Workshop I B: "Strategic outreach and research communications – tactics on policy impact"
Time: 11.00-13.00, 19th June

Resource Persons: Owen Barder (CGD Europe), Navdip Dhariwal (MiranFilms, South Africa), Raghavan Suresh (PAC, India), Julie LaFrance (TTI) (Facilitator)

Preamble
Think tanks are best positioned to understand the policy context within their field and are continuously looking for new ways to build relationships and disseminate research with policymakers, civil society and the media. These relationships provide avenues to share research in order to get issues on the agenda or stimulate policy debates. In order to seize windows of opportunity for influencing policies, think tanks use a wide variety of communications strategies, approaches and tools to effectively communicate research results and strengthen links with policy actors and with the public.

Objectives
The workshop will:
1. provide a selection of methods and tools for effective policy outreach
2. share experiences of tactics and approaches that enhance, and inhibit, policy outreach
3. highlight communication techniques that help think tanks to sustain their outreach efforts

Approach and outcomes
In pursuit of these objectives, this highly interactive workshop will focus on sharing of experiences on tactics, tools and approaches that have been used by participating think tanks to communicate research to target audiences in the policy arena. To set the stage, the session will kick off with a brief summary of the key findings from the 2011 TTI Policy Engagement and Communications survey. A role play exercise, with self-selected volunteers taking part, will provide an active, stimulating and fun way to get all participants thinking about their organization’s tactics for tailoring their research findings to the interests of their stakeholders. The role play will be followed by a metacard analysis in small groups, after which the groups will share findings.

At the end of the workshop, the following outcomes are expected:

- Resource persons and participants will have enriched their perspectives on the most effective methods and tools for communicating research to a variety of actors
- Context-specific successes and challenges for communicating research and policy outreach will have been identified, and solutions for addressing some of the challenges will emerge

A summary report of the workshop documenting a list of good practices for improving organizational governance of think tanks will be produced.