Making the Most of Research

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Rationale

IDRC will foster and support the production, dissemination and application of research results leading to policies and technologies that enhance the lives of people in developing countries.
Study Questions

1. What does IDRC mean by influencing public policy?

2. Where has IDRC-supported research done so?

3. What factors have contributed to and inhibited policy influence?
Elements of the Study

- Background Research & Framework
- Case Studies
- Analysis
- Findings (presentation)
- www.idrc.ca/evaluation/policy
Framework

- Enhancing Policy Capacities
- Broadening Policy Horizons
- Affecting Policy Regimes
Case Studies

- Purposive sample
- Across Program areas and regions
- 25 cases, 67 projects, $53 million
- From $60,000 up to $19 million
- 22 Final, 3 Draft
Analysis

- Regional and Ottawa workshops
- Advisory Committee
- Issue analysis
- Cross-case coding and analysis
LABOR BROKOVICH

When image is threatened!


HIT SONG: WHO LET THE SMOG OUT!!
Elements of Analysis

- Confluence and Influence
  1. IDRC Inputs
  2. IDRC’s view of its role
  3. Intent
  4. Context
  5. Gender
  6. Partnerships and Networks
  7. Communication/Dissemination
  8. Time
Context

- Interplay among:
  a. Demand
  b. Advocacy
  c. Leadership

1. Clear policy maker need
2. Government interest and leadership gap
3. Research interest
4. Emergent issue
5. Government disinterest
Context (continued)

➢ Has an influence on:
   a. Communication strategies
   b. Research focus
   c. Institutionalization

➢ Reflected in:
   a. Funding inputs
   b. Perception of our role
   c. Time
Factors in the Context

- Stability of policy making structures
- Policy maker capacity
- Governance structures:
  - Decentralized vs. government control
- Special situations:
  - Countries in transition
- External pressure
- Project:
  - Turnover
  - Clarity in expectations
  - Clarity in governance
Partnerships and Networks

- Sharing knowledge across boundaries
- Types: capacity and advocacy
- Wide partnerships
- Coordination is key
- Policy makers with authority
- Partnerships at the design stage
- Vest ownership with decisionmakers
- Long-term
Communication

- Targets, Formats, Demand & Timing
- Communication through people
  - Researcher entrepreneurship
  - Policymakers as researchers
  - Finding allies
- Communication through information
  - Passing on the information
  - Dialogue around the findings
  - Follow-up with policy makers
IDRC Inputs

- More money does not mean more policy influence
- Other factors:
  - IDRC approach and philosophy
  - Intellectual contributions (knowledge of field, policy processes, context)
  - Technical contributions (monitoring, follow-up, linkages with other organizations)
  - Previous history with recipient
  - Development projects as part of the research
Perception of IDRC Role

- Supporting research
- Levelling the playing field
- Increasing capacity of policymakers
- Maintaining our principles
- Supporting recipients to influence policy
Intent

• No 1:1 correspondence between intent and influence
• In general influence is more likely with intent, particularly if intent is shared by IDRC and researchers
• Intent does not automatically translate into influence
• Clarity is key on:
  • Level of influence intended
  • Timeline expected
Gender

- 2 Projects with gender emphasis
  - Multi-pronged strategies
  - Learning loops

- Gender vs women
  - Myth: « women get it, men don’t »

- More effort required
  - Learning from doing
Time

➢ Research influence takes time
  • Short projects have long histories

➢ Opportunities need to be seized
  • Project flexibility

➢ Related factors
  • Researcher capacity, Gov’t interest
  • Project objectives
  • Preparing the ground
  • Context
In Conclusion

- Presentation of Cases
- Reflections by our Panel
- Dialogue and discussion