STORIES OF INFLUENCE

TTI's Methodology for Stories of Influence:
IDRC's Categories of Influence & ODI's RAPID

The Think Tank Initiative (TTI) Stories of Influence are guided by two approaches to evaluation: IDRC's Categories of Influence and the ODI's RAPID framework. This document summarizes how these frameworks inform our approach to understanding the manner in which the TTI-funded institutions might contribute, through their research and analysis, to influencing policy.

It should be noted that we have adapted these two models to suit our approach, and do not necessarily touch on all elements of the frameworks in these stories. Instead, these evaluative models help us ensure consistency and thoroughness in our storytelling.

1. Categories of Influence

In his book <u>Knowledge to Policy</u>, Carden (2009)[i] lists three categories of influence designed to describe how research might affect policy. These are:

> *Expanding policy capacities:* Research can support the development of innovative ideas and the skills to communicate them, and develop new talent for doing issues-based research and analysis. In other words, research can improve the institutional framework surrounding policy-making.

> *Broadening policy horizons:* Research can introduce new ideas to the agenda, ensure that knowledge is provided to decision-makers in a form they can use, and nourish dialogues among researchers and decision-makers.

> *Affecting policy regimes:* Research findings can modify the development of laws, regulations, programs, or structures. In actual fact, such a process is rare and normally circuitous, and only in a few instances can change be attributed, visibly and directly, to the inspiration of research alone. [ii]

We categorize the profiled TTI-funded institutions according to these groupings. These titles can be found within the header of each story.
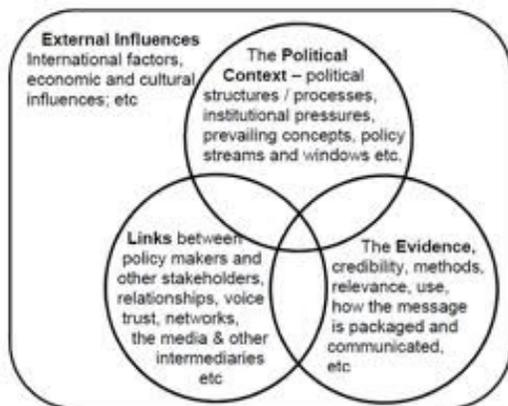
2. RAPID Framework

The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) developed the Research and Policy in Development (RAPID) programme in order to "better understand how research can contribute to pro-poor policies and improve the use of research and evidence in development policy and practice."[iii]

RAPID asserts that there is a two-way process between research and policy, shaped by multiple relations and reservoirs of knowledge. The framework clusters the issues around four broad areas:

- ➤ Context: Politics and Institutions
- ➤ Evidence: Approach and Credibility
- ➤ Links: Influence and Legitimacy
- ➤ External Influences: Enablers/Drivers

Figure 1: The ODI RAPID Framework for Research to Policy Links

Source: Young, John (2005)

The RAPID framework allows us to assess the mechanics of the research to policy process at these profiled institutions, and we use this approach to ensure due diligence in our storytelling. While we do not explicitly list all of the RAPID elements in our stories, we include aspects of the model that are relevant to the story being told.

---

[i] Carden, Fred (2009). Knowledge to Policy: Making the Most of Development Research. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre.

[ii] Carden, Fred (2005). *Capacities, Contexts, Conditions: the Influence of IDRC – Supported Research on Policy Processes.* Evaluation Highlight #5, International Development Research Centre.

[iii] Young, John (2005). *Bridging Research and Policy: The RAPID Approach*. Overseas Development Institute. Accessed 5 March 2013; available at: http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/261.pdf