

Influence of Research on Public Policy
Workshop Report #1:
The Acacia Cases
Johannesburg
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Executive Summary

Policy influence is an important target of IDRC's programming framework. Although the Centre has gained considerable experience in supporting policy inquiry over many years, it has not yet clearly articulated what it means by "policy influence" or "policy impact"; nor has it developed a systematic, corporate understanding of its successes, limitations, and the factors that either facilitate or inhibit policy influence. To address this, IDRC's Evaluation Unit is currently conducting a study to examine the following three questions: (1) What constitutes policy influence in IDRC's experience; (2) To what degree, and in what ways, has IDRC-supported research influenced public policy; and (3) What factors and conditions have facilitated or inhibited the public policy influence potential of IDRC-supported research projects.

As part of this evaluation, a series of 25 case studies covering projects in over 20 countries were conducted which encompass the range of research and geographic areas covered by the Centre's programming. Upon completion of these case studies, the Evaluation Unit planned and organized a series of regional workshops in order to provide an opportunity for IDRC staff and partners to: 1) verify and confirm that the information in the reports was accurate; and 2) reflect on these cases in terms of what happened, how and why.

The first of these workshops was held in Johannesburg on November 8 & 9, 2002 and addressed the four Acacia case studies – Senegal, South Africa, Mozambique and Uganda. Seventeen people participated in this workshop and included both IDRC Acacia and other program staff, and IDRC partners or persons connected to Acacia projects but external to IDRC. This report documents the purpose and objectives of the workshop, summarizes the presentations and the issues highlighted during discussions and exercise sessions, and documents the workshop outputs.

Mme. Ramata Thioune, of IDRC, presented the Acacia - Senegal case. Dr. Zenda Ofir, an independent consultant, presented a cross-case comparison of the remaining three cases: Acacia - South Africa, Mozambique and Uganda. Presentations and discussions focused on the project contexts, strategies and activities to influence policy, the types of influence perceived to have occurred, and on the factors that were believed to have facilitated or inhibited policy influence. Both presenters concluded that policy influence had occurred to a lesser or greater degree, in each of the cases.

In general, most participants felt that the data and findings presented were both accurate and useful. Further, most felt that a case had been successfully made that Acacia had influenced policy, particularly at the national level.

1.0 Purpose and Objectives of the Workshop

Policy influence is an important target of IDRC's programming framework. Although the Centre has gained considerable experience in supporting policy inquiry over many years, it has not yet clearly articulated what it means by "policy influence" or "policy impact"; nor has it developed a systematic, corporate understanding of its successes, limitations, and the factors that either facilitate or inhibit policy influence. To address this, IDRC's Evaluation Unit is conducting a study to examine the following three questions: (1) What constitutes policy influence in IDRC's experience; (2) To what degree, and in what ways, has IDRC-supported research influenced public policy; and (3) What factors and conditions have facilitated or inhibited the public policy influence potential of IDRC-supported research projects.

As part of this evaluation, a series of 25 case studies covering projects in over 20 countries were conducted which encompass the range of research and geographic areas covered by the Centre's programming. The cases represent IDRC-supported research projects that were designed, intended or expected to somehow contribute to the formulation and the implementation of public policy. Upon completion of these case studies, the Evaluation Unit planned and organized a series of regional workshops in order to provide an opportunity for IDRC staff and partners to:

- (1) Verify and confirm that the information in the reports was accurate; and
- (2) Reflect on these cases in terms of what happened, how and why.

It was envisaged that this reflection and learning would deepen the interpretation and analysis of each of the cases from both a regional perspective, as well as from an organizational perspective. Participation in these regional analysis workshops usually included the consultants who conducted the cases, project leaders and research partners, Program Officers from the region and headquarters, Regional Directors, one or two "experts" from the region, and one or two members of the evaluation team to assist with the design, logistics and facilitation of the workshop.

The first of these workshops was held in Johannesburg on November 8 & 9, 2002 and addressed the four Acacia case studies – Senegal, South Africa, Mozambique and Uganda. This report documents the purpose and objectives of the workshop, the issues highlighted and the outputs. Except for the small group sessions, the workshop was audiotaped with a transcript provided. This enabled the evaluation team to capture the discussions and learning that occurred throughout the workshop as a set of data for further analysis. This workshop report was written from the transcript.

2.0 Participants¹ and Workshop Organization

There were 17 participants and two facilitators present at the workshop. Of the 17 participants, 8 are IDRC program staff and 9 are project participants and researchers. These 9 partners and researchers were invited to participate as “experts” in the ICT for development field within the various African regions in which IDRC works and included Dr. Zenda Ofir, the consultant who conducted three of the four case studies. Terry Smutylo (Director) and Stephanie Neilson of IDRC’s Evaluation Unit co-facilitated the workshop.

The two-day workshop was designed to provide participants the opportunity to:

- Review and familiarize themselves with the cases;
- Test the cases against a framework outlining three possible types of policy influence; and
- Consider the determinants for the identified types of policy influence to occur.

Specifically, the agenda incorporated the following sessions:

- Case Presentations by the consultant/officer responsible for preparing the cases, followed by question/discussion periods to verify that the contents contained in the case reports are accurate and to share ideas.
- Case Reviews where participants formed 4 small groups representing the 4 case countries being discussed (i.e., South Africa, Senegal, Mozambique and Uganda) and developed a poster to illustrate the ICT policy process in that country using “a theatrical production” as the main impetus.
- Lindquist Typology session to explore the types of policy influence in each case. The typology was presented by Stephanie Neilson and was followed by a plenary discussion and small group work. The results of the group work were shared in plenary.
- Exercise to identify the determinants of policy influence by identifying those factors, within the context or the project strategy, that are perceived to either contribute to or inhibit the influence of research on policy. This was started in plenary and then 2 groups were formed to identify contributing and inhibiting factors for two specific types of research project: 1) ICT policy projects and 2) action research projects.

¹ For a list of participants and their coordinates please see Appendix 1.

3.0 Overview and Summary of Case Presentations

The objective of this session was to provide an opportunity for participants to discuss the contents of the four Acacia case studies in order to verify that they are accurate, particularly in relation to:

- (1) the project context, including both IDRC and recipient contexts, country issues and issues related to other relevant players; and
- (2) the strategies and activities that the project engaged in to meet its objectives.

The four case studies were presented in two presentations. Mme. Ramata Thioune of IDRC presented the Acacia - Senegal case study, which she co-authored with consultant Khamate Sene. Dr. Zenda Ofir, an independent consultant, presented her cross-case comparison of the remaining three cases: Acacia - South Africa, Mozambique and Uganda. Both presentations were followed by discussions where participants discussed the accuracy of information provided in the case studies and engaged in further analysis of all four cases.

In general, most participants felt that the data and findings presented were both accurate and useful. Further, most felt that a case had been successfully made that Acacia had influenced policy, particularly at the national level.

3.1 Acacia in Senegal Case Presentation by Mme. Ramata Thioune, IDRC.

The Projects

The Senegal case study examined 4 IDRC-supported Acacia projects in Senegal:

- The Acacia Strategy and its Permanent Secretariat (SAAC);
- Youth Cyberspace in Secondary Schools (GEEP);
- ICT Support for the Gender Equality Program in Senegal (Joint Parenting);
- The Role of ICTs in Decentralization Policy (SAFEFOD).

The Context

Key characteristics of the Senegalese policy context within which the Acacia program was run include:

- Strategic choices at the national level:
 - decentralization; and
 - a sectoral approach to development.
- The ICT context in Senegal:
 - multiple actors and multiple initiatives which are not coordinated;
 - good telecommunication infrastructure;
 - a declared political will to have ICT policy; and
 - as yet no integrative ICT strategy/policy.

What is Policy Influence?

The study used the Lindquist concept of policy influence as well as respondents' perspectives of what policy influence constitutes in its analysis. According to respondents, policy influence includes:

- raising awareness;
- lobbying;
- disseminating information;
- capacity building of “policy actors”;
- networking.

Intent

In three of the projects there was “no declared intent” to influence policy according to project documents and project team members, although according to the IDRC project POs, intent was implicit for at least two of those projects.

Perceived Policy Influence

Irrespective of intent, influence was perceived by respondents to have occurred in all four projects, and in the majority of cases this influence was both on institutions (e.g., the Ministry of Education; accelerated implementation of a regulatory body for telecommunications) and individuals (e.g., Ministers, the Prime Minister, women).

All three dimensions of Lindquist's policy influence definitions are illustrated by the Senegal case (i.e., “Expanding Policy Capacity”; “Broadening Policy Horizons”; and “Influencing Policy Regimes”) as are additional definitions put forth by the respondents (e.g., lobbying).

Contributing Factors

Factors identified which were perceived to have enabled or inhibited policy influence related to a number of areas including project design and methodology (e.g., composition of the advisory committee; participatory approach; dissemination reach; activities used to influence; appropriateness of tools), project team experience, and to a lesser extent the political and ICT policy context within which the projects occurred (e.g., beneficiaries' interest and need, and resistance from religious groups in the Joint Parenting project). The relevance and implications of some other characteristics of the project context on the potential to influence policy were explored in more detail in the discussion that followed the presentation.

A summary of the results of the case study as presented, covering the intent to influence policy, the perceived influence, and some factors believed to have enabled and inhibited the potential to influence for each project is presented in Table 1 below.

Gender Issues

Finally, the case study looked at the gender dimension of Acacia -Senegal. Gender is a crosscutting issue in IDRC and also a strategic vision at the program level in Acacia. Mme. Thioune reported that the SAAC was initially unable to implement this vision systematically and is now implementing a project specifically designed to integrate the gender dimension into Acacia.

Mme. Thioune noted that at the project level, there are no systematic tools or control mechanisms in place at IDRC to ensure that gender is actually integrated into projects. Acacia has tried to address this lack of guidelines by implementing a “women-dedicated project” (e.g., Joint Parenting) and by adding specific “gender components” to ongoing projects (e.g., GEEP). The results of these initiatives are not yet available.

Table 1: Summary of Senegal Case Study Results Presented

	SAAC	GEEP	Joint Parenting	SAFEFOD
Expected output	Strategic framework for ICT activities and projects.	Introducing ICT in schools by the Min. of Education.	Change in family law.	Effectiveness for the local leaders' work.
Intent to influence policy: respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implicit in the project objectives (i.e., to influence policy makers and ICT actors). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no declared intent (according to documents or project team); • IDRC PO: intent implicit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no declared intent (according to documents or project leader); • IDRC PO: intent implicit; • other project partners²: intent to indirectly influence family law. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no declared intent (according to documents or project team); • IDRC PO: influence was not primary intent of project; • may indirectly influence the policy process.
Intent: Lindquist	Project objectives refer to “means” for achieving influence, rather than direct attempt to influence.	(intent to influence policy not declared)	Yes intent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • empower women against discrimination; • put pressure on policy and lawmakers. 	
Perceived Influence : respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on institutions in Senegal (accelerated implement'n of ART³; & Telemedicine) & other West African countries (helped implementation of NICI⁴ plans); • on people directly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on institutions in other sectors in Senegal (Min. of Educ; UNFPA- national union); • on people directly involved in policy making process (e.g., former Min. of Education & 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on Prime Minister (introduced proposal to Parliament to change family law to be gender sensitive); possibly on women's groups, NGOs and religious teachers, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on national institution (Direction de l'autonomisation et du Fichier); (no influence on local institutions) • international institutions (e.g., WB, willing to

² e.g., women's groups, consultants

³ regulatory body for telecommunication in Senegal

⁴ NICI= National ICT Communication Initiative

Table 1: Summary of Senegal Case Study Results Presented

	SAAC	GEEP	Joint Parenting	SAFEFOD
	<p>involved in policy making process and project activities (e.g., Former Min. of Com. and ICT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on people indirectly involved via dissemination of project results. 	<p>coordinator of Ed. Comm. for ICT introductions in schools);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on people directly involved in policymaking process (e.g., teachers, researchers, school admin). 	<p>researchers, & journalists.</p>	<p>disseminate tools to communities);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on the President of Local Community Institutions; on the Director of Direction de l'autonomisation et du Fichier.
Enabling factors: respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> participatory approach in project implementation; involvement of policy people in the SAAC process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GEEP team part of educ. system & involved in educ. policy design; involved policy makers in project; GEEP well networked; project participated in nat. & int'l fora; wide and targeted dissem. of results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> beneficiaries' interest and need; wide and targeted dissem. of information; lobbying: policy makers & parliamentarians; networking of actors; PL's and partners' experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> project products.
Inhibiting factors: respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> heterogeneity of SAAC actors (different visions); AAC more emphasis on raising awareness, less on lobbying. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of ICT precludes participation of illiterate women; resistance from religious groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> not enough dissemination activities of product; not enough involvement of policy makers in project.

3.2 Acacia in Mozambique, Uganda, and South Africa Case Presentation by Dr. Zenda Ofir, Evalnet.

This presentation offered a comparative analysis of the Mozambique, Uganda, and South Africa case studies. Dr. Ofir noted that she is still finalizing all case reports and that at this point the South African case study is the least complete. She also pointed out that given the limited time to present three cases and the comparative nature of the presentation, she would necessarily have to remain at the conceptual level on most points rather than delve into detail.

The Contexts

Dr. Ofir opened with a general description of the contexts within which the Acacia program was undertaken in each of the countries, especially in relation to the stability of the government and its institutions, the countries' economic and geopolitical characteristics, and the context, milestones and players in both the political and ICT policy arena in each country.

The contexts are important as they set the stage for what Dr. Ofir calls the "policy window" in each country - that is, those conditions or factors that made it easy or appropriate for policy influence to happen at a particular time in a country.

Of note were the similarities in context between Mozambique and Uganda, for example in terms of war and political unrest, GDP growth rate, population size and percentage living in rural areas, the role of government and the level of expertise in the ICT field. The transition from apartheid after 1994 in South Africa lead to a number of policy and restructuring processes which sets this country in quite a different context than Mozambique and Uganda.

Policy Windows

The policy windows for the three case study countries were described in terms of:

- The international influence [on that country];
- The national environment;
- The individual and institutional efforts [in that country]; and
- The policy environment [in that country].

The factors opening up the policy windows for Mozambique and Uganda around 1995-1997 are almost identical. For example, factors relating to the international influence such as trends regarding the exposure of leaders to international ICT trends, encouragement to focus on ICTs, and financial and technical support were similar between the two countries. Similarities were also noted in terms of stability and growth after devastation, government leadership in search of development mechanisms and a growing awareness of ICTs, a focus on poverty alleviation and development, and a very important role played by individuals and institutions to demonstrate expertise and potential benefits of ICT. In Uganda there may have been a stronger push from the private sector than occurred in Mozambique, although this is difficult to determine.

Consistent with the differences in context, the factors seen as opening up the policy window for South Africa were somewhat different from those in Mozambique and Uganda. For example, in terms of international support, IDRC's support of the ANC in exile helped to open the window of opportunity for IDRC to play a role in ICT policy influence. Further, there was a greater need in South Africa for greater development in the ICT field in order for South Africa to position itself as a player within rapid global development. A number of other factors, including the prioritization by the ANC of ICTs as an area for development, the shift from an authoritarian to consultative government focusing on the needs of the majority, and particularly strong civil society organizations exerting great influence in putting forth a voice for ICTs, were also identified as important factors creating a policy window in South Africa.

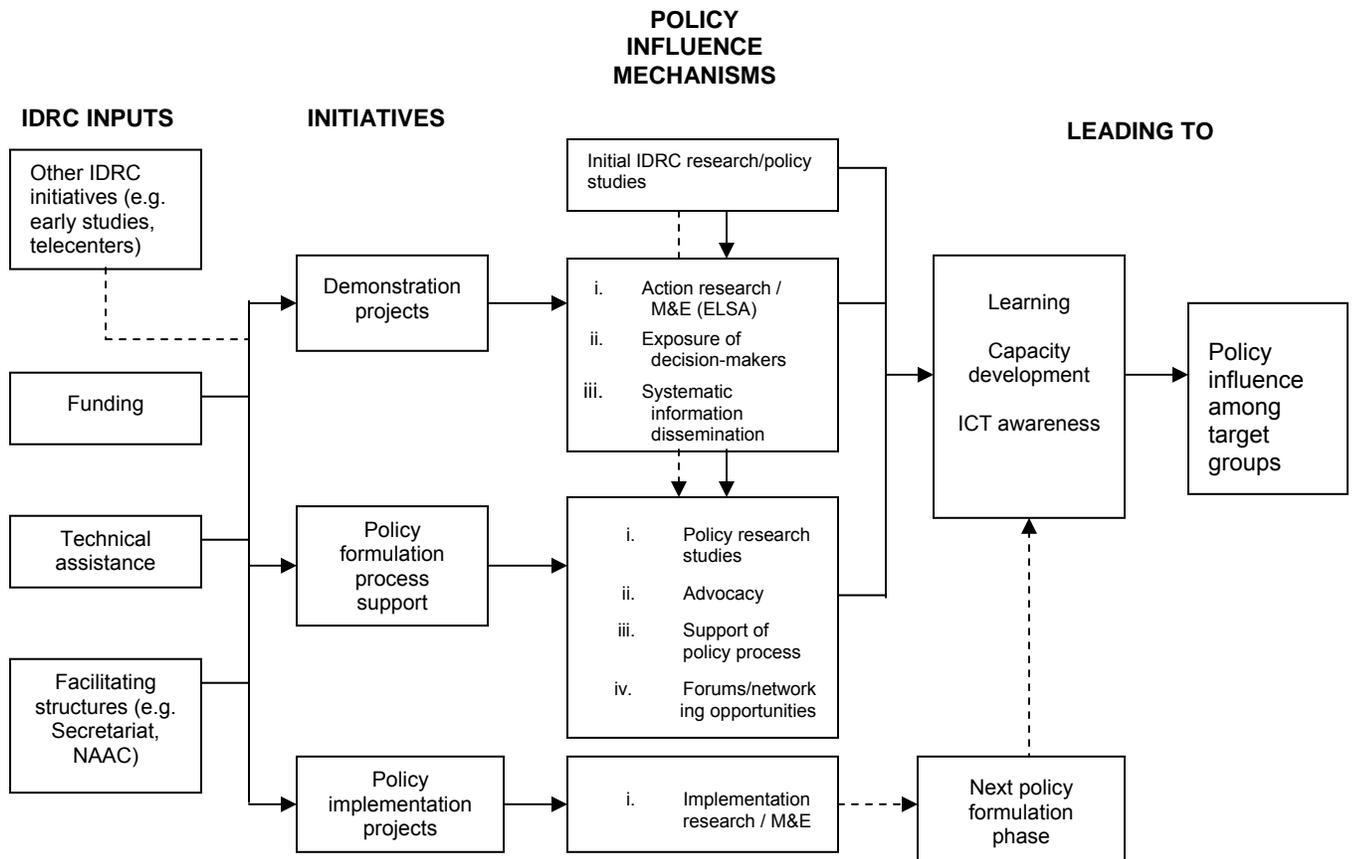
Initiatives, Policy Mechanisms and Influence

For the analysis of the mechanisms and possible influence IDRC-supported projects had on policy in Mozambique, Uganda and South Africa, the case studies examined:

- IDRC Acacia projects:
 - The National Acacia Advisory Committees/ Secretariats in Mozambique, Uganda and South Africa;
 - Demonstration projects (e.g., telecentres) in Mozambique, Uganda and South Africa.
- The development of:
 - Integrated ICT policies in Mozambique and Uganda;
 - Rural Communications policy and strategies in Uganda;
 - Telecommunications Policy in South Africa.
- Policy implementation projects (projects or ideas that flowed from policies).

Using a framework which identifies the IDRC inputs, the IDRC initiatives, and associated policy mechanisms, Dr. Ofir illustrated how these elements could interact to lead to policy influence in Mozambique and Uganda. Specific interventions lead to specific mechanisms of influence, which then achieved various "degrees" of policy influence, determined in part by the conditions in the policy window. Graphic presentation of the integrated design of Acacia Uganda as it relates to policy influence activities is shown in Figure 1 below. The case of Mozambique was virtually identical, except for the "other IDRC initiatives" (i.e., "pre-Acacia" inputs) that fed into the process in Uganda but did not occur in Mozambique.

Figure 1: Graphic Presentation of the Integrated Design of Acacia Uganda as it Relates to Policy Influence Activities⁵



⁵ This is Figure VII.I from p. 63 of "Dr. Zenda Ofir. October 2002. Second Draft Report. Strategic Evaluation: Research Influence on Policy. The Case of Uganda."

It was noted that in most cases is too early for the policy implementation projects to have had any influence on policy in Uganda and Mozambique as they are only now at the stage where policy is being implemented. In South Africa it is possible that some influence has resulted from the Universal Service Agency projects.

Extent of the Influence

Dr. Ofir pointed out that it is not easy to determine the extent to which various policy influence mechanisms actually influence policy in the cases. However, on analysis of the mechanisms that took place within the projects and of the comments by respondents, she did feel that one could see examples of very direct policy influence in Mozambique (for example one of the Ministers told her that she was adapting her processes to imitate the policy process that was supported by IDRC and ICTs). Dr. Ofir used the metaphor of a “sprint” to describe the direct policy influence observed in the Mozambique case. In the Uganda case, she determined that there was some direct influence but because there were more players than in Mozambique, the influence in the Uganda case was more diffuse than in the Mozambique case (more like a “relay race”), and not as easy to determine. In South Africa the influence was quite direct initially (until 1995) for example with the establishment of the National Telecommunications Policy Project, but when Acacia came about the influence was much less direct (“a marathon”) in part because there were many more players and many other initiatives in addition to Acacia in South Africa by that time.

Dr. Ofir referred participants to the numerous tables in her report for specific examples and mechanisms of policy influence in each case and offered the following general types of policy influence identified in the cases:

- “Broadening Horizons”: new ideas, debate (NAACs; think-tanks – workshops, forums);
- “Affecting Policy Regimes”: establishing new regimes; adapting existing regimes (e.g., South Africa);
- “Generating New Knowledge”: mainly ideas and some new understandings.

Dr. Ofir continued with a comparative analysis focusing on the extent to which influence occurred through the various mechanisms and how this related to various factors in the three countries’ respective policy windows. She concluded that:

- Impact will be greater the earlier in the policy development process the intervention takes place and the fewer the players involved;
- A strong private sector and civil society involvement in the policy arena can exert strong policy influence and thereby diminish IDRC’s influence;
- The integrated approach to ICT policy development, which occurred at a high level (i.e., Prime Minister’s Office in Mozambique and Ministry level in Uganda), facilitated policy influence in Mozambique and Uganda. While conversely, the “representation approach” taken in the South Africa policy

arena and the involvement of many actors each with their own competing perspectives hindered progress in that country.

Common Facilitating Contextual Factors

Contextual factors that facilitated policy influence and were common to all three countries include:

- Transition to stability;
- Government committed to the poor;
- General wave of optimism, yet great obstacles;
- Government open minded, consultative;
- Government not yet self-sufficient in policy making (capacity inadequate);
- Growing awareness of ICT for development, active champions;
- Very few ICT projects/models.

Features related to IDRC's involvement that facilitated policy influence and were common to all three countries include:

- Early involvement – good timing (in the case of South Africa before Acacia);
- Good reputation at highest levels of government;
- Good personal relationships and respect for technical expertise;
- Variety of support foci;
- Support included action research projects / “research as ideas”.

Common Hindering factors

Some factors identified as hindering the amount or potential for policy influence are:

- Late implementation of ELSA (the Evaluation and Learning System of Acacia) - systematic building of lessons missing;
- Lack of systematic work and tracking policy research, longitudinal studies, long-term studies;
- “De-motivating” IDRC administrative and decision-making processes (e.g., turnover of program staff and changes in programming priorities).

4.0 Issues Highlighted/ Major Discussion Points

During the discussion participants addressed the accuracy of the information presented, offered additional data, gave suggestions for clarification and further analysis, and raised general comments about the policy study and the Acacia program. Some of the issues that were highlighted follow.

Participants appreciated both presentations and felt that in general, the data and findings presented were both accurate and useful. The need for some small changes and elaborations to detail were discussed and pointed out to the authors. Further, most participants felt that a case had been successfully made that Acacia had influenced policy, particularly at the national level. Many liked the comparative approach and expressed an interest to have the Senegal study included in the comparison with the other three cases. One participant suggested that the NAACs get the opportunity to validate the reports, which may prevent a situation where inaccuracies make the reports debated documents rather than useful ones.

Clearly, there were differing views among participants as to what degree Acacia initially set out to influence policy. For example, one participant provided the following perspective on the planning behind the formation of the SAAAC (South Africa): *"...I think going back to the time at which the South African Acacia Advisory Committee was formed I think our reading of the situation is that the intention to influence policy was really relatively secondary and may to some degree have happened by accident in – perhaps that's too strong a word – in the countries in which it did happen. In South Africa the formation of SAAAC, which Zenda highlights as being relatively low-level focused on the beneficiary communities, was specifically intentional and it wasn't only at the request or the behest of the people involved, it was actually the IDRC who requested, I think our initial intention was to do something rather more high powered. And it was from the IDRC's side that the request to form a low-level committee came about. And in a sense that's partly the answer to the point that Willie was making. It was never the aim of the SAAAC to push for a national information society policy."*

There appeared to be more agreement among participants that policy influence was an objective in Acacia Mozambique and Uganda. The point was made that the comparative case analysis illustrates that project designs which lead to policy mechanisms create policy influence opportunities, and thereby such projects can influence policy whether that was the primary intent or not.

These differing views on intent may reflect different understandings of what constitutes policy influence – an underlying theme of the whole strategic evaluation. Indeed, in referring to the methodology of the case study interviews, Ms. Thioune emphasized that the interviewers' understanding of Lindquist's typology of influence and how this was explained during interviews are critical to the outcome of the study, since the determination of whether there was influence

or not depended on the respondents' understanding of the concept. It was suggested that the Mozambique, Uganda and South Africa report address the issue of intent and the degree to which Acacia intended to influence policy.

Participants appreciated the use of the concept of a "policy window" in the comparative analysis to help understand opportunities in each country. The "windows" generated much discussion, for example on the distinction between driving policy and influencing/motivating policy and the roles of various actors (e.g., IDRC, private sector, civil society) in the various countries. Participants added additional background information and shared their own take on the implications of various conditions within the contexts and on how the conditions may have changed over time thus changing opportunity. For example, one participant suggested that the policy window in South Africa has now changed, and as such the role of facilitation has to step back a bit from the process and instead the focus now should be to build capacity to do policy so the process can move forward. Also, in extending the concept to the Senegal case, some factors that may contribute to a policy window in that country were put forth (e.g., pre-Acacia there were well established sectoral policies regarding ICTs - strong informatics policy, strong telecommunication policy).

Participants made a number of comments about factors that facilitated or inhibited policy influence in the various cases. These comments either supported or built on points made during the presentations while others, many of which addressed program/project design issues, were new. Some of these comments follow.

Suggested Factors Inhibiting Policy Influence

- Project/program design issues:
 - The role of the NAAC in some district projects in Uganda was not explicit and thus may have affected their ability to coordinate.
 - A lack of systematic follow-up in reporting about Acacia's pilot in the four countries reduced momentum and opportunity to pick up donor's interest and support.
 - Discontinuing ministerial meetings at a point when Acacia was starting to take on a leadership role in ICT advocacy at the ministerial levels caused Acacia to lose the front line.
 - Not only was the ELSA late, it was perceived to be a summative type of evaluation which, besides having a judgmental philosophy, was not structured to synthesize the lessons learned into some kind of coherent formulation which could then have impact on both future projects and on possible policy formulation.
- Contextual factors:
 - The lack of an integrative policy process and the multiple but not organized initiatives in Senegal affected the amount of influencing possible. Acacia began to be perceived as a competing force with

other entities to have policy influence. The challenge is how to bring them together.

- In Senegal, due to the constant change of people in the institutions as well as in the ICT field who are the main interlocutors for the NAAC, there is no continuity in the debate, in the consultation, or in the process of establishing the NAAC.
- A lack of knowledge/research data for the NAAC meant that it couldn't effectively carry out its role in advocacy and informative process.

Suggested Factors Facilitating Policy Influence

- Project/program design issues:
 - Groups of people with a common understanding working together, rather than individuals, are better able to influence policy;
 - Use of data to influence decisions – important tool to be able to defend what you're trying to influence;
 - A good understanding of the context that you're moving into (i.e., the policy window);
 - Many different projects that provide many different mechanisms for policy influence, from both the bottom-up and the top-down;
 - Demand driven initiatives (receptivity);
 - Participatory approach (the vehicle is the Advisory Committee) in South Africa; consultative approach in Senegal. The sector approach in Senegal was consistent with/congruent with Acacia sector approach;
 - Involvement of policy people in projects;
 - Key results of projects disseminated to important public members.
- Contextual factors:
 - Growing acceptance of ICT as a development issue – “search for a solution”;
 - Enabling environment based on improved infrastructure (Senegal).

Some Observations on Similarities and Difference Among/Between Cases

- “One thing that kind of struck me was the similarities and dissimilarities. And I think I saw similarities where I didn't think I would see them. Basically for me it seemed like Mozambique and Uganda are much closer in how they did things and the policy influence and things like that. And then Senegal and South Africa are very similar in how they did things, depending on whether you decide that the NICP is considered within Acacia or not.” “In some way you can say that that comes from the context, the infrastructure and policy context to begin with. Uganda and Mozambique I think were coming from a slow base, whereas Senegal and South Africa were both at a much, I won't say higher but at a different infrastructure level. So it's interesting to see how that inter-relates with the policy influence.”
- Acacia focused on policy formulation in Uganda and Mozambique, and on policy implementation support in South Africa.

- Mozambique, Uganda and South Africa were countries in transition while Senegal was not.
- Mozambique and Uganda took an integrated approach to policy development; in South Africa and Senegal there was no integrated approach.
- *“In terms of the dominance of public sector versus private sector, for me, we’ve seen four different examples. I do not know the situation in Senegal, I would put Senegal maybe between Uganda and, you know, Uganda and Senegal are probably very close in terms of public-private sector interaction. South Africa at the other end, at times even reaching a level of high animosity. And then, because of the dominance of the private sector and then in Mozambique, a really embryonic attempt at interaction.”*

Gender Issues

And finally, gender issues were addressed very briefly in both presentations and in the discussions following the presentations. Comments were made about the extent and nature of IDRC's role, and Acacia's and the four countries' focus on making sure that policies and projects attend to gender considerations. There seemed to be a general feeling that there was not enough time to address this subject in any depth during this workshop. It was suggested that perhaps a half-day session would be needed to look at policy impact in terms of gender equality in the context of the policy study workshops, and that perhaps Acacia should consider having its own discussion of gender, for example regarding an integrated strategy for gender considerations at the program and project level outside of the policy study workshop framework.

5.0 Commentary Re: Country Policy Processes

In this session participants formed 4 small groups representing the 4 case countries being discussed and developed a poster to illustrate the ICT policy process in that country using "a theatrical production" as the main impetus (i.e., who is the star of the production, what is the hit song, who are the other characters and what is their role, what is the plot, etc.). This exercise helped to synthesize the information received through the case presentations and discussions with the participants' own expert knowledge in the area. Each group presented their poster in plenary.

While the tone was light and participants clearly had fun during this session, the productions were revealing. Productions included adventure stories, farce, and theater of the absurd, and linked a range of policy actors to a range of real life (e.g., miners and wives) and theatrical characters (e.g., the Seven Dwarfs and Darth Vader). The titles of the productions were:

- Mozambique: "The Adventures of the Miner's Wife";
- Senegal: "Project Bill and His Many Suitors";
- South Africa: "Six Characters in Search of an ICT Policy"; and
- Uganda: "King Kabale is Alive".

One participant was struck by the similarities between the Uganda and Mozambique plays: *"I found the other thing that was very striking was at first Zenda was trying to draw out the comparisons and differences and found a number of comparisons in particular between Uganda and Mozambique. And then in Stephanie's last session, Uganda and Mozambique did exactly the same play almost. I thought that was very striking."*

6.0 Lindquist Typology Of Policy Influences Session

The objective of this session was to explore the different types of policy influence observed in the various cases using the Lindquist typology of policy influences.

Stephanie Neilson of the Evaluation Unit, IDRC gave a brief presentation on the motivation to commission the development of a framework to help evaluators understand the policy development process and how it can be influenced, how this framework is expected to be useful at IDRC, and on the key elements of the typology itself.

Lindquist came up with three types of policy influence:

- 1) **Expanding Policy Capacities**, which would include things like:
 - a) Improving the knowledge or the data of certain actors;
 - b) Providing them with information and data to make decisions;
 - c) Supporting recipients to develop innovative ideas;
 - d) Improving capabilities to communicate ideas; and
 - e) Developing new talent for research and analysis.

- 2) **Broadening Policy Horizons**, which would include things like:
 - a) Providing opportunities for networking and learning within the jurisdiction or the policy domain, or with colleagues elsewhere;
 - b) Introducing new concepts to frame debates;
 - c) Putting ideas on the agenda or stimulating debate;
 - d) Educating researchers and others to take up new positions with broader understanding of issues; and
 - e) Stimulating quiet dialogue amongst decision-makers.

- 3) **Affecting Policy Regimes**, which would include things like:
 - a) The modification of existing programmes or policies; and
 - b) The actual fundamental redesign of programmes or policies.

Participants proceeded to “test” the typology by trying to slot identified examples of different types of policy influence from the various cases into the typology.

This exercise generated a lot of discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the typology. Some major discussion points were:

- Whether or not the framework represented the reality of policy influence;
- Whether the framework was able to take power differentials into account;
- How the framework takes conflict into consideration;
- Differentiating between elements of “how research can influence policy” and elements and processes involved in the “policy development process”;
- It was unclear how the typology could place “lobbying”, “the creation of new policies”, and “creating conditions for transparent policy making”;
- Whether the typology, as “categories of influence”, was able to reflect that policy influence is a process (which is, for example, affected by time,

policy windows, feedback and changing environment of the policy influencer, and which has cumulative effects of influencing over a number of categories).

The examples of the types of influence generated in this session were used in the next session where participants identified factors that they felt either contributed to, or inhibited, the influence of research on policy (see section 7.0 below).

7.0 Output of Group Exercise on Factors of Policy Influence

Exercise: To Identify the Determinants of Policy Influence

The objective of this exercise was to identify the determinants of policy influence by identifying those factors, within the context or the project strategy, that are perceived to either contribute to or inhibit the influence of research on policy.

This exercise was started in plenary and then 2 groups were formed to identify contributing and inhibiting factors for two specific types of research project: 1) ICT policy projects and 2) action research projects.

The outputs from this exercise are shown in Tables 2 & 3 below.

Table 2: ACACIA WORKSHOP OUTPUT: Factors that Contribute to or Inhibit the Policy Influence Process for ICT Policy Projects.

	Context	Strategies
Contributors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before Acacia – there were things on the ground: policy research; government had taken steps to establish infrastructure; uncoordinated diffusion of technology; liberalization; establishment of regulatory body • Acacia came with a coordinating framework • Policy vacuum • Small group of experts • Lack of pre-existing notions • National expectations and atmosphere of change • International climate of action; debate • Persistent champion • Institutions with a mandate for policy • IDRC-supported those institutions with a mandate for policy • Institutional readiness and receptivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political consensus • National consensus – opportunity to develop strategy • Community consensus-building through workshops • Institutional agreement that Acacia was to coordinate/be the coordinating body • Location of the Secretariat • Creation of national taskforce/commission • Acacia came in with a coordinating framework • Funding consultants in situations of limited expertise and time • Working with emerging leaders • Support to the complete (project) design process • Small forums to test ideas before sharing with larger groups • Policy process implemented as a project • First stage of South African consultations (information garnered from these consultations used in planning/design) • Institution used IDRC processes • Being close to bureaucrats • Anticipate windows of opportunities
Inhibitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before Acacia – the things on the ground were uncoordinated; Acacia came in with a coordinating framework; however, the Acacia presence then led to discrete and separate projects; (<i>this led to discrete funding; competition for funding; projects competing against each other for funding</i>); • Small group of experts • Lack of relevant experiences • Entrenched interests • Lack of understanding of ICTs • IDRC PO workload • Insufficient research capacity developed • Policy window closed • Once in power leaders less interested or receptive to new ideas • Power struggles between ministries • Instability of institutions • Dispersion of responsibility among key players and government structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Funding of discrete projects led to an uncoordinated strategy (Uganda, Mozambique, Senegal)</i> • Location of the Secretariat • Funding of consultants (doesn't build public good expertise and/or local capacity; outside consultants don't have accountability) • Second stage of South African consultations (information garnered from these consultations not used in planning/design) • Being close to bureaucrats • Lack of input from ELSA • Lack of research in ICT policy projects (sometimes/not always true)

Table 3: ACACIA WORKSHOP OUTPUT: Factors that Contribute to or Inhibit the Policy Influence Process for ICT Action Research Projects.

	Context	Strategies
Contributors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptance of ICTs as a development issue in all countries • “Search for Solution” – lack of innovative solutions to development problems; ICTs offered hope to failures with old developed methods • Growing enabling environment – infrastructure, internet access (mostly around cities) • Peace – provides freedom of movement and ability to work in rural areas • Champions (ICTs) • Embryonic debate on ICTs in development – looking at telecentres, schoolnets as development tools • A demand for knowledge and solutions using ICTs • Growth of civil society – seeing ICTs as a tool for civil mobilization etc. • Telecom Reform – donor interest in ICTs as development tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a long-term development approach • Experiment on the ground to prove viability, raise awareness, feed debate, test replicability • Build a national capacity building strategy in ICT research, action research • Promotes national ownership of research activity, provide continuity in terms of researchers responsible for projects and institutionalize • Network, people, institutions etc. • IDRC's funding strategy • Focus on key development issues like education, health, NRM • Create champions • Participatory nature of projects • Regional presence of Acacia build knowledge outputs • Regular reporting to administrative body/partners/organizations • Cross membership of project leaders for key member of policy team • Dissemination strategy for key results with frequent high level reporting
Inhibitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of ICT infrastructure • Lack of human resources • Lack of documentation/documented experience in ICTs for development • ICT experts primarily technically skilled – “techies” – needed development outlook • Lack of capacity in action research • ICTs and action research not seen as resources or amenable to research • Lack of awareness at government level (bureaucratic) of ICT issues could not translate ICT issues to policy • Lack of donor coordination – competition among recipients, lack of knowledge sharing etc. • Management strategy of community telecentres (weak) • Community conflict • Conflict between real time vs project time – community learning curve can consume much of project time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of part-time staff – need dedicated staff • Quality of HR outside main centres leads to log in reporting results • Failure/delay in ELSA • No back-up to ELSA – result of IDRC neglect; compromised policy influence because a key learning tool was missing • Turnover in staff/administrative problems

8.0 Participant Feedback about the Workshop

The following feedback was received from participants during a plenary discussion:

- (1) Presentations: participants particularly liked the cross-case comparison approach of Dr. Ofir's presentation; however, both presenters made comments (either directly or indirectly) about a lack of guidelines for presenters.
- (2) Keep the theatre play.
- (3) It would be useful to provide a complete overview of the policy study at the beginning of the workshop and inform participants in advance on the purpose/objective of the workshop, participants' roles, and expected outputs (e.g., exercises to draw on "learning" beyond their feedback on the case reports).
- (4) Need to have a ½ day added into the workshop explicitly devoted to gender.
- (5) Some wanted more time and suggested to not hold the workshop on a Saturday.
- (6) Although participants received copies of workshop papers electronically in advance of the workshop, participants would have preferred to have received the package of workshop reports in hard copy for review when they checked in (some of the documents were very large and hence some participants were reluctant to print them out themselves prior to the workshop). This would have allowed participants to start thinking about some of the sessions (e.g., the typology exercise) ahead of time.

Specific to Acacia:

- (1) Participants would like a report that synthesizes all four cases, and provides a cross-case analysis/comparison.

Appendix 1: List of Participants – Johannesburg Workshop

Name of Participant	Country Represented	Organizational Affiliation	E-mail Address	Address
1. Laurent Elder	Senegal	Team Leader Acacia IDRC – WARO	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
2. Alioune Camara	Senegal	Program Officer IDRC - WARO	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
3. Ramata Thioune	Senegal	Knowledge Analyst IDRC - WARO	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
4. Florence Etta	Uganda	Knowledge Analyst IDRC - ESARO	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
5. Heloise Emdon	South Africa	Senior Program Officer IDRC – South Africa	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
6. Prof Edward Mugambi	Uganda	Makerere University	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
7. Dr Z Nyiira	Uganda	Uganda National Council of Science and Technology	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
8. Marielle Rowan	Mozambique	IDRC Liaison Officer	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
9. Polly Gastor	Mozambique	CIEUM Eduardo Mondlane University	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
10. Charley Lewis	South Africa	Lecturer, LINK Centre	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
11. Dr Stephen Mncube	South Africa	Chairman, Sentech	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
12. Eng Venancio Massingue	Mozambique	Eduardo Mondlane University	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Name of Participant	Country Represented	Organizational Affiliation	E-mail Address	Address
13. Stephanie Neilson	Facilitator	Evaluation Unit - IDRC	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
14. Terry Smutylo	Facilitator	Evaluation Unit - IDRC	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
15. Sean Kane	South Africa	Researcher/lecturer	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
16. Kevin Conway	n/a	Communications - IDRC	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
17. Claudie Gosselin	n/a	Gender Unit - IDRC	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
18. Willie Currie	South Africa	Consultant	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
19. Dr. Zenda Ofir	n/a	Consultant	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]