A Study of Policy Influence: The G-24 Research Program

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Introducing G-24

The G-24 is an intergovernmental group of 24 countries which coalesce to negotiate international financial and monetary issues. Established in 1971.

Initially a UN initiative, IDRC became involved in supporting the research program in 1988.
The Methodological Process

- Project Coordinators
- Policy Makers
- Project Officers
- Researchers
- Other Stakeholders
Objectives of the Research Program

• To enable developing countries to participate effectively in debates and deliberations on financial and monetary issues

• To enhance the understanding of developing countries policy-makers

• To raise awareness outside developing countries of the need to introduce the “development dimension” in global financial governance
Achievements at a glance

- Production of solid technical analysis for negotiations with the WB and IMF
- Provision of warning signals to keep members alerted on emerging issues
- Provision of fresh ideas for the international public policy community as well as for academics
- The glue that held the G-24 together
- Multiyear funding particularly helpful for planning
First Imprint
G.K. Helleiner 1991-1999

• Very active Research Director
• Involved in meetings with G-24 Ministers
• Brought about several meetings with G-9
• Galvanizer of strategically oriented research outputs
• Involved in increasing ownership of the research program by the member countries themselves
  – Contribution to funding
  – Creation of a Technical Group in 1994 to guide demand-driven outputs
  – Production of short position papers for Executive Directors
  – Creation of Liaison Office in 1997

➢ GLITCHES in the area of dissemination and communications
Passing of the Torch
Dani Rodrik 1999-2003

New research objectives

• The “development dimension”
• A paradigm change
• Different authors: influential academics in the North
• Wider audience beyond the Executive Directors
Dilemmas Opened

• The role of the research coordinator: leader or follower?
• Who owns the research program?
• Who is the research coordinator accountable to?
  - UNCTAD as Executive Agency
  - The G-24 Ministers and Executive Directors
• The role of research: long term or immediate impact?
• Perceptions of policy influence: a linear (direct) process or an indirect process of circulation and percolation?
Assessing Policy Influence

- **Expanding policy capacities**: detailed policy briefs spelling out dilemmas, cost and benefit of options
- **Affecting policy regimes**: a long term goal in which the research program cannot be singled out
- **Expanding policy horizons**:
  - new ideas on the agenda
  - broader understanding of issues

*The most important form of influence attributed to the research program*
Some Lessons

• “The longer and more academic the research papers are, the less likely they are to be useful”

• Research must be seen as instrumental. It must follow the negotiations and be timely.

• Dissemination is important but must be tailored to the type of research and at key points of the policy process.

• A continuous mechanism that brings together researchers with policymakers will enhance policy relevant questions from researchers and will alert policymakers about potential “goodies” in store.