (1) lowering political temperature and tension, especially during electoral process; (2) promoting issue-based campaigning and voting; (3) creating an equal playing field for candidates; and (4) maintaining a platform of accountability. IEA success was due to cooperation established with key bodies such as Trades Union Congress, civil society, and media.

In contrast to previous examples, the TT **CSDS** from India has conducted regular research to analyze democratic and electoral trends spanning a period of five decades, using surveys as a research tool. CSDS has done research on voting behaviors, mobilization patterns, voter registration, reasons for nonvoting, electoral reforms, enhancing policy agendas, campaign expenses, electronic voting machines, and insight into electoral reforms.

Findings and Conclusions:

TTs roles during elections include: (1) research on electoral trends and process; (2) involvement in and contribution to electoral processes.

TTs can contribute to electoral debates through: (1) research; (2) providing platforms for electoral debate; (3) establishing cooperation and dialogue with and among various stakeholders, including political parties, civil society, and media; (4) translating complex ideas and informing citizens; (5) lowering political temperature and tension; (6) promoting issue-based campaigning and conscious voting; (7) strengthening the link between academia and the state; and (8) organizing trainings/outreach events.

The main challenge for TTs is how to remain trustworthy and efficient when engaging with the electoral process, especially in turbulent and unstable political contexts. To remain efficient, TTs should: (1) properly recognize the specific political and socio-economic context; (2) recognize and promote bottom-up policy processes to open the space for engaging civil society and citizens; (3) develop multiple connections with various stakeholders; (4) remain transparent.

TTs can learn from each other in this area. Mechanisms developed by experienced TTs may be adopted by other TTs to their own specific socio-economic and political context.

2.E. Community-Engaged Research

Background:

Transforming respondents into research subjects has been recognized as an ethical issue by researchers and policy makers. This session looked at research as a process which engages respondents as participants, while asking about the possible outcomes and contributions of this approach to influence policymakers and enhance key development issues.

Moderator: Raghavan Suresh (Public Affairs Centre (PAC), India)
Speakers: Dr Meena Nair (PAC, India)
Dr Ajaya Dixit (Executive Director, Institute for Social and Environmental Transition-Nepal)
Dr Andrew Onokerhoraye (Executive Director, Centre for Population and Environmental Development (CPED), Nigeria)
Dr Arthur Bainomugisha (Executive Director, Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE), Uganda)
Dr Udan Fernando (Team leader, Communications and Policy, Centre for Poverty Analysis, Sri Lanka)

Discussion:

Community-Engaged Research (CEnR) is a framework, or approach, for conducting research and advocacy.[2] TTs representatives from Africa and India presented their use of the CEnR approach. The

[2] http://www.epa.gov/ncer/rfa/forms/cenr.pdf

project of **CPED** aimed to promote peace and conflict resolution in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The goal of the **PAC** project was the inclusion of urban poor in maternal health service delivery in Bangalore. **CEPA** in Sri Lanka developed an action learning study entitled "Beyond Voice –Action Research to engage community in research." The case study of CEPA, Sri Lanka shows how TTs can create the potential of a democratic society. It demonstrates how TTs can connect with other cause-based organizations to extend their influence and realize the democratic potential of societies. **ISET**-Nepal worked on synthesized evidence for policy making, asking how to bring together different approaches to scientific knowledge of academia and citizens to respond to natural resource and environmental challenges in a rapidly changing social and economic context. **ACODE** in Uganda carried out action research addressing issues of the country's decentralization system through local government councils' Score Card Initiative, which targeted local government capacity building. Through their actions, ACODE empowers citizens to hold local government leaders accountable.

According to **Dr Meena Nair**, community should not be defined along ethnic, local, or religious lines, but by the relation of people to institutions, and the services provided. The common denominator of the community is the beneficiary of various interventions. Still, every context is specific with its own cultural diversity and hierarchies within the society. Involving the community requires awareness of all of this, including issues such as who constitute the elite, and the exclusion of women in patriarchal societies. Research should be designed in a way not to exclude the voices of the marginalized, such as children and women.

Engaging communities in the process of research is crucial for recognizing real problems and solutions. TTs should assure the representativeness of community interests in the design of the research from its very beginning, involving the community in the design of the research and providing necessary training. Focus group discussions, for instance, may create a conducive environment to ensure participation of the marginalized. The role of the TTs is to bridge research design with the community interests; in doing so, researchers should capture the potential in each community without bias and on an equitable basis.

Findings and Conclusions:

The awareness of specific social hierarchies and dynamics is the first step when approaching CEnR. TTs, however, should find a way to overcome hierarchies within the society and include the voices of marginalized, such as children and women, in the research process.

TTs should establish cooperation with community members from the very beginning of the research to involve them in defining problems and research questions and designing an appropriate methodology in subsequent stages of the research.

To assure quality, CEnR needs to be understood as a scientific process with its own principles and methodologies. What distinguishes CEnR from other qualitative approaches, such as ethnographic fieldwork, is political engagement and purposefulness of the research.

Given different understandings of research and its quality, TTs should always remain transparent about their aims and methodology.

Parallel Sessions BLOCK 3: Quality Assurance Mechanisms

Time: 14:00 – 16:00

During four parallel sessions and the subsequent plenary session, panellists and speakers shared their knowledge, practice, and experience on how TTs can assure research quality and rigour, and explored ways in which TTI can further support TTs in strengthening their quality assurance mechanisms.

3.A. A Think Tank Organizational Self-assessment

Background:

Understanding internal and external contexts are very important for TTs, and is crucial for research quality. In this session, three speakers reflected on this issue, and discussed the two studies supported by TTI on the ways in which TTs can improve their research quality by learning about their external context and taking action to change their internal contexts.

Coordinator: Dr. Peter Taylor (TTI Program Manager, IDRC)
Speakers: Liz Brown (Results for Development, Washington DC)
Priyanthi Fernando (CEPA, Sri Lanka)
Jean Mensa (IEA, Ghana)

Discussion:

Every institution that wants to bring about change needs to make a self-assessment and think carefully about the nature of the change, what they want to achieve, and also, the different factors that affect this process.

To understand the external context for the purposes of self-assessment, **Liz Brown** explored the relationship between political, economic, and social contexts, and TTs strategic behavior and performance. Drawing on TT and donor interviews, a literature review, a survey of TTs, in depth case studies, and focus groups, four main external context factors were identified as follows: (1) political and economic factors, (2) donor-related factors, (3) intellectual climate factors, and (4) civil society-related factors.

The internal context can be understood through an analysis of organizational capacity building. For **Priyanthi Fernando** from **CEPA**, internal context needs to be evaluated in relation to the constantly changing external context. The external and internal factors that led CEPA into an organizational capacity building experience were: (1) the reduction in donor funding for poverty related research; (2) internal difficulties in developing a coherent research agenda; (3) reliance on client-based consultancies; and (4) the fact that their independent research agenda, research quality, and the accumulation of knowledge were compromised. In the process of improving quality, CEPA took the following steps: (1) created a common understanding of the research cycle; (2) updated existing standards and procedures to cover all stages of the research cycle; (3) formalized and enforced those standards and communicated them to new recruits; (4) maintained peer reviews; (5) encouraged staff to proactively search for new methods/methodologies.

In a similar spirit, **Jean Mensa** listed steps undertaken to improve IEA's capacity: (1) developing the capacity of the researchers, (2) responding not only to long-term national issues, but also to emerging issues, (3) creating a database to be able to rely on their own data, and (4) setting up a system to maintain institutional memory. Accordingly, the strategies developed to improve research quality were: (1) providing training to researchers; (2) involving research assistants in writing; (3) enabling regular coaching from senior researchers to junior researchers on how to write better reports; (4) establishing a standard framework for documenting; and (5) having a coordinator responsible for improving IEA's capacity.

Findings and Conclusions:

The external context is highly influential in the effectiveness of TT's work. A TT must take into consideration: (1) political and economic factors, (2) donor-related factors, (3) the intellectual climate, and (4) civil society-related factors. These all have a significant impact on policy discussions/dialogues, and the way that governments adopt and implement policies.

To maintain their credibility, be more attractive for the funders, and compete with other organizations in the sector, TT self-assessments should embrace the principles of change and transformation. One of the most prominent ways of self-assessment and transformation is organizational capacity building.

Internal capacity building includes elements such as: (1) improving research quality; (2) maintaining a peer review system; (3) creating a reliable database; (4) creating incentives to engage young researchers more in the process; (5) effective internal management; (6) access to various funding, including government funding; (7) improving human capital/resources by coaching, short-term, and long-term training; (8) accommodating new researchers; and (9) transparency.

One of the challenges faced by TTs is ensuring research quality given competing pressures of policy influence, partnership requests, donor expectations, and client deadlines.

3.B. The Role of Research Ethics

Background:

The session explored what ethical behaviour, which is essential for credibility and accountability, means for TTs. The speakers unpacked stories, ideas, and challenges around three key themes of research ethics particular to TTs: impartiality in evidence and narratives, accountability to all stakeholders, and transparency in individual and institutional behaviors.

Coordinator: Seema Bhatia-Panthaki
Speakers: Margarita Bneke de Sanfeliu (FUSADES El Salvador)
Andrew Onokerhoraye (CPED, Nigeria)
Meena Nair (PAC, India)
Ruth Levine (Hewlett Foundation US)

Discussion:

The example of **FUSADES** showed how they managed to remain credible thanks to a sound communication strategy and high quality, impartial research, despite allegations and accusations by the government. Ethical behavior in this case meant acting according to, and in pursuit of, "uncomfortable truths", and remaining unbiased and independent.

The case of **CPED** focused on research ethics in Africa, where a discussion on research ethics was ignited by the 1997 WHO Dakar Declaration which underlined the importance of certain principles such as: responsibility engagement, partnership and consensus building, empowerment, non-discrimination, confidentiality and privacy, and engaging the community as research partners. Particular attention needs to be given to assure the confidentiality of data collected from individual respondents to protect their privacy, especially when dealing with sensitive issues. To assure research ethics, CPED runs workshops and trains researchers to take ethical considerations on board in the research design, dissemination, and policy engagement processes.

Ethical behavior also means accountability towards all stakeholders, particularly individuals and communities that participate in surveys, as argued by **Meena Nair** from **PAC**, India. PAC started using core funding to go back with the results of their survey to the participants, which is particularly important for those survey participants who will be affected by policies based on the evidence collected from them.

Ruth Levine drew from her experience at the Centre for Global Development (**CGD**) to discuss the relationship between funding and living up to the ethical standards of policy research. She underlined two key points: (1) adhering to high ethical standards is not free; (2) funding can distort, or is perceived to distort, research itself and it is essential to mitigate risks associated with this. Accordingly recommendations for TTs were: (1) find funders who understand and support data transparency and are, at the very least, amenable to open data; (2) clarify how ethical principles translate into the research planning and implementation process, as these costs must be negotiated upfront with the funders. Policy-based evidence making and limited funding puts TTs in risk of losing transparency and credibility. As Ruth Levine underlined, TTs "need evidence-based policy making instead of policy-based evidence making." The three part vaccine for TTs to adhere to the highest ethical standards include: (1) strong, committed leadership; (2) core funding; and (3) diversified funding.

Findings and Conclusions:

Ethical behavior for TTs refers to the process, as well as the implementation, of the research. Ethical principles translate into strong research quality, assuring long term transparency and credibility of TTs.

No one set of ethical standards can be adopted along the research policy chain. Different sorts of issues require different risk mitigation strategies. There is a need for codes of conduct, not just for TTs but also funders to ensure that highest quality work gets funded. The TTI funded institutions can play a role here.

3.C. Peer Review for Research Quality Enhancement

Background:

The session focused on the relevance and usefulness of the peer review process for TTs, asking about the specific needs of TTs when it comes to reviews, and TTs position in the complex settings of academia, practice, and policy. Lessons learned from the implementation of a pilot peer review mechanism in Latin America were discussed together with peer review experience in Asia and Africa. The session consisted of four presenters.

Coordinator: Dr. Antonio Romero (Senior Program Officer, IDRC)

Speakers: Andrea Ordoñez (Consultant, Ecuador)
Dr. Martin Benavides (GRADE, Peru)
Dr. Werner Hernani-Limarino (Fundación ARU, Bolivia)
Dr. Vaqar Ahmed (SDPI, Pakistan)

Discussion:

The pilot peer review mechanism implemented in **Latin America** revealed that the peer review process needs to be adopted to make sure that the specific needs and approaches of TTs are understood by the reviewers, especially if they are mainly academic peer reviewers. Academic peer review, review of project proposals, book chapters, working papers, and policy briefs for TTs is a time consuming process which requires qualified professionals willing to develop a good quality review. Various strategies might be applied to encourage reviewers, including remuneration and defining objectives of the review, which also contribute to the quality of the review.

Policy institutions and research institutions have differing views on the importance of peer review as a research quality determinant. **Martin Benavides** pointed out that while quality is a key aspect for TTs, it is disputable whether peer review truly contributes to it. To be useful for TTs, peer reviews should: (1) be performed by reviewers familiar with TT methodologies and their research context; (2) be performed by qualified, recognized reviewers whose aim is to contribute, not to compete; (3) develop formats which would allow reviewers to make substantial revisions; (4) shift the tendency from blind reviews towards open reviews to ensure transparency and improve quality.

According to **Werner Hernani-Limarino**, peer-reviews contribute to research quality if TTs approach research as a process of knowledge production. Peer reviewing can also serve as a quality indicator, especially for young TTs and NGOs. **Vaqar Ahmed** developed this point, highlighting superiority of open and multiple, external reviews over blind or exclusively internal ones. To assure quality review, TTs need to cooperate with reviewers who understand the importance of quality research.

Findings and Conclusions:

Peer review significantly contributes to the quality of research publications by adjusting it to international standards, and providing insightful feedback.

To enhance the peer review process, TTs should: (1) define objectives of the review; (2) specify the format and purpose of the document reviewed (project proposals, book chapters, working papers, and policy briefs require different reviewing approaches); (3) select qualified, professional reviewers familiar with the subject and methodology; (4) encourage the reviewers.

3.D. Think Tanks Learning from Each Other

Background:

Participants of the session reflected on their experiences regarding TT collaboration: types and dimensions of collaboration, and their advantages and disadvantages to identify barriers and share tips and hints for successful collaboration with like-minded organizations. The session consisted presenters from three TTs as well as Goran Buldioski, Director, Think Tank Fund, who reflected on presentations and provided donor perspective.

Moderator: Vanesa Weyrauch (Politics and Ideas, Argentina)
Speakers: Felix Asante (Executive Director, Institute of Statistical, Social & Economic Research)
Adriana Arellano (Research Director, Grupo FARO)
Subrat Das (Executive Director, Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability)
Goran Buldioski (Director, Think Tank Fund)

Discussion:

Based on the experience of collaboration between ISSER and IPAR-Senegal, **Felix Asante** unpacked the reasons why TTs would collaborate: (1) intention of raising more funds; (2) sharing tasks; (3) sharing knowledge and insights. At the same time, collaboration can be very challenging, due to communication problems, including a language barrier. The ability of TTs to cooperate should be measured in terms of complementarity of capacity among different TTs. Effective collaboration requires careful choice of appropriate partners and the establishment of clear rules of cooperation followed up by systematic management.

TTs may choose to collaborate with other institutions/TTs only during specific tasks/project activities, especially if the project is large. Deriving from his experience of collaboration, **Subrat Das** (CBGA) noted that "one should know who is who within the other organizations." **Adriana Arellano** took this point up to make a distinction between "personal" and "institutional" collaborations. Personal networks developed with nine other TTs led to collaboration. In contrast to the example of CBGA, the incentive for collaboration preceded any kind of concrete project, which allowed TTs to have more flexibility, space and freedom. The example of institutional collaboration, in turn, was a fusion of 14 TTs with the aim of capacity building and regional policies influence. The precondition for both was personal and institutional trust.

To ensure efficiency, before pursuing collaboration, especially at the international level, TTs should: (1) consider searching for local and internal learning opportunities; (2) carefully scan the environment from an interdisciplinary perspective; (3) recall previously gathered experience, e.g. any "institutional memory" of previous collaborations.

Findings and Conclusions:

Successful collaboration requires: (1) mutual trust; (2); good communication; (3) rigorously elaborated rules; and (4) common aims. Competition, rather than collaboration, may also empower TTs, increasing their creativity and efficiency.

Cooperation may empower TTs and enhance the outcome through: (1) learning from each other and empowering less experienced TTs; (2) increasing funding opportunities; and (3) TTs complementing each other. Cooperation may come from commonality in research areas/values/regions on which TTs work, or complementarity. Since there is no one definition of 'collaboration' or 'cooperation', it should be always specified by TTs beforehand what is meant by these terms.

Plenary: Assuring Quality of Research in Think Tanks

Time: 16:30 – 17:30

Background:

Five panellists reflected on their experiences and shared lessons learned on assuring research quality during the plenary session. Below is the discussion and key findings that emerged from the debate.

Moderator: Shekhar Shah (NCAER, India)
Panelists: Boris Branisa (INESAD, Bolivia)
Khalida Ghaus (SPDC, Pakistan)
Eric Eboh (CSEA, Nigeria)
Eric Chinje (African Media Initiative, Cameroon)
Craig Bardsley (Economic and Social Research Council, UK)

Discussion and key findings:

Research quality mechanisms vary depending on different approaches to, and understandings of, research quality. Panelists of the session reflected on what quality means for them:

Research should be relevant: **Boris Branisa** highlighted that research should be "based in real time rather than on an abstract level." He also said that quality is about impact. The world needs more active, engaged research to foster changes on local, national and global levels.

Research quality is a "set of achievements" for **Khalida Ghaus**, SDPC, Pakistan, who distinguished: (1) scientific value of research; (2) consequences of research; and (3) impact, including informing public opinion, civil society, and provoking social mobilization. For her, "There is no single lens and no single way of research quality. There are various aspects of it."

Research quality is context dependent: different criteria are used within academia, and by policymakers, as **Shekhar Shah** reminded everyone. **Eric Eboh**, Nigeria, elaborated on that point by adding that the quality is also measured by the "consumers."

Challenges and Recommendations:

According to **Boris Branisa**, the main challenge when pursuing quality research is access to resources. The research is not truly understood as valuable, especially in developing countries, hence TTs lack resources. His recommendation for TTs is to be creative and to convince society about the value of research. **Craig Bardsley** advised establishing networks of funding.

Given multiple approaches to research quality, **Shekhar Shah** recommends that research "should be multidisciplinary, connecting different organizations, networks and alliances." He lists aspects of research which should be considered to assure quality: (1) timeliness; (2) usability; (3) relevance; (4) communication; and (5) transparency. **Khalida Ghaus** developed this idea by highlighting the importance of credibility and objectivity.

The communication of research determines its reception. **Boris Branisa** recommended developing different sets of skills for effective communication, and **Shekhar Shah** underlined the advantages of collaborating with other TTs and communication specialists.

DAY 3: FEBRUARY 20, 2015 – RESEARCH QUALITY: IMPACT

Plenary: Brief Overview of TTI External Evaluation

Time: 8:30 – 8:45

External Evaluation team, InDevelop, Sweden

Bernard Wood, team leader, briefly introduced the evaluation team and noted that they are in the earliest stages of planning a highly complex evaluation. He remarked that seeing the TTs in action is invaluable and impressive. He briefly summarized the key findings of the following parallel sessions, pointing out the most crucial findings for research quality.

Data Visualization for Engagement (2.A): Data has to be clean and strong.

Written Tools for Engagement (2.B): (1) Different research products appeal to different audiences; (2) TTs may use key case studies, blog sites, videos, documentaries; (3) It is about "wrapping, unwrapping and rewrapping evidence."

Think Tanks Influence During Elections (2.D): (1) TTs must make intellectual contributions to political discussions; (2) TTs should be politically active but in a non-partisan manner; (3) TTs should promote pluralism; (4) Elections are a great time to engage, but TTs have to be mindful of their context.

Community-Engaged Research (2.E): (1) It is necessary to engage community from the beginning of the research; (2) Community is not homogeneous. It can be more challenging to build trust in multi-ethnic communities; (3) In the case of research in conflict situations, ensuring transparency may be challenging.

A Think Tank Organizational Self-assessment (3.A): (1) "You need to know yourself, your strengths and weaknesses"; (2) The process of change happens from the inside and outside; (3) Self-assessment should be systematic; (4) It is important to define, and conceptualize, the progress. Change needs to be accepted and should be made sustainable.

The Role of Research Ethics (3.B): (1) Data need to be made public; (2) Researchers must get participants' consent for the research; (3) Codes of conduct are very important; (4) Ethical standards can be costly and timely, but are crucial for TTs; (5) TTs should develop standards which are valid across regions in order to lead global collaboration; (6) Building trust with local communities contributes to good outcomes.

Peer Review for Research Quality Enhancement (3.C): (1) Importance of incentives for developing peer review; (2) Quality publishing may improve research quality; (3) Need to identify objectives of the research and who are the peers; (4) Whereas some TTIs are striving towards peer review publishing, others see it as optional; (5) One of the problems is that peer review can be a self-fulfilling prophecy. Some researchers are good in writing policy reviews and working papers but not successful in publishing research in peer-reviewed journals; (6) Peer review requires time and giving money incentives for reviewers. Some TTIs may find it residual; (7) TTs should incentivize peer review process but at the same time understand the demands of the market.

Think Tanks Learning from Each Other (3.D): (1) Funding plays a crucial role in a project's sustainability; (2) It is necessary to identify objectives before collaborating to enhance the experience; (3) TTs should search for peers with whom they can cooperate, however this collaboration should not be enforced.

Open Space: For Discussions on Potential Collaboration

Time: 8:45 – 10:30

Moderator: Valerie Traoré

During the Exchange participants were encouraged to identify the issues which they see as important, articulating their ideas by writing them down on flipcharts provided in the open space. This resulted in the identification of 13 "Hot Topics." Participants of the Open Space voluntarily assigned themselves to particular groups of interest. Each of the "Hot Topics" attracted a group of TT representatives interested in collaboration. The groups were asked to reflect on the following questions: (1) What is the problem? (2) What would be the solution? (3) What are the next steps? This was followed by a 45 minute group discussion, and a presentation in the Plenary Session.

Plenary: Collective Action for Research Quality

Time: 11:00 – 12:15

Moderator: Valerie Traoré

The plenary session was a continuation of the morning session and consisted of 13 presentations from the Open Space groups. Each group selected a group leader, who served as a potential coordinator and contact point for other TTs interested in cooperation. The future of these collaborations is in the hands of the TTs themselves, as TTI has decided to provide them with the space and opportunity, but not to interfere or pressure on TTs pursuing their goals.

List of the "Hot Topics" and Brief Group Descriptions:

1. **Linking demand and supply for setting a research agenda**

Three key elements should be considered when setting a policy research agenda: relevance, capacity, and reputation. TTs should also obtain information from policy makers through mutual dialogue or other means, such as surveys. They should also budget according to their long-term plans.

2. **Disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation**

TTs cooperate to enhance local resilience by bringing diverse knowledge and experience gained in different countries to examine the interface between global, national, subnational, and local levels, by initiating a platform called R2R.

3. **Think tank transparency**

Transparency can be about research quality and/or political involvement. This group distinguishes between transparency as an ongoing process, external and internal transparency of the organization, and being transparent in communicating research. The aim is to create a platform which would provide technical support for TTs willing to communicate their transparency.

4. **Re-inventing funding models**

The aim of the group is to provide peer support for TTs by sharing experience and expertise in identifying potential donors and obtaining funds, given different contexts of fund raising in different regions. The main areas of interests are project based funding and core funding.

5. **TTIs and university community engagement for academic and democratic citizenship**

Relevance (including the connection between the academia and community engagement), lack of research culture in higher education institutions, and weak recognition of the civic purpose of universities are three issues that need to be addressed. This group seeks to contribute to the development of academic citizenship and democratic citizenship through TT, university, and community engagement.

6. **Think Tanks and ethics**

There are internal and external ethical considerations for TTs, with the former referring to the working of organizations themselves, and the latter to relations of TTs with other organizations. The group aims to create a platform to: share their stories and experiences; provide access to document notes, codes, and declarations on research ethics; codify and adopt best practices; and disseminate their knowledge.

7. **Regional collaboration on transboundary research such as trade, water, food security, climate, and history**

While research on food security and energy have been conducted at the national level, there has been little done at the regional level. The group aims to produce comparative analyses based on synthesis papers across regions, to create knowledge useful for national governments and regional officials.

8. **Gender inequality, poverty and environmental degradation**

The main goal of the group is to generate knowledge in collaboration with communities, involving them not as victims but as actors, to develop a common framework of analysis and produce policy relevant outputs.

9. **Capacity building**

To empower TTs capacity building, this group identified three main actions: (1) Mentoring junior researchers by external coaches, (2) Communication and cooperation with other TTs, and (3) Doing research on problems faced by researchers in terms of capacity building and starting customized programs consisting of courses and workshops that would train researchers.

10. **Engaging young people**

"Were you young once? Did you want to change the world once? Did you change the world?" This motto briefly summarizes the main goal of this group, which is empowering youth by: (1) raising awareness, and developing research, effective communication, and problem solving skills among young people; (2) developing a collaborative program across the regions to learn from each other by organizing training courses and promoting leadership through exchange programs.

11. **Reinventing community engagement in research**

The aim of this group is to improve tools and methods of community engaged research so that the research can meet ethical principles and bring about desirable impact.

12. **Economics in Southeastern Asia**

The intention of this group is to form a world-class, sophisticated, open platform promoting evidence, opinions, commentary, and ideas on integration and peace in South Asia, the least integrated region in the world, having nuclear powers and huge trust deficits. Part of the project would be a blog led by five leading TTs in this region (such as IPS, CPD, NCAER, SPDC).

13. **Minority and marginalization in the South Asian countries**

The group seeks to develop a model containing "best practices" to prevent discrimination and marginalization on religious, ethnic, gender and caste in South Asia.

CONCLUSIONS: EVALUATION AND CLOSING REMARKS

Time: 12:30 – 13:00

Moderator: Valerie Traoré
Panelists: Roxana Barrantes (IEP, Peru)
Mustafiz Rahman (CPD, Bangladesh)
Cheikh Oumar (CRES, Senegal)
Jenny Lah (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, US)

Valerie Traoré briefly summarized the Exchange as an opportunity to discuss and explore different aspects of, and perspectives on, research quality. She encouraged the panelists and participants to reflect on "what to take home from the Exchange." Panelists were asked to reflect on the following questions: What do they plan to do differently after these three days? What will they continue doing if they think that they had actually captured that aspect right? Are thinks tanks ready to turn evidences into beliefs? What criteria are used to evaluate TTs from a donor perspective? How can TTs assure their credibility? How can TTs get international reputation? And how was the overall experience of the Exchange?

Dr. **Roxana Barrantes**, IEP, Peru stressed the importance of engaging with different communities, such as the scientific community and policy community, to improve research quality. **Cheikh Oumar**, CRES, Senegal, noted that conducting research is a very interactive process and the quality is not necessarily about the influence. On the contrary, influence is one of the pre-requisites for quality. Speaking from a donor perspective, **Jenny Lah**, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, US, suggested that maintaining a certain standard and reputation allow TTs to have stronger impact on policymakers. This process is reciprocal and dynamic: strong quality research assures policy impact, and policy impact consequently translates to credibility and improves quality research. **Mustafiz Rahman**, CPD, Bangladesh, distinguished two cycles: (1) the research cycle, and (2) the policy making cycle. To make a change, TTs need to blend these two. What matters for TTs is "obtaining outreach and making an impact through seizing the moments and doing quality research."

According to **Cheikh Oumar**, transforming evidence into beliefs is beneficial as long as TTs engage society while carrying on this process, because "politicians make policies for society." He also spoke of the significance of the form: TTs should always adjust form and content for the specific audience. By doing so, TTs can communicate more effectively with policymakers, other stakeholders, and society. Dr. **Roxana Barrantes** elaborated on this, saying that "an idea is like a doll that you have to dress," and different communities require different packaging. All TTs should cooperate with qualified data artists who are able to transform data in different forms that can be adopted for particular cultural and linguistic contexts. **Mustafiz Rahman** spoke of the importance of the content, and establishing credibility and legitimacy: "once a TT establishes credibility and legitimacy, no matter how the data is dressed, it becomes attractive." Attractive presentation of data is secondary to legitimacy, credibility and data quality; it can empower the message, but cannot replace the content.

Jenny Lah agreed that given complexity and multiplicity of factors, it is a challenge for donors to find objective criteria to assess TTs. Among criteria used by donors she listed: (1) peer reviews; (2) policy uptake; (3) relevancy of TTs interests to the existing problems and needs. Elaborating on TT credibility, Dr. **Roxana Barrantes** said that TTs are heterogeneous organizations, hence the need for various efforts to improve research quality and build TT reputations. TTs have to live up to their reputation and need to work on long-term issues, waiting for policy windows to enter the public arena. Engagement with the scientific community can contribute to TTs recognition and reputation. To be recognized on the international stage, the most crucial area for TTs is strong quality research, as **Cheikh Oumar** reminded the group. TTs should also act ethically, and concentrate on globally important issues, such as poverty or issues concerning youth, because "the youth of today will be the politicians of tomorrow." Moreover, TTs should strive to democratize the discussions and debates, and to communicate their messages in a respectful, transparent way. Finally, it was agreed that TTs should learn from each other, which includes reading the works of others, especially in areas of common interest.

Valerie Traoré invited the panelists to share their overall impression of the Exchange. **Cheikh Oumar** said that the Exchange was a wonderful opportunity to learn from each other. Dr **Roxana Barrantes** drew attention to the importance of capacity building, and ensuring relevance, and hoped that the Exchange would empower TTs in both fields. **Mustafiz Rahman** said that the Exchange assured him about the importance of context: the context constantly changes and it is a challenge for the researchers to follow up and understand the environment. Given a dynamic environment with constantly emerging new issues, there is a growing demand for good research and good policy suggestions.

The final reflection was regarding challenges for assuring research quality given heterogeneity across the TTs and a constantly changing environment. **Mustafiz Rahman** listed the following challenges: (1) the institutional life cycle: TTs are on different levels of experience, and the level of their quality differs, because building capacity and credibility is a constant process; (2) funding; and (3) human resources and a constant rotation of qualified researchers.

Dr. Peter Taylor shared his final reflections on the Exchange, saying that it was an important moment to bring all the TTs together in order to exchange and learn about different approaches to outreach, impact, and research. The Exchange created space for various interrelationships: between the people, concepts, tools and methods, all of which need to interrelate in order to improve the research quality and to bring about change. The role of TTs is to convert ideas into practice, and to change them to policies. To bring about that change, strong research quality is central. Moreover, what is crucial is cooperation, partnership, and finding ways to work together, because "your success is our success" and "collectively we can do more and better." Dr. **Peter Taylor** thanked the participants, organizers and hosts of the Exchange, hoping that the Exchange, which was an example of such a setting where many various interactions happen, will bring about future collaborations and positive change.

PARTICIPANTS

Participant	Organization	email	Country
Abdoulaye Diagne	CRES (Consortium pour la Recherche Economique et Sociale)	cres_ucad@yahoo.fr; cres@ucad.sn; cres@cres-sn.org	Senegal
Abid Qaiyum Suleri	SDPI (Sustainable Development Policy Institute)	suleri@sdpi.org; abidsuleri@gmail.com	Pakistan
Adriana Arellano	GRUPO FARO (Fundación para el Avance de las Reformas y las Oportunidades)	aarellano@grupofaro.org	Ecuador
Ajay Mathur	Government of India	amathur@cleanenergynet.in	India
Ajaya Dixit	ISET-N (Institute for Social and Environmental Transistion-Nepal)	adbaluwatar@ntc.net.np; bholu007@gmail.com	Nepal
Akansha Dubey	NCAER (National Council of Applied Economic Research)	adubey1@ncaer.org	India
Alfred BIZOZA	IPAR-Rwanda (Institute of Policy Analysis and Research)	a.bizoza@ipar-rwanda.org	Rwanda
Amy Raub	WORLD Policy Analysis Center UCLA Fielding School of Public Health	araub@ph.ucla.edu	
Andrea Ordonez	Southern Voice	andrea@andreaordonez.org	Ecuador
Andrej Nosko	Think Tank Fund	andrej.nosko@opensocietyfoundations.org	Hungary
Andrew G. Onokerhoraye	CPED (Executive Director, Centre for Population and Environmental Development)	agonoks@yahoo.com; agonoks@cpedng.org	Nigeria
Andrew Preston	DFID	a-preston@dfid.gov.uk	India
Anil Kumar Sharma	NCAER (National Council of Applied Economic Research)	aksharma@ncaer.org	India
Annapoorna Ravichander	CSTEP (Center for Study of Science,	annapoorna@cstep.in	India

	Technology and Policy)		
Anne Wetlesen	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)	anne.wetlesen@norad.no	Norway
Anshu Bharadwaj	CSTEP (Center for Study of Science, Technology and Policy)	anshu@cstep.in	India
Antonio Romero	TTI, IDRC	aromero@idrc.ca	Uruguay
Arthur Bainomugisha	ACODE (Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment)	a.bainomugisha@acode-u.org	Uganda
Assefa Admassie	EEA (Ethiopian Economic Association/Ethiopian Economic Policy Research Institute)	aadmassie@yahoo.com	Ethiopia
Augustus Muluvi	KIPPRA (Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis)	amuluvi@kippra.or.ke	Kenya
Awadhendra Sharan	CSDS (Centre for the Study of Developing Societies)	sharan@csds.in	India
Bekele Shiferaw	Partnership for Economic Policy	b.shiferaw@pep-net.org	Kenya
Ben Hillman	Knowledge Sector Initiative	bhillman@ksi-indonesia.org	Indonesia
Bernard Wood	InDevelop	bwoodcan@gmail.com	Canada
Beryl Leach	International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie)	b.leach@3ieimpact.org	India
Bitrina Diyamett	STIPRO (Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Research Organization)	bitrina.diyamett@stipro.or.tz; bitrind@yahoo.com	Tanzania
Boris Branisa	Fundación INESAD	bbranisa@inesad.edu.bo; borisbranisa@gmail.com	Bolivia
Bruno Martínez	ID (Desarrollo Participación y Ciudadanía)	bmartinez@desarrollo.edu.py	Paraguay

Carmen Ortiz	ASIES (Asociacion de Investigación y Estudios Sociales)	cortiz@asies.org.gt	Guatemala
Carolina Robino	TTI, IDRC	crobino@idrc.ca	Uruguay
Charlotte Alvarenga		charlotte.alvarenga@gmail.com	Guinea Bissau
Cheikh Oumar Ba	IPAR-Senegal (Initiative prospective agricole et rurale)	coba@ipar.sn; coba@refer.sn	Senegal
Chukwuka Onyekwena	CSEA (Centre for the Study of the Economies of Africa)	conyekwena@cseaafrica.org	Nigeria
Craig Bardsley	ESFR (Economic and Social Research Foundation)	Craig.Bardsley@esrc.ac.uk	UK
Cynthia Addoquaye Tagoe	ISSER (Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research)	caddoquayetagoe@ug.edu.gh; candy_tagoe@yahoo.com	Ghana
David Schwartz	IDRC	dschwartz@idrc.ca; mnsengiyumva@idrc.ca	Canada
Dawn Lucas	IDRC	dlucas@idrc.ca; edany@idrc.ca	Canada
Debapriya Bhattacharya	CPD (Centre for Policy Dialogue)	debapriya.bh@gmail.com	Bangladesh
Demirew Getachew	EEA (Ethiopian Economic Association/Ethiopian Economic Policy Research Institute)	demirewget@yahoo.com	Ethiopia
Diakalia Sanogo	TTI, IDRC	dsanogo@idrc.ca	Kenya
Dionisio Borda	CADEP (Centro de Análisis y Difusión de la Economía Paraguaya)	dborda@cadep.org.py	Paraguay
Doudou Ndiaye	CRES (Consortium pour la Recherche Economique et Sociale)	dndiaye@cres-sn.org	Senegal
Dushni Weerakoon	IPS (Institute of Policy Studies of SriLanka)	dushni@ips.lk	Sri Lanka
Eberechukwu Uneze	CSEA (Centre for the Study of the Economies of Africa)	euneze@cseaafrica.org	Nigeria
Elizabeth Brown	Results for Development	ebrown@r4d.org	USA

Elizabeth Laruni	MISR (Makerere Institute of Social Research)	elaruni@googlemail.com	Uganda
Elizabeth McAllister	InDevelop	emcallister@sympatico.ca	Canada
Engr. Job Eronmhonsele	CPED (Executive Director, Centre for Population and Environmental Development)	loyaltyisgood@yahoo.co.uk	Nigeria
Enrique Mendizabal	On Think Tanks	enrique@mendizabal.co.uk	UK
Eric Eboh	Agriculture Policy Research Network	eceboh@yahoo.com	Nigeria
Erin-Renee Keddo	TTI, IDRC	erkeddo@idrc.ca	Canada
Eugenia Kayitesi	IPAR-Rwanda (Institute of Policy Analysis and Research)	e.kayitesi@ipar-rwanda.org ; kayintag@yahoo.com	Rwanda
Fahmida Khatun	CPD (Centre for Policy Dialogue)	fahmida@cpd.org.bd	Banglad esh
Fatou Cissé	CRES (Consortium pour la Recherche Economique et Sociale)	fcisse@cres-sn.org	Senegal
Felix Ankomah Asante	ISSER (Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research)	fasante@hotmail.com; fasante@ug.edu.gh	Ghana
Fernando Masi	CADEP (Centro de Análisis y Difusión de la Economía Paraguaya)	fmasi@cadep.org.py	Paragua y
Fernando Straface	CIPPEC	fstraface@cippec.org	Argentin a
Flaubert Mbiekop	TTI, IDRC	fmbiekop@idrc.ca	Kenya
Florian Bauer	REEEP – Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership	florian.bauer@reeep.org	Austria
Gary Mena	Fundación “ARU”	gmena@aru.org.bo	Bolivia
George Logush	Economic and Education Research Consortium	george.logush@gmail.com	Ukraine
Giuliano Martiniello	MISR (Makerere Institute of Social Research)	gmjuliangrimao@gmail.com	Uganda
Gobinda C. Pal	IIDS (Indian Institute of Dalit Studies)	director@dalitstudies.org.in	India

Goran Buldioski	Think Tank Fund	goran.buldioski@opensocietyfoundations.org	Hungary
Guy Lodge	Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR)	guy.lodge@nuffield.ox.ac.uk	UK
Hana A. El-Ghali	Issam Fares Institute at the American University of Beirut	ha58@aub.edu.lb	Lebanon
Helen Fisher	InDevelop	helenelizabethfisher@gmail.com	Canada
Honourable John Holmes	Canadian Embassy		Canada (Turkey)
Ian Christoplos	InDevelop	ian.christoplos@indevelop.se	Sweden
Ibrahim Kasirye	EPRC (Economic Policy Research Centre)	ikasirye@eprc.or.ug	Uganda
Ibrahima Hathie	IPAR-Senegal (Initiative prospective agricole et rurale)	ihathie@yahoo.com	Senegal
Ifediora Amobi	African Heritage (formerly: African Institute for Applied Economics (AIAE))	iamobi@afriheritage.org; ifediora.amobi@gmail.com	Nigeria
Ihsan Ali Fauzi	PUSAD Paramadina	ihsanaf@paramadina-pusad.or.id	Indonesia
Jai Asundi	CSTEP (Center for Study of Science, Technology and Policy)	anshu@cstep.in	India
Javier Protocarrero	CIES	javier@cies.org.pe	Peru
Jayendra Rimal	ISET-N (Institute for Social and Environmental Transition-Nepal)	jayendra@isetnepal.org.np	Nepal
Jean Mensa	IEA-Ghana (Institute of Economic Affairs)	jeanmensa@ieagh.org; iea@ieagh.org	Ghana
Jenny Lah	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation	jenny.lah@gatesfoundation.org	USA
Jody Heymann	UCLA World Policy Centre	jody.heymann@ph.ucla.edu	USA
John Okidi	TTI, IDRC	jokidi@idrc.ca	Kenya
John Omiti	KIPPRA (Kenya Institute for Public	jmomiti@kippra.or.ke	Kenya

	Policy Research and Analysis)			
Jonathan Stead	Africa Portal, South Africa	Jonathan.Stead@wits.ac.za	South Africa	
Jorge Leonel Henriquez		FOSDEH (Foro Social De Deuda Externa Y Desarrollo de Honduras)		Honduras
José Angel Quirós	FUSADES (Fundación Salvadoreña para la Desarrollo Económica y Social)	jquiros@fusades.org; atrigueros@fusades.org	El Salvador	
José Guillermo Compte	FUNDAUNGO (Fundación Doctor Guillermo Manuel Ungo)		El Salvador	
Julie Lafrance	TTI, IDRC	jlafrance@idrc.ca	Canada	
Karin Fernando	CEPA (Centre for Poverty Analysis)	karin@cepa.lk	Sri Lanka	
Karrine Sanders	Association of Commonwealth Universities Developing Research Uptake in Sub-Saharan Africa Program (DRUSSA)	Karrine.Sanders@acu.ac.uk	UK	
Katerine Saravia	Fundación “ARU”	ksaravia@aru.org.bo	Bolivia	
Katy Harris	Overseas Development Institute	katy.harris@odi.org.uk	UK	
Khalida Ghaus	SPDC (Social Policy and Development Centre)	khalidaghaus@spdc.org.pk	Peru	
Kwame Owino	IEA-Kenya (Insitute of Economic Affairs)	Owinok@ieakenya.or.ke	Kenya	
Laurie Huggett	CommsConsult	laurie@commsconsult.org	USA	
Leonardo Garnier	Policy maker - Costa Rica	leonardogarnier@gmail.com	Costa Rica	
Lykke Andersen	Fundación INESAD	landersen@inesad.edu.bo	Bolivia	
Margarita Sanfeliu	FUSADES (Fundación Salvadoreña para la Desarrollo Económica y Social)	msanfeliu@fusades.org	El Salvador	
María Elena Rivera	FUNDAUNGO (Fundación Doctor Guillermo Manuel Ungo)	me.rivera@fundaungo.org.sv	El Salvador	
Maria Isabel Remy (Marisa)	IEP (Instituto de Estudios Peruanos)	mremy@iep.org.pe	Peru	

Maria Urbina-Fauser	TTI, IDRC	murbina-fauser@idrc.ca	Canada
Martin Benavides	GRADE (Grupo de Análisis para el Desarrollo)	mbenavides@grade.org.pe	Peru
Martin Vlachynsky	Institute of Economic and Social Studies	martin.vlachynsky@iness.sk	Slovakia
Martina Vojtkova	International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie)	mvojtkova@3ieimpact.org	UK
Matthew Harvey	DFID	matthew-harvey@dfid.gov.uk	UK
Mauricio Díaz Burdett	FOSDEH (Foro Social De Deuda Externa Y Desarrollo de Honduras)	mdb@fosdeh.net	Honduras
Meena Nair	PAC (Public Affairs Centre)	meena@pacindia.org	India
Meghan Lloyd-Laney	CommsConsult	Megan@commsconsult.org; commsconsult@gn.apc.org	UK
Mezgebe Mihretu Woldegebriel	EDRI (Ethiopian Development Research Institute)	arisema2001@yahoo.com; mezgebe.m@epau.gov.et	Ethiopia
Miguel Jaramillo Banaante	GRADE (Grupo de Análisis para el Desarrollo)	mjaramillo@grade.org.pe	Peru
Minhaj Mahmud	BIGD (BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (former IGS))	minhajmahmud@gmail.com	Bangladesh
Miriam Omolo	IEA-Kenya (Insitute of Economic Affairs)	miriamomolo@ieakenya.or.ke	Kenya
Muhammad Asif Iqbal	SPDC (Social Policy and Development Centre)	asifiqbal@spdc.org.pk	Pakistan
Musambya Mutambala	STIPRO (Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Research Organization)	musambya.mutambala@stipro.or.tz	Tanzania
Mustafizur Rahman	CPD (Centre for Policy Dialogue)	mustafiz@cpd.org.bd	Bangladesh
Nicholas Awortwi	PASGR	awortwi@pasgr.org	Kenya
Nidhi S Sabharwal	Former IIDS; Centre for Policy Research in Higher Education	nidhi@dalitstudies.org.in	India
Ogudu Kalu Uko	African Heritage (formerly: African	ouko@afriheritage.org; sunnkay2000@gmail.com	Nigeria

	Institute for Applied Economics (AIAE))		
Olga Loarca	ASIES (Asociacion de Investigación y Estudios Sociales)	oloarca@asies.org.gt	Guatemala
Orazio Bellettini	GRUPO FARO (Fundación para el Avance de las Reformas y las Oportunidades)	obellettini@grupofaro.org	Ecuador
Oumar Ndao		omarndao@gmail.com	Senegal
Partha Mukhopadhyay	CPR (Centre for Policy Research)	president.cpr@cprindia.org; partha@cprindia.org	India
Paul Okwi	TTI, IDRC	pokwi@idrc.ca	Kenya
Paulo Gomes		pgomes@constelor.com; charlotte.alvarenga@gmail.com; hmendes@pgandpartners.com	Guinea Bissau
Penda Mbow		penda.mbow5@gmail.com	Senegal
Peter Da Costa	Hewlett Foundation Consultant	peter.dacosta@gmail.com	Kenya
Peter Evans	DFID	peter-evans@dfid.gov.uk	UK
Peter Taylor	TTI, IDRC	ptaylor@idrc.ca	Canada
Pierre Jacquet	Global Development Network	pjacquet@gdn.int	France
Priyanthi Fernando	CEPA (Centre for Poverty Analysis)	priyanthi@cepa.lk	Sri Lanka
Raghavan Suresh	PAC (Public Affairs Centre)	director@pacindia.org	India
Ramona Angelescu Naqvi	Global Development Network	rangelescu@gdn.int	Romania
Ransford Gyampo	IEA-Ghana (Institute of Economic Affairs)	momensah@gmail.com; michaeloforimensah@ieagh.org	Ghana
Richard Darlington	WonkComms	R.Darlington@ippr.org	UK
Rodolfo josé Elías Acosta	ID (Desarrollo Participación y Ciudadanía)	relias@desarrollo.edu.py;	Paraguay
Rodulio Perdomo	FOSDEH (Foro Social De Deuda Externa Y Desarrollo de Honduras)	rodulio.perdomo@gmail.com	Honduras
Roman Mogilevskii	the Institute for Public Policy and Administration at the	roman.mogilevskii@ucentralasia.org	Kyrgyzstan

	University of Central Asia (Aga Khan)		
Roxana Barrantes	IEP (Instituto de Estudios Peruanos)	roxbarrantes@iep.org.pe	Peru
Ruth Levine	William and Flora Hewlett Foundation	rlevine@hewlett.org; DRobichau@hewlett.org	USA
Ruthpearl Wanjiru Ng'ang'a	APHRC	rnganga@aphrc.org	Kenya
Saman Kelegama	IPS (Institute of Policy Studies of SriLanka)	kelegama@ips.lk	Sri Lanka
Samar Verma	TTI, IDRC	sverma@idrc.ca	India
Sami Atallah	Lebanese Center for Policy Studies	sami.atallah@lcps-lebanon.org; sami.atallah@gmail.com	Lebanon
Samuel Wangwe	REPOA (Research on Poverty Alleviation)	swangwe@repoa.or.tz	Tanzani a
Sanghmitra S Acharya	IIDS (Indian Institute of Dalit Studies)	sanghmitra.acharya@gmail.com	India
Sanjay Kumar	CSDS (Centre for the Study of Developing Societies)	director@csds.in; sanjay@csds.in	India
Santiago Cueto	GRADE (Grupo de Análisis para el Desarrollo)	scueto@grade.org.pe	Peru
Sarah Lucas	William and Flora Hewlett Foundation	slucas@hewlett.org	USA
Sarah Ssewanyana	EPRC (Economic Policy Research Centre)	ssewanyana@eprc.or.ug	Uganda
Saumya Shrivastava	CBGA (Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability)	saumya@cbgaindia.org	India
Seema Bhatia-Panthaki	TTI, IDRC	spanthaki@idrc.ca	India
Shannon Sutton	TTI, IDRC	ssutton@idrc.ca	Canada
Shekhar Shah	NCAER (National Council of Applied Economic Research)	sshah@ncaer.org; shekharshah@gmail.com	India
Shweta Srinivasan	CSTEP (Center for Study of Science, Technology and Policy)	shweta@cstep.in	India
Sonja Stojanovic	Belgrade Center of Security Studies	sonja.stojanovic@bezbednost.org	Serbia

Stephen McGurk	IDRC	smcgurk@idrc.ca; nleguerrier@idrc.ca	Canada
Stephen Yeo	Consultant - Think Tank Exchange	jsyeo@btinternet.com	UK
Subrat Das	CBGA (Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability)	subrat@cbgaindia.org	India
Sue Szabo	IDRC	sszabo@idrc.ca; alouiseize@idrc.ca	Canada
Sultan Hafeez Rahman	BIGD (BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (former IGS))	hafeez.dhaka@gmail.com	Bangladesh
Susan Merpaw	TTI, IDRC	smerpaw@idrc.ca	Canada
Susan Nicolai	Overseas Development Institute	s.nicolai@odi.org.uk	UK
Udan Fernando	CEPA (Centre for Poverty Analysis)	udan@cepa.lk	Sri Lanka
Vagisha Gunasekera	CEPA (Centre for Poverty Analysis)	vagisha@cepa.lk	Sri Lanka
Valerie Traoré	Niyel	vtraore@niyel.net	Senegal
Vanesa Weyrauch	Politics and Ideas	v_weyrauch@yahoo.com	Argentina
Vaqar Ahmed	SDPI (Sustainable Development Policy Institute)	vaqar@sdpi.org	Pakistan
Vidhyandika Perkasa	Centre for Strategic and International Studies	vidhyandika.perkasa@csis.or.id	Indonesia
Werner Hernani Limarino	Fundación “ARU”	whl@aru.org.bo	Bolivia
Wesley Grubbs	Pitch Interactive	wes@pitchinteractive.com	USA
Will Paxton	Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR)	willp77@live.co.uk	UK
Winstons Muhwezi	ACODE (Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment)	winstons.muhwezi@acode-u.org	Uganda
Zitto Kabwe		zittokabwe@gmail.com; jruhwanya@gmail.com	Tanzania