Workshop II B: "What difference are we making? Analyzing and measuring the impact of think tanks"

Time: 14.00-16.00, 19th June

Resource Persons: Lorena Alcazar (GRADE, Peru) and co-authors of case studies on measuring impact; Zenda Ofir (Evalnet, South Africa); John Okidi (TTI) (Facilitator)

Preamble
Think tanks are primarily applied policy research and advocacy organizations that are keen to demonstrate the roles they play in informing and influencing public policy debates, public policy choices and public policy decisions. Generally, think tanks around the world are at different levels regarding the capability to formally monitor and assess the impact of their contributions in development processes. This TTI Exchange workshop is a forum to explore and share ideas and experience in undertaking the challenging task of measuring and analyzing monitorable indicators of the impacts of think tanks.

Objectives
The workshop will:
1) share ways of using indicators and metrics to monitor and measure impact
2) compare the value of alternative measures of impact in the public domain
3) support development of capacity in monitoring and measuring impact

Approach and outcomes
In pursuit of the above objectives, the workshop will feature presentations of practical approaches and experience that illustrate the challenges and means of empirically obtaining and analyzing information to demonstrate the roles played by think tanks in development processes. A series of case studies from TTI supported institutions in Africa, Latin America and South Asia will be presented to provide insights on how some institutions are dealing with the important task of capturing the evidence of the difference they are making as think tanks. The case studies are grounded in a literature review and an analytical framework that was produced by GRADE, a TTI supported institution. Highlights of the literature review and analytical framework will precede the case study presentations, in turn followed by a presentation based on the experience of Zenda Ofir, an experienced professional in the field of monitoring and evaluation. The presentations should provoke constructive feedback from the audience that corroborate or challenge the approaches tabled in the presentations, leading to meaningful follow up discussions. The different contexts in which think tanks operate may imply variations in approaches to capture information on, and to measure and analyze, the impact of think tanks. Thus, there will be value in breaking up the workshop into smaller subgroups to promote in-depth discussions of pertinent issues that the workshop co-facilitators will identify from the presentations. A plenary and wrap up session will conclude the workshop.

At the end of the workshop, the following outcomes are expected:
• Resource persons and participants will have enriched their perspectives on how the impact of thinks can measured and analyzed
• Crosscutting and context-specific challenges will have been identified, and tested solutions or concrete ideas will have been shaped to help promote a culture of capturing impacts
• Participants will gain specific takeaways that they may adapt to support impact measurement and analysis in their respective contexts
• A summary report of the workshop will be produced as part of the overall Exchange report