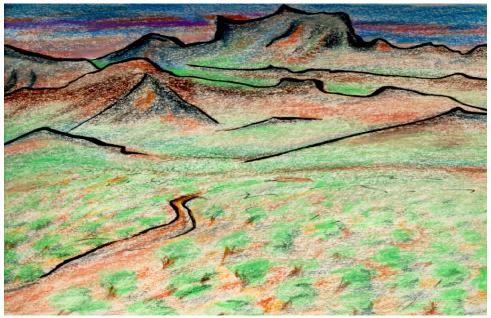# Cases, Concepts and Connections

The Influence of Research on Public Policy

Cap Verde, Jean-H. Guilmette

Evaluation Unit

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Opening Remarks

Maureen O'Neil, President of IDRC

Maureen O'Neil, President of the International Development Research Centre, welcomed participants to the workshop organized by the Evaluation Unit, the fourth in a series that has already seen similar events over the last few months in Johannesburg, Montevideo, and Bangkok. These workshops provide valuable opportunities to look at the work that has been done by IDRC to better understand policy influence and to share the lessons learned, she noted.

Determining how research influences policy is a complex task. A number of studies have been conducted by other international organizations, including the International Food Policy Research Institute, the Netherlands's Development Assistance Research Council, GDNet (Global Development Network) and the ODI (Overseas Development Institute). Reflecting on this topic is not a unique endeavour, noted O'Neil quoting Diane Stone (a consultant to the Study Advisory Committee), who said that what set IDRC apart with this study was that the Centre was very self-reflective and looked backwards at what worked and didn't work.

For the staff, the study constitutes an important document, as well as an opportunity to get directly involved. "Think of it as a giant PCR," O'Neil said. It is also important for management, as it clarifies where IDRC has an advantage. As well, it will help legitimate and validate the Centre's work.

O'Neil pointed out that two experts in the field—Carol Weiss and Evert Lindquist—were present at the workshop. She encouraged participants to take some of the ideas presented in the study and start working with them even before the study is completed.

Introduction: Overview of the Study and Workshop Purpose

Fred Carden and Stephanie Neilson, Evaluation Unit, IDRC

In this study, Fred Carden explained, "we are looking backward to move forward," a rare opportunity. He reminded the group of the three main questions addressed by the study and the workshop:

- What do we mean by influencing public policy?
- Where has IDRC supported research?
- What factors have contributed to and inhibited policy influence?

Stephanie Neilson then presented the several elements of the study.

Background research includes a literature review and the framework and typology of policy influences prepared by Lindquist. "We also looked at what IDRC has already done in this area, including evaluation reviews and PCR reviews," Neilson explained.

As part of the fieldwork, a series of rich case studies selected from the three programming areas were done across all regions. A purposive sample was used, which looked at projects identified by program staff as having had policy influence, to find a common framework. All together, 25 case studies were conducted, covering 67 projects, with a budget of approximately $53 M. Twelve of the studies have been finalized and seven are at the draft stage. A number of other IDRC activities that focus on policy influence, such as the Trade and Industrial Policy Secretariat (TIPS) in South Africa, Research for International Tobacco Control (RITC), the Economy and Environment Program for Southeast Asia (EEPSEA), and Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM), will also be included in this study.

The analysis includes this series of workshops as well as analyses by consultants, work by the advisory committee, and issue analyses. "We will look at coding the research and the workshop outputs," Neilson added.

Regarding the use that will be made of the research, she expressed hope that participants would take the information from the workshop and use it in their research. A document presenting the key findings will be prepared, as well as a series of management notes on important issues, and a volume on tools and methods. The case studies will be summarized to make them more accessible and distributed. "We will work with the Communications people to prepare a common plan and we will also work with other international organizations over the next few months to find synergies and forums to share information."

Carden then provided participants with some information about the coming two days. He explained that the purpose of the workshop is to explore the findings of the case studies, clarify what has been learned, and uncover similarities and differences among the three program areas as well as work positively with these differences. It is important to determine how these findings will help IDRC in the future.

Keynote Presentation: Carol Weiss

O'Neil introduced Carol Weiss, the keynote speaker. Carol Weiss is a Professor in the Graduate Faculty of Education at Harvard and holds a Ph.D. from Columbia University. She is a pioneer of the modern evaluation field. In the 1960s, she conducted a review of the program *War on Poverty* in the U.S. and was "struck by the complete lack of use made of her findings." This set her on a path to improve evaluation as a field and to understand how evidence could be used in decision-making. Weiss has worked all over the world, including in Africa and in Pakistan. She has written 11 books and 100 articles, and her 1972 book on evaluation, *Evaluation Research: Methods of Assessing Program Effectiveness*, is one of the key texts on evaluation methodology. Weiss has worked closely with this project from the very beginning.

Carol Weiss congratulated IDRC for tackling such an important study. "It is a subject of considerable concern not only to IDRC but to many other governmental and international funding bodies and to foundations that provide research grants with the aim of influencing policy."

"Sociologists of knowledge" were the first, in the early years of the 20th century, to look at the uses of research and at how knowledge enters the currents of intellectual thought and changes the course of history. It wasn't until the mid-20th century, Weiss said, that systematic empirical studies began on the uses of research. After the U.S. War on Poverty was started, in an effort to understand the effects of a wide series of government interventions, government agencies funded hundreds of evaluations. This highly rational approach focused on determining which programs reached their goals and which didn't, and assumed that policies would be more effective if they were based on sound empirical data.

The terminology used for studies on the effect of research and evaluation was "research utilization" or, even more grandly, "knowledge utilization." There was little recognition that decision-makers had other knowledge from other sources, Weiss noted.

Early studies of research utilization were mainly surveys made up of closed-ended questions, said Weiss. The investigators believed that they knew what the important questions were and that they could specify the kinds of utilization that were likely. Therefore, they began with specific questions that collected largely forced-choice responses, such as *strongly agree*, *mostly agree*, etc., or numerical or other short-form answers. As these kinds of questions lent themselves readily to quantitative analysis, results were largely expressed in statistical form.

Another assumption underlying these studies was that researchers could identify the extent of knowledge use in policy and the conditions and characteristics that fostered it, and that these findings would generalize. Investigators believed that they could build up a body of knowledge that applied across settings, topics, time periods, and people. They would then know what kinds of research topics influenced the largest percentage of users, which kinds of dissemination mechanisms were most likely to reach intended audiences, and so on.

For example, these early studies helped determine that research and evaluation that were easy to read and liberally sprinkled with graphs and pictures, were more likely to be used. There was also general agreement that research and evaluations should try to draw out the implications for action, as decision-makers wanted—and needed—a sense of future direction from the research and evaluation they received. Another finding was that utilization was more likely when the results of the research didn't run afoul of opposing interests.

But there were also subjects on which studies did not agree. Some found that research quality was irrelevant, others indicated that it did make a difference. According to some investigators, in order to be used, research had to fit into the current policy framework and could not suggest far-reaching revisions or undermine existing understandings and activities. Others believed that decision-makers wanted to hear about alternatives. Similarly, there were studies that found that research whose recommendations were not within the jurisdiction of the agency for which the research was done were less likely to be used, while other inquiries found that such considerations were irrelevant.

Meanwhile, disenchanted with the lack of influence and relevance of their studies, researchers "began writing woeful articles in the professional journals, bemoaning the neglect of their work," said Weiss.

At the same time, though, came recognition that some of the assumptions that had been taken for granted might be inappropriate or wrong: maybe utilization wasn't the right language, maybe research had influence in less instrumental ways, maybe it affected decision-makers' understanding and awareness without an immediate effect on decisions, and "maybe that was not a bad thing." People came to realize that the notions of policy making, decision-makers, and influence needed to be revised.

Parallel to the reconsiderations of concepts came a rethinking of methods for studying research use, said Weiss. Investigators began to recognize the importance of context—the context of the agency, of its clients, and of its bureaucratic location. They began to realize that they needed to open up the interview to the respondents' experience and let them tell the story in their own terms, using their own frame of reference. As a consequence, it became clear that more qualitative inquiry was needed.

More recent studies of research influence have adopted this broader perspective, Weiss said. They have taken into account the fact that many people are involved in making policy and that, if research results are going to have an influence, they have to reach the "the policy-influencing community." One must consider that research might have an impact before a final decision is made—by changing ideas and behaviours or altering the climate of opinion within which decisions are made.

Much else besides research affects policy decisions, Weiss pointed out. Policy-makers have considerable knowledge of their own based on their experience, their education, the information and advice they get from everyone around them, and models of policy from other jurisdictions. They are also inevitably subject to influence by the mass media and all the other sources of information. "One research study is not necessarily going to sway their beliefs and make them see things a different way. Nor should it," Weiss commented.

As a consequence of recognizing these kinds of factors, some of those who study research influence have been shifting their focus: "Instead of concentrating solely on the effect of research on individuals in policy-making positions, they have begun to take the policy-making *system* as their canvas, or as much of it as they can encompass." They recognize the importance of the context, the topic area, institutions, history, and the kind of research. "All of these factors lead to a focus that goes beyond the choices made by individuals and sees the policy-makers in their multidimensional setting," Weiss stressed.

"The IDRC study is in tune with the thinking on the study of research influence," she commented. The study has many important characteristics found to be appropriate: it is a qualitative study based on case studies; it is attentive to local conditions and historical circumstances; it pays attention to institutions, history, and context; it takes a broad-brush sweep; and it builds on the lessons gained through previous work in the field.

The IDRC Study has further merits. It was built on a common conceptual and methodological base and all the case study authors went into the field with the same set of carefully developed and tested questions. As a result, the data are comparable across cases, and the central framework facilitates analyses across cases.

Further, local people did most of the case studies, which meant that each case writer was familiar with the context and the setting. Doing the study across nations also added a good deal of variety and will allow for richer analysis. Some studies have recently been undertaken on an international level, something that will contribute significantly to the literature not only on international development but also to all studies of the interaction of research and policy, Weiss said.

She also saluted the fact that the study identified its potential users from the outset, a clear sign that the Evaluation Unit "takes to heart the lessons from the literature." From the outset, the study was done in cooperation with managers and staff. In addition, the evaluation staff has provided early feedback about its findings. The conversations that go on around the cases and their findings keep enriching the interpretive process.

Another strong point is that the study staff recognizes that the findings emerging from the cases are only one contribution to the organization—the study has other by-products. "It is training a cadre of researchers—the case writers—in the demanding business of conducting qualitative research and, further, doing it within a well-structured framework. This is training that is rarely available, especially to researchers in developing countries," Weiss commented.

Furthermore, she said, the IDRC study is making remarkable methodological strides. Not many cross-case studies have been conducted with the same attention to comparability of theory, method, and data and this work will surely have much to tell researchers about methods to adopt, adapt, and avoid.

Joking that she would lose credibility and appear to have been bribed if she does not find anything to criticize, Weiss said she managed to find two limitations to the study. The first is inherent to retrospective studies: they often encounter difficulties locating informed people and relevant documents after the fact. The information gathered is often partial due to an inability to clearly remember or retrace the facts or an unwillingness to tell the whole story.

A second limitation is that the study of the consequences of IDRC's research is a one-time episode. Weiss suggested that, if this kind of study were replicated periodically, even on a smaller scale, later inquiries would show trends over time and indicate whether or not IDRC studies were having greater influence as the years go by. "Perhaps using the promise of research influence as a criterion for awarding grants would change their policy effectiveness in the countries with which you work. But then again, maybe not," she added.

In conclusion, she invited participants to put this workshop to good use to plan and implement "an even more inspiring future."

Discussion

A participant commented that the method used in the IDRC study provides "superb case studies," but wondered about the usefulness for consultants. Weiss responded that they could draw lessons from them and pick the influential elements from the stories. This is why there will be a cross-case analysis, she added.

Another participant returned to the idea of modifying the criteria for supporting research to increase the influence on policy. "Even if we wanted to do that, does the research show that it would work?" he asked. Weiss said she did not know of any study on the subject. She pointed out this should not be the only criterion.

The comment was made that not all research projects and all policies are equal. Some research does not have a great impact on policy and "this is not always a disastrous finding." Weiss agreed that all projects should not be treated identically and said that was the reason why there could not be "blanket responses."

A participant underlined the importance of the language chosen. "Decision-makers in developing countries often don't like the imperial attitude of people wanting to 'influence their policies'" and one must not sound too prescriptive. She also made the point that the quality of the research becomes an important issue, if it is to influence policies. Weiss said she had written widely on this subject. She added that research contributed in three domains—data, ideas, and advocacy. This last one is not IDRC's domain; it is up to the researchers in the country to take responsibility and try to influence policy in their field.

Someone wondered how the overview of the topic's evolution applied to developing countries. This is what we are waiting to see from the study, Weiss replied. The analysis should shed lots of light on this point. She added she had read through most of the cases and had not been "taken aback by any of it."

Commenting on a point make by Weiss on how regime changes often make it hard to influence policy, a participant said that, in South Africa, it had on the contrary created an "incredible opening." The problem, he added, is the implementation by the countries. Weiss agreed with both points, but noted that a lot of turnover creates lots of volatility and prevents sustained attention to issues.

Referring to her experience in Kenya, another participant pointed out that when local policy people are part of process from the beginning, outside researchers do not influence policy from the outside and make decisions for others. Weiss commented that it was one of the longest standing findings. Picking up on one of the participant's comments, she said that, indeed, it did not mean "letting the research people do whatever they want." It is also important to involve the population and the people that usually don't get enough attention in the developing countries, not only the top bureaucrats. The participant said that, by policy-makers, she did not mean only the top people, but indeed people at all levels.

Based on her experience in the field of tobacco control policy making, the knowledge transfer must be oriented towards people too, a participant commented. If a policy is too far ahead of social norms, there won't be any implementation. Weiss joked that she had planned on saying these things the next day.

Another participant said that if IDRC was going to choose to influence policy through research, some of the work should be done at the regional level, as some problems are similar in the various countries within a region. This would seem logical, Weiss replied.

Case Presentations

Acacia— A Synthesis of Four Country Studies
Zenda Ofir

Zenda Ofir presented the Acacia cross-country synthesis report she authored, entitled "ICTs for Development in Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa and Uganda."

The Acacia program is a series of case studies commissioned by the IDRC in four African countries as part of a larger study on the policy influence of IDRC's research and interventions around the world. Ofir conducted three of the four studies. Acacia focused on the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) for rural community development in Africa. It differed from the normal IDRC portfolio in two ways. First, it did not focus entirely on research and capacity building as such but on establishing projects as learning models for the future. Second, there were few existing relevant projects and Acacia had to establish its own learning, actions, and research. The program analyzed 15 pilot projects that enhanced and enriched each other across the countries.

IDRC contributed funding, technical assistance, support of facilitating structures such as committees and secretariats, and learning from earlier IDRC work and related interventions.

The Acacia program was a learning initiative that consisted of strategy development, pilot projects, policy formulation processes that were prominent for ICT integration needs, policy implementation projects, and ad hoc activities that supported specific needs and themes relevant to ICT.

Policy influences were confirmed surprisingly often by the stakeholders and were determined by measure of effective implementation of policy influence mechanisms. Intermediate influences were more common, with few direct influences, and the extent of the influences was not always clear.

The most effective types of policy influence included creating new policy regimes, since using ICTs for development was a new field; helping to reformulate/modify policies in other sectors; providing opportunities for networking and learning; introducing new concepts and stimulating debate; and enhancing knowledge and awareness.

Policy influence was weak in policy capacity building in several ways, including supporting the recipients to develop innovative ideas, improving their capabilities to communicate ideas, educating researchers and others in new positions, and developing new talent for research and analysis.

Multi-pronged policy influence mechanisms were used, including funding of policy processes, networking and exchange of technical expertise, ICT champions, advocacy and awareness campaigns, exposure to pilot projects, action research for quick results, research itself, teaming of researchers, international technical expertise, dissemination, and capacity building through

partnerships and training.

A multitude of factors allowed IDRC to achieve many types of policy influence in all four countries, which, although quite different in essence, had similar national contexts and cross-cutting issues that assisted in assuring good policy influence. First, they all had an open policy window. There was poverty yet national stability, and governments were seeking development solutions, supporting investments, and becoming aware of ICTs. Policy frameworks already existed for development and reforms, and they had a recognized and growing need for coherent policy formulation. Since the ICT field was new to them, they had few preconceived ideas and models and were searching for new ideas to use. They had little local research capacity and institutional collaboration, but there was significant international interest and exposure to ICTs. The IDRC was a key player in the whole arena.

There were a number of other facilitating factors:
- The IDRC's early pioneering entry into the countries ahead of other players;
- Government support at the highest level;
- IDRC's work to put pilot projects on the ground;
- Good human relations and respect from the key people for IDRC's technical expertise, knowledge, and commitment to the cause of the countries;
- Neutral location of policy formulation processes;
- Government commitment to transparency, consultation, and multi-sector participation;
- The interlinked, complementary nature of Acacia that is based on national priorities;
- A small group of well-networked, committed decision-makers;
- Inclusion of ICT champions in facilitating bodies;
- Good communication between the researchers and project leaders who were able to link findings to application.

At the same time, different constraints were experienced. When there were many role players with their own agendas and specific directions, policy influence lessened. Also, policy influence was tied to how well the IDRC players and their ideas were positioned. Institutional changes and turf wars within government were also constraints. Other factors included weaknesses and uncertainties in IDRC's management processes that were detrimental to trust already built, late implementation of ELSA (Evaluation and Learning System of Acacia) resulting in insufficient systematic research, inadequate communication between bodies, inefficient implementation of strategies, and a lack of strategy development.

Discussion

One delegate asked Ofir to elaborate on what she meant by "human relations." Ofir gave the example of Mozambique in which IDRC consultants, advisors, and program officers had high profiles with the government, strong technical expertise, a non-prescriptive and non-imposing approach, and were interested in the country's agenda. Trust, mutual respect, and personal friendships and relationships had already been developed with committee members and decision-makers in government and different sectors before the country's transfer to democracy in 1994. Ofir noted that good human relations should be cultivated whenever opportunities arise.

The same delegate asked Ofir to explain why she felt there were weaknesses in IDRC's management processes. Ofir clarified that there were two aspects. One was a weakness in communication. Another related to the slowness in funding in some cases when no clear reasons were given to explain why certain decisions had been taken. For example, closure of an office in one of the Acacia countries delayed momentum and energy, stopped communication, and damaged personal relationships—all of which were factors detrimental to the potential for policy influence. In particular, it occurred at a critical stage of decision-making, and one key minister expressed great disappointment and discouragement. Ofir, however, noted that IDRC has an exceptional reputation in these countries.

One delegate asked why only four countries were studied and inquired about transferring smaller offshoot projects to other countries. The response was that it was a matter of choice to select certain countries, programs, and projects. Only 15 projects were studied, but there were many, many more projects. Acacia was implemented in four countries, but the IDRC has a much larger and broader history than these four countries.

Another delegate asked about the impact of the pilot projects. Ofir replied that it was extremely useful to have established the pilot projects on the ground, providing concrete examples to see and study where little or none existed before, and raising severely important policy issues to the attention of policy-makers. The Acacia program was helpful to the countries in that it had a national strategy and focus based on national priorities and interests rather than a fragmented approach supporting a project here and a project there.

SEE Programming in Viet Nam
André Saumier

André Saumier presented IDRC socioeconomic program work in Viet Nam. Three IDRC-sponsored projects were carried out: VISED (Vietnam Sustainable Economic Development 1993-97), VEEM (Vietnam Economic and Environment Management 1997-2002), and MIMAP (Micro Impact of Macroeconomic and Adjustment Policies 1995-2001). Initial negotiations of VISED began in 1991, and VEEM was its successor. Combined, the two projects operated in Viet Nam for 10 years on a reasonably consistent basis. MIMAP was a stand-alone project initiated by IDRC and is still continuing in some ways to a considerable degree.

Saumier noted that the Viet Nam case is rather unusual and interesting. He presented the context surrounding the projects. In 1990, with economic collapse looming, Hanoi's Communist regime took the decision to move away from the previous Soviet/Stalinist policies and embrace a more market-oriented economic system. However, there were a multitude of policy challenges.

Saumier explained that, unlike the total reorientation from communist to Western systems that took place in the formerly communist parts of Europe, the Vietnamese leadership was careful in wanting to abandon only the economic components but maintain the political ones, including the one-party state. As such, it was very sensitive to how changes in the economic components might impact on or threaten the political components. Also, Viet Nam's policy-making system is

extraordinarily murky and obscure. Its complex policy stream consists of the government, the National Assembly, and the Communist Party. The Party, being the highest holder of political power, plays an active role in policy-making and development. By design, it is a secretive system that does not publish documents such as White or Green Papers, budgets, draft policies for consultations or discussions, financial statements of the Central Bank, etc. Maintaining secretiveness is a very important objective that is enforced by a system of secret police.

A further challenge was that the senior officials and advisors were all trained in Communist economic models and theories. They had little understanding of market economics, quantitative methods, and Western-style policy analysis and recommendations. They had no knowledge of how to manage a transition towards a market-oriented, capitalist economy, and in fact, holding on to their previous knowledge would have been irrelevant and harmful. However, they were open to advice, as they knew that it was a necessary development and absolutely essential to obtain immediate advice from experts.

Despite the challenges, Saumier noted that the IDRC projects had very interesting impacts on policy in Viet Nam. In terms of the three categories of influence that are used consistently, the impact on expansion of policy capacities was quite dramatic, contributions were made to the broadening of policy horizons, and some influence on policy regimes likely occurred although it is difficult to pin down.

Saumier explained that the IDRC did not go to Viet Nam with pre-ordained policy proposals but chose an initially controversial path. Western experts in economic analysis gathered together a number of untrained Vietnamese researchers, asked them what areas were priority policy issues, and showed them how to do research and draw policies from research. This was possible since IDRC had a 10-year track record in Viet Nam, which led to a clear and significant expansion of policy capacities

Saumier then spoke about the difficulties encountered by VISED and how improvements were made in VEEM, its successor, based on lessons learned. Lack of Official Development Assistance (ODA) experience during VISED led to a scattershot approach in projects and organizations, resulting in a number of relatively small and diverse projects. VEEM, instead, focused only on two critical, interrelated issues having to do with trade policy, a major, significant concern of Viet Nam at the time. Moreover, unlike VISED, VEEM worked with one key Vietnamese agency only—the Institute of Economics—and had access to decision-makers at high levels, opening up opportunities to work closely with them, provide them with important findings, and build up their capacity to a level of dramatic improvement. As well, the President of the Institute was a member of both the Party Central Committee and the National Assembly. Being extremely well connected and powerful, he was able to play a key role in influencing policy.

MIMAP took a different approach to achieving policy influence. First, it challenged the previous definition of poverty—the number of kilograms of rice a family can buy each month—and convinced officials to adopt the IDRC approach of having the local communities themselves measure actual poverty based on their own situation. It was a pilot project that needed the enrichment of the former narrow definition of poverty and proved to be very fruitful and effective in the war on poverty. Second, MIMAP researchers helped local researchers develop a

set of relatively simple and straightforward computer-generated equilibrium models for analyzing the impacts of various policy proposals. These models are more precisely called Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) models. Such models and the data needed to generate them had not existed before. The Ministry of Finance used them in a number of circumstances to do analyses of fiscal policy and trade reform.

Saumier noted that the outcomes of the IDRC projects led to the unexpected conclusion that the impact on policy in Viet Nam was singularly successful. Although one cannot say precisely that policy A was caused by research X in any case, one can say how context was modified. For example, a number of key people became more comfortable dealing with issues in different ways than they had previously been taught. As well, several conclusions of the VEEM project, published in academic reports, were very explosive yet were fully shared by some of the closest advisors of the Prime Minister. They turned out to be an important part of the supporting evidence needed by the reform group within Viet Nam to continue to accelerate the reform agenda.

Discussion

One delegate asked what key areas were critical to the results and conditional on synergies between projects. Saumier replied that for VISED and VEEM, one significant area was narrowing down to one or two key research institutions with exceptional connections and working closely with them. One of them was the Institute of Economics. Another aspect was narrowing down to two closely related issues that Viet Nam was preoccupied with at the time, thereby seizing the policy moment. For MIMAP, a different approach was used which proved to be effective in a different fashion. There was little contact between the poverty stream and the CGE model stream in MIMAP.

Another delegate asked what forms the research output took. What key products, such as papers, articles, reports, etc., influenced policy change in Viet Nam? Saumier replied that any research could be said to be relevant, and all the problems were important, but it was necessary to select and prioritize since everything could not be tackled at the same time. Choices were made based on advice from foreign advisors as well as the views of the Vietnamese themselves. IDRC followed the Vietnamese. Saumier explained that the effect of this second path of influence is less visible but deeper. For example, there are people still in Viet Nam who were there as part of the projects, learning and continuing to be relevant to the needs of the country. Saumier also emphasized that Viet Nam is a different environment from Western countries in that there is no free press and policy cannot be challenged. Therefore, in order to have an influence within the reform-minded niches of Viet Nam, it was important to develop policy research capability built on world standards of performance and analogies.

Another issue was raised with regard to thinking of people and networks as outputs. Saumier agreed, adding that in secretive systems, networks are very important.

Mining Cases in Peru

Fernando Loayza,

Fernando Loayza presented two case studies on mining in Peru, commenting that both cases were useful and yielded interesting conclusions. In terms of their potential to influence policy, "one did, and the other did not."

The first case study was on High Altitude and Mining in Peru. It was approved in December 1989 and completed in March 1993. The second, Copper Mining and Water Resources in Southern Peru, was approved in May 1991 and was completed in October 1993. Thus, it was possible to look at the impact and influence of the two projects over approximately ten years.

The High Altitude and Mining study came about because of increasing concerns in the mid-1980s about the impact of high altitude on health in Cerro de Pasco. Earlier deaths and a higher incidence of miscarriages had been noticed. An initial study confirmed that these health problems were not only related to the high altitude but also to working and living habits. Natives and long-term residents were losing their ability to adapt to high altitudes due to Chronic Mountain Sickness (CMS), which could get worse over time.

Loayza explained the input participants had. ADEC-ATC Asociación Laboral para el Desarrollo (a Peruvian NGO) conducted a study hoping to convince the government to make some changes. It contacted the Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia that had a long experience in the area of CMS. A number of mining labour unions were also interested and supported the study.

The objective for the research was to assess the impacts of high altitude mining on the health of the mining population in the Cerro de Pasco region. The policy intent, Loayza said, was to have CMS recognized as an occupational illness in mining activities by the Peruvian government and possibly the International Labour Organization. The research was successful. It found a significant association between miners' work (especially drillers) and Chronic Mountain Sickness. These findings were so important that, two years later, the research was published in the best scientific publication in Peru.

In terms of processes, Loayza explained that the research had little (if any) influence on policy. Among the possible reasons for this lack of influence was the adverse policy context. The Peruvian state was undergoing massive reforms at the time. Privatization was underway to liberalize labour markets in order to increase productivity and labour unions found themselves seriously weakened. Thousands of people were working in mines to increase productivity. As a result, international aid priorities changed, focusing primarily on the survival of people caught in this difficult economic situation. In addition, the Institute for Occupational Safety that had initiated the research was closed.

Another important factor was the absence of a strategy to systematically diffuse the findings within the mining and occupational health policy communities. Very few dissemination activities were carried out. There had been sufficient funding for the research but there was no context monitoring to adjust the activities designed to influence policy. There were a number of windows of opportunities for including research results in the regulatory reform process but it did not happen.

Loayza pointed out that IDRC was not involved in the project outside the design stage.

Moving on to the topic of outcomes, Loayza said that the project had no impact on the knowledge or agenda of policy-makers and main mining stakeholders. He described the policy capacity that was built around the issue as "non-existent."

The second study presented by Loayza is the Copper Mining and Water Resources study. The Southern Peru Copper Corporation (SPCC), the largest mining company in Peru, established two large mining operations that affected the city of Ilo and the valleys of Locumba and Moquegua due to pollution and water management issues. There were complaints that the government was expected to address environmental pollution issues as well as review how scarce water resources were used by the mining industry. The government appointed a Multi-sector Technical Commission to evaluate the environmental impacts of SPCC. However, implementation of the changes recommended by the Commission was postponed.

The main stakeholders included LABOR, an NGO that understood that international pressure was needed to incite the Peruvian government to take action. Seconded by the municipality of Ilo and the farmers of the Ilo and Moquegua Valleys, LABOR sued SPCC before the Second International Water Tribunal (IWT-II). The Tribunal approached IDRC to do research on the issues.

The objective of the research project was to assess the impact of mining on water and to present the results to the IWT.

The policy intent was to change the lenient attitude of the Peruvian government and to change SPCC's water use and management. The main result of the project was the presentation of the case against SPCC before the IWT-II. SPCC's environmental damages were denounced at the international level.

The policy context was favorable. With the establishment of a mining regulatory framework, environmental issues were moving upwards in the policy agenda. There was also a clever strategy for dealing with policy implications, including a strategy for influencing policy where research was instrumental. LABOR got key local and national stakeholders on board and research results were disseminated successfully and caught the attention of national and international media.

As in the first study he presented, Loayza indicated that IDRC was not involved outside the design stage.

The outcome was that the IWT condemned SPCC's environmental practices. However, before the verdict, SPCC made a pact with the government that it would invest a huge sum of money in reclamation activities. In addition, SPCC changed its corporate environmental policies.

In what way did the study influence policy? Loayza explained that it led SPCC to adopt a proactive environmental policy, highlighted the need for establishing mining environmental regulations and enlightened policy-makers, stressing the need for a central authority to oversee

things.

Loayza drew several conclusions from these two studies. The first one is that the context and the project's strategy to disseminate results and influence policy are important. Planning must start at the beginning—there must be an ability to adapt to the changing context.

The second is that, for influencing policy, research capabilities are not really the most effective. In the case of the High Altitude Mining study, the missing element was an entrepreneurship capability for influencing policy. Next, Loayza said that IDRC treats policy influence as a research by-product and that is not enough.

The fourth point is that, for optimizing policy influence, it is essential to disseminate research results at the regional and global levels. The findings must be discussed at a higher level. In this case, for example, if they had been discussed in other South-American countries, something would have happened. Dissemination is something that can be done by IDRC—not by developing countries.

Discussion

Commenting on the issue of optimizing dissemination, a participant said that advocacy had gone a long way for tobacco control.

Loayza said that there was a lot in common between the two projects. However, the history was different. Issues important to the High Altitude Mining project had existed for a long time, while in the other case, the problems were new.

He also mentioned a meeting that took place in Santiago where the social chapter of the WTO agenda was discussed. People were surprised by the presentation on the effects of trade. He added that 25 articles were considered to implement standards.

It may take a lot of time for studies to influence policy, Loayza commented, adding that scientific quality is important. All countries must revisit the issues and set common standards so that no country is disadvantaged.

Environmental Management Development in Ukraine and its Influence on Public Policy
Iryna Lyzogub

Iryna Lyzogub presented the major components of the program entitled Environmental Management Development in Ukraine (EMDU): water pollution control, water toxicology, information systems development, pilot projects, environmental audits and environmental entrepreneurship, and public outreach.

The EMDU program environment was "not friendly," she stated. The environment in Ukraine is

very different from what can be found in other developing countries and "Western understanding of policy does not apply." It is a very hierarchical system where initiative is not welcome and access to facilities and information is extremely limited. As a result, people were afraid to cooperate with donors without approval from the top.

As Ukraine was at that time in the grip of a long and serious economic crisis, environmental and scientific research was neglected and badly under-funded. In addition, structural changes in the bodies responsible for implementing environmental policy resulted from the country's administrative reform, a general state of discontinuity ensuing.

Finally, Lyzogub pointed out that, at the time, there was no banking system in place in the country. At the beginning of the EMDU program transactions had to be done in cash or in barter.

In spite of this adverse environment, the program was a success. One of the key success factors was the way the program was managed.

The Ukrainian Management Committee (UMC) established by the Minister of Environment Protection of Ukraine played a crucial role in the success of the program. Dr Shevchuk—a remarkable individual who by all accounts was largely responsible for the positive outcomes of the program—chaired the committee. UMC included policy-makers and researchers from various organizations who, because there were no subordinate relations within the Committee, were not afraid to express their views.

Another factor behind the successful management of the EMDU program was IDRC's approach based on trust and reliance on local partners. Lyzogub pointed out that this approach was preferred to that of other donors who often tended to view local researchers as incapable. The legacy left by IDRC, she said, is that "Canadians are easy to work with and favour a consensus-building approach." It is an important legacy that paves the way for other successful collaborations.

The third key player in the management of the program was the Dnipro Renaissance Foundation. It played a crucial role in helping resolve financial challenges faced by the program following the passing, early into the program, of the Presidential Decree subjecting foreign donor money to heavy taxation. IDRC and local partners found a way to move funds through the Dnipro Renaissance Foundation on a tax-free basis.

How did the EMDU program influence policy? First of all, it expanded policy capacities and improved the knowledge of certain players, Lyzogub stated. Information Systems Development projects facilitated data exchange and dissemination and helped overcome the "Soviet caution," as a participant in the study called the high level of secrecy that generally hindered programs. The Baseline Water Quality Study was initiated at the beginning of the program to create a reliable database on the water quality of the Dnipro. Its results were used to determine where to place health camps in the Dnipro Basin. It also raised the interest of local governments and provided useful reference points for future research.

The EMDU program helped improve scholarly standards and provided bases for education. As pointed out earlier, in a context of economic difficulties, scientific research was not a priority for

the government, Lyzogub said. Research institutions did not have sufficient funds to pay their researchers' salaries or heat their buildings. IDRC's financing made it possible to carry on research. It also allowed research institutions to attract post-graduate students, publish textbooks, and reach a higher level of professionalism, as they had to meet the high international standards demanded by IDRC. The Centre also encouraged researchers participating in the program to develop innovative ideas.

Lyzogub explained that another effect of the EMDU program on policy is that it broadened policy horizons by providing opportunities for researchers to enter the international scientific community. For the first time, they conducted research according to international standards and started publishing in international scientific journals, collaborated with other research projects and facilitated coordination with other organizations, and participated in training and trips to Canada, thus acquiring not only new knowledge but also a new perspective on issues. Generally speaking, a stimulating dialogue between and among researchers and decision-makers was initiated.

"IDRC always stressed the importance of research," Lyzogub commented, noting that it refused to follow decisions that contradicted research findings. For example, it refused to fund expensive equipment if it was not proven it could help with the research.

Another aspect of the broadening of the policy horizons as a result of the EMDU program was the new focus on public involvement and outreach. Lyzogub gave the example of the Riverbank Stabilization Project where a Soviet-style approach was used at first. In the absence of any consultation or information, people feared their land was being purchased by Canada and waited for program staff with pitchforks. The UMC quickly learned to improve its public information strategies. Thanks to the EMDU program, Ukrainians learned to include public participation and awareness in project proposals.

The program also had impacts on the legislation. The National Program on Ecologic Rehabilitation of the Dnipro Basin and Drinking Water Improvement was adopted in Ukraine. The Drinking Water Law was also passed, as well as the Presidential Decree on the National Atlas of Ukraine. Finally, a draft law on ecological audits has been developed within the framework of the EMDU program.

Discussion

A participant asked what attitude Ukrainian partners adopted when IDRC targeted them. Lyzogub said that they appreciated the Centre's approach, which they much preferred to the "pushiness" of many other donors. She pointed out that Ukraine used to be a superpower and, as a result, Ukrainians are quite sensitive and do not like foreigners coming in thinking they have all the answers.

Another participant enquired about the selection process for members of the UMC. IDRC approached the various organizations but let them select their representatives, Lyzogub explained. The Centre also tried to include stakeholders.

Asked if the interviewees showed symptoms of the "Soviet Caution," she said that generally speaking, they did not. However, one interviewee was indeed very negative about the project but would not say why. There was another one who insisted on saying that the program had no impact whatsoever but interviewers noticed that she still knew everything about the program, had watched TV shows and read books, and was clearly very familiar with the information that had been disseminated, thus proving that the program did have an impact.

Jean-H Guilmette, Executive Director of the Office for Central and Eastern Europe Initiatives (OCEEI), commented that the creation of the UMC was required as part of the contract passed between Ukraine, IDRC, and DFAIT. IDRC made suggestions to broaden the committee, in part to include more women. Accountability and decision-making, he pointed out, were always the responsibility of the President of the UMC who got his orders from the Minister.

Commenting on politics in Ukraine, he said that he had "never seen anything like this before." People were arrested and beaten for providing trivial information on water management and became leery of collaborating with the EMDU program. The idea of involving the public was completely foreign in the Ukrainian culture.

Mobilizing for Policy Outcomes: Experience to Date

Environmental and Natural Resources Management (ENRM)
Facilitators: Stephen Tyler and Ronnie Vernooy

Stephen Tyler and Ronnie Vernooy provided participants with information on how the session would unfold, and invited David Brooks of Friends of the Earth Canada to present the Case Study of Sustainable Improvement of Marginal Lands in Arsaal, Lebanon.

There were actually two projects in Arsaal, sometimes referred as Phase I and II, Brooks explained. These projects are just closing now, so the memory problem evoked by Carol Weiss was not an issue in this case.

Brooks described the geography of Arsaal, which is a large province in the extreme northeast corner of Lebanon. By Lebanese standards, it is isolated and remote, even though it is only 3.5 hours by road from Beirut.

The population is relatively small, with 36,000 inhabitants, half of whom live in the community of Arsaal or its vicinity. There are twice as many goats and sheep as people, Brooks added.

The region enjoys marginal rainfall, with an average of 300 mm of rain a year. In reality, there is more water available because of the runoff from the snow in the Anti-Lebanon Mountains. There is a high snow pack on those mountains that feeds the community located on their flanks. Before the 1960s, the economy of Arsaal was low-input sustainable agriculture, with a cash income from herds of sheep and goats. Brooks added that the usual "activities one expects near a remote border" also contributed to the local economy.

The project was built around two land-use conflicts. The first one appeared with the introduction of orchards as cash crops. Some 40 years ago, one person started growing fruit trees on rangeland, mainly cherries and apricots, and discovered that when they trucked their products into urban areas, it was a very successful venture. Arsaal soon became a major fruit-producing region.

But, Brooks pointed out—there was indeed a "but"—to maximize output, families with land began to "enclose" (in the old British sense) the best land for orchards. This not only reduced the area available for pasture but also precluded the use of just those pastures that were critical for the herds in dry years, as the orchards were planted in the hollows where grass lasted throughout the summer.

As a result, there were plenty of internal conflicts between herders and fruit growers, with divides along local class and family lines.

The second conflict, Brooks said, had to do with the creation of limestone quarries. With the intensive reconstruction effort taking place in Lebanon, there was a high demand for limestone, the type of stone commonly used for facing on buildings. Limestone was therefore a high-value but obviously non-renewable "crop." It proved to be quite profitable, although it is uncertain whom for, as ownership was often unclear. These quarries were created in the last ten years when road access improved for this remote region.

But—there is also a "but" in this case—to create the quarries the land used until that point for fruit orchards on the lower slopes of the mountains was taken over. In addition, the blasting and the heavy trucks used to transport the stone raised huge amounts of dust that smothered and choked the remaining fruit trees in the surrounding areas. Road surfaces were also destroyed by the heavy traffic and became dangerous. Unlike the first one, this conflict divided Arsaalis from "outsiders."

Brooks then described the goals and methods of the Arsaal projects. The two phases of "Sustainable Improvement of Marginal Lands in Lebanon"

- Analyzed the extent and nature of the changes in land use
- Defined the impacts on the natural resources base and the environment
- Defined the impacts on socio-economic relationships
- Developed technical and institutional measures for more sustainable land-use management
- Built the management and analytical capacity

What were the measures of the project's success? Brooks reminded participants that the projects included in the study had been pre-selected because they were deemed successful. Based on their achievement of specific objectives, the two Arsaal projects were clearly successful. However, the object of the present exercise, Brooks pointed out, was to judge their success by a different standard, namely their influence on policy. He added that policy impacts were not listed in the objectives of the project and were at no point mentioned as a specific objective in either of the Arsaal projects. It is possible to infer, though, that this element was always present in the minds of both researchers and at least some citizens of Arsaal, Brooks added.

The projects had a significant influence on policy, Brooks concluded, at least if "policy" reflects the key elements of politics in Lebanon. These elements include national policies that are often vague and seldom formalized. A great many of the policies are *de facto* rather than *de jure*. Another element is the large number of splits in the Lebanese society—this society is divided along class, religious, and regional lines—but "Arsaalis fit in none of the major power groupings." They seem to be on the outside. Also, there was no municipal government to speak of in Arsaal from early in the Civil War until 1999. The final element highlighted by Brooks is the research environment in Lebanon, which is strong but tends to follow traditional academic lines in a mono-disciplinary and non-participatory manner.

Success in achieving a policy impact must therefore begin from the fact that, starting from its geographic isolation, Arsaal has been politically marginalized in Lebanon for many, many years, said Brooks.

He then reviewed the types of policy influence the projects had, pointing out that some were partially unintended. Their impact was primarily horizontal on researchers and research institutions. They also had a reasonable impact downward on local people and institutions. The direction where the impact was the smallest was upward, as national institutions were not significantly influenced.

There was bad news in regard to the policy influence upward on the national government: the Ministry of Agriculture was relatively impervious to both the process and the results of the Arsaal study as pastoralism and rangeland management not being among the Ministry's top priorities. No new resources have been allocated. There were also good news stories: the projects managed to garner some attention at the national level and some people are now following their progress. Extension officers have started attending workshops given in Arsaal, and Members of Parliaments from the region have been taking some of the issues to higher levels.

There is mixed news when it comes to the influence the projects have had on the municipal government. Progress at the municipal level is hindered by the lack of funds, conflicting priorities among municipal officials, and the fact that these people have related more with the development aspect of the projects versus their research dimension, and with the technical side of the research over the social aspects. However, municipal officials are now thoroughly familiar with project activities and research results. Several members of NGOs who used to work with the Arsaal projects now work for the municipality, and officials and researchers are now comfortable with each other.

The policy influence on the community is more difficult to document because it represents various forms of capacity building. Rather than economic, the real legacy of the projects was institutional. Cooperatives were created for herders and women, a Local Users Network was put in place, and a multi-stakeholder Natural Resources Platform was established for developing an agenda of action for the government.

The biggest gains were made horizontally. The policy influence was mostly felt by the American University of Beirut (AUB), Brooks pointed out. Arsaal reintroduced field research at AUB after the Civil War. It linked research focus and method to community development, which led to the

creation of a new multi-disciplinary group at AUB called the Environment and Sustainable Development Unit to link research and outreach. Outside of AUB, the projects also influenced the Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute that rethought its role and modified its approach, and regional institutions that now promote the "Arsaal approach." They were also instrumental in the selection by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) of the Arsaal projects as the best entry point for work against desertification.

Brooks said that the project scored high on multidisciplinarity, medium on participation (some groups and sectors were not sufficiently included and participatory communication failed) and poorly on gender mainstreaming. Although the research team included very capable women and helped some women move into management positions with NGOs, men are still in charge of marketing and finances in the Women's Coop. Furthermore when women are included in meetings, they often play a minor role, and there are still no women on the Municipal Council. Brooks suggested that gender mainstreaming might be the wrong perspective. Quoting a member of the Municipal Council, he suggested that "The issue of rights for women is important in Arsaal, but gender issues are not." He also pointed out that, although gender distinctions remain in work, these are often default assignments, and men will often assist with women's work and vice versa. The best point of entry for analysis of agricultural activities is the family and its kinship relationships, he concluded, not women *per se*.

Why was Arsaal ready to accept a research project of this nature and pick up on many if not all research results? Brooks credited a generation of "radicalized" young people returning to Arsaal after the Civil War for this openness, a new leadership looking for new ways to pose demands, a new political scene where basing the economy on illegal trading with Syria was no longer feasible, and finally the enthusiasm, tenacity and skill of the AUB faculty and the care that was put in the selection of students who worked in Arsaal.

The marginalization of Arsaal will not end quickly, Brooks concluded, but the two IDRC projects at AUB have helped move the region and the community closer to the mainstream of Lebanese political and economic life than could have been anticipated.

Discussion

A participant asked how the projects ended up being in Arsaal and whose choice it was. Brooks responded that Shadi Hamadeh of AUB made the decision. Hamadeh explained that as part of a natural resources management study, they had started working in another village to update a study done by Ann Fuller in the 1930s. While there, they happened to talk to some herders from Arsaal who explained their herds were grazing there because they had been driven out by the conversion of the pastoral land to fruit production. The conflict sounded interesting and they decided to study it.

Another participant pointed out that IDRC studies often focus on marginal cases and draw useful lessons from them.

In response to a question on policy, Brooks said that they could see changes in the ways governments operated, public services were delivered, and AUB worked. "Things happened in

Arsaal when someone eventually went to Beirut and got them to fix the road."

Someone asked if the interfaculty program at AUB was linked to the work in Arsaal. If this AUB capacity building was successful, would efforts be made by IDRC to track down where graduate students go? Hamadeh said that the Arsaal projects were anterior to the establishment of the interfaculty program, but that many faculty members were instrumental. One of them is now the head of the environmental program. Two graduate students from the interfaculty program are working for the Ministry of Agriculture, two are with the Ministry of Environment, and two or three others are with the Economic and Social Council at AUB (ESCUAB), a regional UNDP program working on socio-economic issues. He added that Arsaal was the first attempt at interdisciplinary research.

A participant asked Brooks to comment on his quote about the distinction between women's rights and gender issues. The team had long conversations with gender specialists, Brooks said, and he went into them after having been primed by Eglal Rached, Director of IDRC's Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa. It soon became clear that the most productive way to approach gender issues was from the perspective of how families work, instead of starting with a focus on women.

In response to a question on how the study influenced the definition of policy, given that it showed that some issues could be dealt with locally while others could not, Brooks said that it had, but it was difficult to document. Hamadeh used the example of the land tenure issue. Most of the quarries are illegal and unregulated, he explained. The herders tried to go to the municipality to reinstate their grazing lands but had little political weight. A group of herders then decided to talk to the Ministry of Agriculture, then to the Prime Minister who said he could not move on this issue right away but "put a big plan in the works."

Group Discussion of the three questions

In the sphere of policy influence, what kinds of outcomes can we identify?

- Some researchers supported by IDRC end up leaving their jobs and going to work at the municipal level. This was seen as an unintentional outcome. Another participant commented that this might reflect IDRC's choice of partners: Maybe the Centre chooses researchers who show a potential for opting for this kind of work.
- There can be a change in the process used for decision-making at all levels. Brooks added that there could also be changes in the ways things get done, in organizational practices.
- A policy process that was unknown to researchers may become understood. It was pointed out that it is important to work with the recipients prior to the project and to develop a common language at the beginning, so that everyone understands the policy-making process, as it saves a lot of time later. This point was summarized by participants as "developing capacity and a shared language."
- "Engaging governments in projects" was listed as another outcome. Using her experience in Latin America, a participant talked about how municipalities were now integrating urban agriculture in their development plans, following some successful smaller-scale

projects.
- Another outcome is the "modification of the way resources are allocated" as a result of the research done.
- A participant added "getting involved internationally" as a critical outcome, pointing out that in the environmental field in particular, problems such as water management issues often have no borders. A key condition for tackling issues at the international level is creating self-confidence, he added, citing his experience in Ukraine: only once a certain level of self-confidence had been achieved locally did project people felt up to talking to the Russians who were also implicated in the management of the river system.
- Levelling the playing field with the implementation of new processes was also considered an important outcome.
- Promoting a holistic approach and teaching decision-makers, politicians, and researchers how to think globally, and to adopt a partnership mentality was cited as another outcome. One participant added "the modification of research methodologies."
- "Stimulating research on policies to better integrate them" was also suggested. Using the American University in Beirut for an example, this participant talked about developing a mechanism to stay in touch with policy-makers.
- "Empowering weaker stakeholders" can also be an outcome, someone pointed out. In Peru, for example, the intervention of the IWT helped level the playing field and give more power to local people. A participant suggested that this is a tool as well as an outcome. She said that a number of declarations had been signed in South America about the commitment to urban agriculture and that added considerable weight to the smaller initiatives.
- Another outcome can be that a project helps operationalize broad and vague policies, as was the case with native land rights in Panama.
- Opening windows on the rest of the world by putting researchers in contact with the international research community was one outcome of the work done by IDRC in Ukraine.
- "Changing tenure and access regimes," as was the case with water users associations, was added to the list.
- "Reframing a problem" can also be an outcome, as research can show that a problem is different from what was originally thought. What was initially perceived in some places as an issue with a slash and burn agriculture turned out to be a problem caused by a lack of land tenure, for example.
- "New legislations" was added as a final item on the list, as it had not been mentioned yet.

In achieving these outcomes, what are the ways "we" mobilized?

Participants provided most of their answers to this question in point form.

- Networking
- Democratizing research, with more people involved, more participation
- Sharing access to information
- Engaging decision-makers early and meaningfully in projects
- Mapping the various stakeholders and knowing their role and policy field, and doing so

continuously
- Looking for conflicts, as conflicts often indicate that something has to change; seeing conflicts as entry points for research to have an influence
- Using capacity building as a delivery strategy, as many countries like policy experts
- Managerial empowerment at the local level
- Mapping the resources available and doing a resource analysis to determine how to better manage and leverage these resources
- Going in without a preset agenda in order to build trust, as it helps make research more relevant and more influential
- Using the media, learning from advocates who have well understood their power and know how to use them to their benefit
- Taking advantage of all windows of opportunities, not only conflicts
- Engaging diverse or radical thinkers, mobilizing a range of opinions and perspectives to ensure a rich policy agenda
- Mobilizing policy champions
- Adopting a "closing the loop" strategy
- Supporting research over long periods of time, while maintaining the ability to change gear quickly
- Refraining from "trying too hard" to have research influence policy: there were IDRC projects where policy influence was on the agenda and "nothing happened" and others where this was not an objective and "it did happen." This participant warned against the risk of applying tricks we have learned and failing.
- Remaining non-threatening
- "Policy influence is really the role of our partners, not IDRC's," a participant commented.

What does this tell us about our approach to program delivery in this program area?

"If what we are trying to do is enable our partners to identify opportunities to influence policy, what are the implications for the design of our programs?" the facilitators asked.

- There is a danger of jumping on one of the many trendy bandwagons and being swayed by what is in style at the moment.
- It is necessary to be able to change gear more effectively. Another participant emphasized the importance of flexible response mechanisms.
- When working on marginalized situations, an impact on policy at the national level should not be expected, someone underlined. IDRC should therefore have "twin streams" with different expectations regarding the influence of programs on policy.
- IDRC needs to provide more training to its partners in the areas of facilitation techniques, participatory research, and negotiation, for example. Another participant added "training in political opportunity assessment" to help partners better acknowledge the importance of the context.
- Capacity building would also benefit IDRC.

Maureen O'Neil pointed out that, while researchers are trained to understand problems, IDRC's

Act states that the Centre must assist in solving problems. Researchers are asked to develop "action maps" for social change, she added. However, it must be recognized that their advantage is understanding problems, and they should not always become political operatives. Programs tend to be successful when researchers and NGOs team up.
Although some are always pushing for applied research, the focus must be on outcomes and applications of research in project development, a participant commented. Another stressed the importance of designing projects as models of good research practices.

IDRC must not push every project to influence policy. There are two kinds of project, a participant said—one with a potential to influence policy, one without. If a project has such a potential, it must be acknowledged from the beginning with the proper resources, "otherwise, it won't happen." He suggested that a special unit be set up within IDRC to work on that.

Another suggestion was for indicators and proper mapping instruments, including indicators that could be used when selecting projects. Outcome Mapping could be useful to help formulate the expected influence on policy, said a participant.

Before returning to the plenary session, participants informally continued their discussion for a few minutes. In response to a question on the need to keep the distinction between policy influence and other types of influence, such as development impacts, a participant said that, yes, it was necessary to distinguish between impacts in general and policy influence.

O'Neil agreed that it was important to keep this distinction. She pointed out that the objective was to understand the relationship between the generation of new knowledge and ways things are done, "not just any old behaviour change. Should we favour those projects that seem to focus on policy change more than others, given the scarce resources?" she asked. "Our mandate is to support research that leads to change," she reminded participants.

A discussion ensued on the notions of policy influence and public policy. "Is a donor's policy a public policy? Is an NGO's?" a participant asked. Some participants decided that it is a public policy whenever there is a framework where decisions are made.

Two or three years ago, a participant said, the debate at IDRC was about the influence on decision-makers, not policy-makers. O'Neil used as an example the issue of insecticides and flowers in Ecuador. Getting farmers to not wear their boots in the kitchen is not a policy decision, she said, but it is still essential to find ways to be convincing with research findings in order to get governments to change the regulations on insecticide use. "Making it illegal to use certain concentrations is a policy change," she pointed out, adding that the same evidence can be used for both things.

It is important to keep the public policy framework in mind, a participant commented. In the context of the Environment and Natural Resources Management case studies, local governments are seen as policy-makers.

It is not limitative to focus on public policy, another participant concluded.

Social and Economic Equity (SEE) Program Area
Facilitators: Pam Scholey and Martha Melesse

Before the presentation of the case study findings by Bienvenido Argueta, the facilitator asked
Colleen Duggan to present an overview of the Guatemalan context

Duggan first handed out two sheets:
- Financing of Education in Guatemala, Phase I
- Financing of Education Reform: Possibilities in the Short and Medium Term, Phase II

She reported that, since the English translation of this case study was sometimes difficult to read
and comprehend, she would review the main policy context and used a flow chart to outline the
most important elements.

Beginning in 1996, Duggan said, the Guatemalan government and the National Guatemalan
Revolutionary Unity (URNG) signed several Peace Accords.

Indigenous peoples from 21 different ethnic groups make up 60 per cent of the country's
population, making Guatemala a complex environment in which to work.

Twelve different peace accords represented different areas stemming from the past conflict.
These included areas such as access, military, and legal and constitutional reforms. Two accords
in particular were used in this case study:

- The Socio-Economic Aspects of the Agrarian Situation, and
- The Indigenous People's accord.

Both of these accords set time lines for policy changes that would be required in future to make
education more accessible.

Two mechanisms oversee the Peace Accords: the Accompaniment Commission, and the
MINUGUA, the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala.

Two national processes linked to the accords. These included constitutional and legal changes
required to implement the accords, and the Fiscal Pact (a taxation reform).

Mixed commissions created under the two accords of interest were comprised of government
officials, former guerrillas, and private sector members. The Consultative Commission was made
up of government, private, and civil society members, whereas the Mixed Commission was made
up of members of government members and indigenous peoples.

The cornerstone of these was the design for educational reform. The Mixed Commission had the
responsibility of bringing the policy into practice. Its agenda was to reform education and other
policies that allow for sustainability in education.

Bienvenido Argueta provided the context of the case study, noting that it was a grassroots
movement to research policy influence problems. Most of Guatemala's traditional institutions do

not employ indigenous people working for them, so indigenous peoples rarely have the ability to conduct research themselves. This highlighted the difficulties that countries with such complex cultural differences face and which led to two separate kinds of structures—traditional versus non-traditional.

During the Guatemalan elections, responsibility for decision-making was transferred to the Congress from the Executive Branch—a much different approach than many were accustomed to. Argueta noted that the next government could reverse this practice.

He then reported that because the Fiscal Pact collapsed, the new government did not recognize agreements with the civil society and the private sector. Without the Pact people do not have to pay the taxes required in order to finance education reform.

Argueta outlined the process of participation in educational reform. For example, although the teacher's union had requested a wage increase, it did not happen without the Fiscal Pact.

Overall, he said, there is a requirement to introduce new approaches rather than use traditional structures, and there is a need to improve dialogue and consensus.

Argueta highlighted the challenge of what was termed the "rationale of mass media and public opinion." Essentially this meant that although they attempted to modify policies to a more western style, or "world of behaviour," some Guatemalan newspapers would only publish ideas from traditional centres. Consequently, researchers had difficulty disseminating the information.

Argueta noted that in a post-conflict situation, it is very difficult to put together a common strategy between so many different groups.

Describing the types of influence that affected the research, Argueta said that political capacities need to be expanded to

- Improve knowledge and rational support for elaborating the new policies, programs, and projects;
- Develop new talent for research and analysis. To broaden the political horizons, new concepts and ideas need to be introduced into the agenda, and researchers and others needed to be educated about these concepts.

He then summed up the factors that influence Guatemalan political structures:

- Non-western rationality versus democratic modern state
- A conflict of interests between multiple groups
- Traditional and new discourses based on information and a set of arguments
- The conditions and strategies of communication among groups

He also said that, to a degree, some questions lose their validity depending on which group is posing them (e.g., private, public, or civil society).

Discussion:

A participant commented that this is a complicated social context and a recent project. The handouts included specific outputs (e.g., a briefing paper, policy proposal, and capacity building in Phase I; reform funding study, policy recommendations, education analysis training in Phase II) expected at the outset of the project but it is not clear if those have been realized.

Argueta replied that the problem is that research needs to be ongoing. Second, since the budget did not increase, the proposal had to change. All of this was done when the Fiscal Pact was still in place and would have been able to locate many sources, but with the demise of the Pact, this did not turn out to be the case. Educational reform, he said, is important and people are talking about it, but it cannot be done in only one or two years.

Colleen Duggan added that the diagnostic study and the proposal were two objectives accomplished. However, she noted that there were constraints tied to the timelines of the national budget, and at the time researchers did not know what the budget process would be. Consequently, they lost approximately six months during which time they lost key people and funding. This represented a major opportunity loss. There were also divisions within the Mayan movement and not everyone belonged to the same policy "circles."

"I had a conflicted reaction to this study and worried that IDRC had been over ambitious," stated a participant. IDRC expected quick outcomes, and this was not realistic, especially with groups of people that had been former combatants. But much has been done in a short time and other people are picking up the pieces from the research. Perhaps IDRC has not gone far enough in thinking of what it wants to do. There is nothing in this study about linking to other groups and bring these issues to a larger region.

Duggan observed that when talking to IDRC program officers, she was told that IDRC did not have a specific program for influencing policies. She noted that Carol Weiss had said just that morning that this project was ambitious, but that it also assisted non-traditional power groups (e.g., women, indigenous peoples) to come up with their own proposals. IDRC's investment has to be over a longer term in some cases.

One participant reminded the group that this project was conceived during peace talks when there typically tends to be a lot of "euphoria." Key groups wanted to see action on the ground. Maybe this was unrealistic, he said, but it was important because the challenges were enormous. The impact on policy is only one aspect. He noted that this project also helped Coordination of Organizations of the Mayan Peoples of Guatemala (COPMAGUA) to take steps on policy development and helped build capacity in civil society, so taking the results to a larger group is perhaps not realistic at the moment.

Another participant noted that IDRC's expectations were unrealistic given the short time period (one year) and the amount of funding ($120,000). She said that if capacity were to be built, policy changes would need to happen over a period of decades.

Group Response to the three questions

In the sphere of policy influence, what kinds of outcomes can we identify?

1. Changing Understanding and Creating Awareness

Project	Outcome
MIMAP Morocco	Change in official definition of poverty; related change in policy, e.g., olive harvest time was amended to reflect the true harvest time
	Local poverty planning
Vietnam	Sensitization to new issues, views and trends
	Awareness of issues by policy-makers

2. Capacity Building and Training

Project	Outcome
(general comments)	More training programs for researchers
	Development of policy research capacity
Guatemala	Develop research capacities of non-traditional research partners with agenda to influence policy
Vietnam	New and increased capacity for policy-relevant research
Arsaal	Development of new multi-disciplinary research program

3. Opening spaces for discussion between groups, and involvement of civil society

Project	Outcome
(general comments)	Civil society, including marginal groups included in the research process
PBR	Opening spaces for discussion of research and its results can assist in building confidence between estranged groups.
	Generation of knowledge plays an important role in civil society oversight of democratic process.
IMFNS	Civil society, including marginal groups, included in the decision-making process in managing resources
MIMAP Senegal	Stimulated national and regional debates and policy dialogue on poverty reduction involving government and civil society
	Enhanced wide knowledge and awareness about poverty dimensions and dynamics both within government departments and among civil society groups consulted

Ukraine and Peru	Bringing out public information and moving public opinion and influencing media

4. Dissemination of Information and Results

Project	Outcome
Peru	Efficient dissemination of information and enlightened policy-makers

5. Moving between research and policy making through research and researchers

Project	Outcome
Chile	IDRC-supported researchers take on key position in government
Vietnam	Link between research centre and policy-makers
Ukraine	Greater sharing of information across government and research units
Acacia	Networking

6. Assist in getting policy-relevant proposals to the table

Project	Outcome
(general comments)	Define and assess policy processes for proposals
Guatemala	Concrete policy proposals
Middle East/North Africa	Profile landscape of the policy influence community by country

7. Input into government policy

Project	Outcome
Morocco	Input into government programs for sectoral development (e.g., aromatic plants)
	Result of researcher being recognized as the expert
Peru consortium	Macroeconomic model developed by research team and adopted by Central Bank
EcoHealth (Mexico)	Research content and methodology provides basis for government programs, e.g., Mexican air quality
Vietnam	Providing information and policy advice on complicated issues

8. Support for experimentation/pilot projects with the potential to affect policy decisions

Project	Outcome
Acacia	Pilot projects led to implementation
MIMAP (Philippines)	Support policy pilots
Luang Prabang	Demonstration effect as a positive determinant of policy formulation

Scholey expressed surprise that no negative or unintended outcomes came out of the exercise, citing the fact that some researchers had been threatened or arrested in the past.

In achieving these outcomes, what are the ways "we" mobilized?

Facilitator Martha Melesse requested that participants not only discuss how IDRC and its partners mobilized, but note any instances where IDRC "got in the way." She also stressed the distinction between what IDRC has done to assist its partners achieve results and what strategies IDRC has used.

One participant cited the project in Vietnam. There, he said, IDRC affected policy because of its willingness to stay with one group of people over a long period of time. IDRC did not expect instant results and stayed with the project despite complaints from others of its long-term commitment to the mentoring process. Another participant agreed, saying that IDRC has a history of respecting a country's priorities, as in the Vietnam example.

One participant commented on the link between researchers and advocacy groups and civil society, which allows for a better dissemination of information.

Another pointed out that IDRC has helped with capacity building, e.g., it has allowed its project officers to nominate a person for additional training. The difficulty with this strategy, he said, is that this can and has led to a "brain drain" in some cases.

One participant said that IDRC is willing to take risks with non-traditional partners or different types of information.

Another participant said that what hinders IDRC in facilitating policy impacts is two-fold: IDRC's time lines seem to encourage short, one-off projects, and its level of risk aversion. Both of these, she said, can get in the way sometimes.

Melesse then asked if the group saw any negative outcomes because of this last point regarding risk aversion.

Pam Scholey said that it was hard to comment on a particular case, but noted that in Palestine, IDRC spent one-and-a-half years speaking with people when that energy might better have been spent on the program itself. She noted that IDRC knows it must weigh the risks, but suggested that this could perhaps be done more creatively.

A participant noted that with so many smaller capacity-building projects, some carefully chosen areas could benefit from economies of scale. On this point, another participant noted that there

are a number of cases where IDRC has chosen not to work with weaker or smaller groups because stronger or larger groups already had an "in" into policy circles.

One participant said that IDRC has not done much meta-analysis, relying more on research networks to share information.

Increasingly, another participant said, IDRC is convinced that multi-disciplinary teams are needed to blend policy with social research. The organization could look at inter-program initiative collaboration to do this.

Melesse asked for examples of where IDRC has used multi-disciplinary teams to influence policies.

One participant cited EcoHealth Mexico as an example, stating that it forced all sectors to work on one project (e.g., the clean air issue attracted more than just health groups). She also noted that, in Peru, there was multi-sectoral input, but no communication among these groups of the results. Another participant used the example of Environment and Natural Resource Management (ENRM), because, by its very definition of managing coastal zone management issues, it had to involve multiple sectors.

One participant believed that IDRC must do more to support its researchers' partners in order for them to understand and analyze their own governance processes and systems.

Within IDRC, one person noted, more needs to be done to understand how policy is made, how the agenda is set, etc. There must be a context put to the policy influence, she said, because if IDRC is to support a group over the long term, it must understand the policy context in order to choose the most appropriate group with which to partner.

What does this tell us about our approach to programme delivery in this Program Area?

Building on the discussion about context raised in the latter half of the discussion of Question #2, one participant noted IDRC's programming limitation, saying that there is no development funding available to obtain a contextual understanding of an area or an issue. Understanding the context is more than understanding the structure, he said. IDRC needs to know what confluence of people, events, etc. at any given moment in time informs the policy narrative. One participant suggested that the case studies might be used to understand this larger contextual issue.

This discussion, however, raised a potential tension because it was unclear whether IDRC could both understand the full policy narrative without sacrificing results.

The group reached consensus that a comprehensive framework is required to study the full policy narrative, a framework that would allow different project people to talk with each other.

Another potential limitation pinpointed was IDRC's inability to move fast enough to take advantage of policy windows of opportunity. Although IDRC can support groups that are familiar with the local context and is also good at innovating, it is not as good at replicating

projects or programs. Following up on this, one participant noted a disconnect between IDRC's sophisticated view of the policy process and what actually appears in its written documentation.

ICT4D: Acacia Mozambique

Facilitator: Steve Song

Steve Song explained that after a short presentation and discussion, participants would address three questions

Zenda Ofir provided a short summary of the Mozambique Acacia program and lessons learned.

In Mozambique, the Acacia initiative began around 1995–96. The head of the CIUEM (Centro de Informática Universidade Eduardo Mondlane—the Mozambique Centre of Computer Science) participated in international meetings and met with IDRC. IDRC did background work and arranged a conference in Maputo, and Acacia was born. It was officially implemented in 1997. There was a national Acacia advisory committee and a secretariat in Maputo. The advisory committee was responsible for implementing a series of activities: two telecentre projects in rural areas; a SchoolNet project; a program focusing on youth and the implementation of ICTs within their environment (using a telecentre in the school environment); community-based natural resource management and wireless connectivity; women and networking; and peace-building using ICTs. There was also a project to establish a national ICT policy for Mozambique, and a series of projects that would build on the implementation of that policy. These initiatives are only now starting to take place.

Acacia was launched in 1997. Most of the projects were completed in 2001. In some cases, there was renewal for a second phase. The telecentres are still in place.

There were several key ingredients to the success of this project in Mozambique:

- There was a policy window.
- ICTs represent a new field, so there are fewer preconceptions about the policy issues.
- Both top-down and bottom-up approaches were taken, in a complementary approach. Projects were designed through consultation, according to national priorities and interests.

Through IDRC advocacy, policy-makers saw that they needed an overarching framework for ICT policy, within which sectoral policies could be established if needed.

The bottom-up approach was taken when IDRC and others set up model projects on the ground. Many issues were raised by these pilot projects. There were also consultative processes that brought stakeholders together. In Mozambique, policy processes only became consultative in the early 1990s. This was one of the first such processes, and it was a model for how policy processes should take place (i.e. by valuing transparency and bringing stakeholders together). The policy process itself was led by the ICT policy commission, which had its own consultative processes (supported by IDRC). These underlying consultative processes, as well as some ad hoc studies which also informed the policy environment, worked together to facilitate the policy

influence.

There were very good personal relationships and high levels of trust between IDRC and the ICT champions and decision-makers, as a result of IDRC's non-prescriptive, supportive style, and its technical expertise.

A key IDRC representative was frequently mentioned as the person who inspired the policy-making process and provided valuable technical expertise. The fact that the people in Mozambique could respect her knowledge and IDRC's commitment not to push its own agenda (but to work with local partners, networks, and priorities) was key in drawing IDRC into the process. Developing countries are always concerned about colonialization, and IDRC was one of the few organizations that they trusted.

A number of factors helped contribute to the success of the program:

- There was support for the policy formulation process from the highest government office, and participation by the highest government officials.
- The policy formulation process occurred in a neutral place.
- There was support for and promotion of transparent, multi-stakeholder processes by both government and IDRC.
- There was a small, well-networked group of champions and decision-makers across sectors.
- There was a very active ICT/IDRC champion.

The way in which IDRC does its business was in line with the environment in Mozambique in the 1990s, Ofir concluded. The value placed on transparency and consultation gave IDRC an edge above everyone else.

At least seven lessons were learned from this experience:

1. **Policy influence can be enhanced if it is consciously ingrained into interventions at various levels—*if* IDRC is dedicated to influencing policy.**

    It is important to ensure that IDRC and project staff have a clear understanding of what "policy influence" means—and that they understand the possible mechanisms of policy influence. Multi-pronged approaches should be built and integrated into programming. Results should be monitored, and adaptations done. A key issue is whether projects should be designed to ensure that they influence policy: "Do you consciously include policy-influencing mechanisms right from the start?" The same question could apply to gender issues theory and implementation.

2. **The greatest chance for policy influence is through trust, personal relationships, and mutual respect.**

    The key is to focus on human relationships: identify champions and decision-makers, build trust, involve those who can create awareness, lead advocacy, and make linkages between

people. These local people can be paired with expert IDRC advisors and program officers.

3. **A facilitating, non-prescriptive approach to well-designed, multi-pronged programs (according to the national priorities) leads to greater trust, more sustainable relationships, and greater potential for policy influence.**

4. **The more role players there are, the more important the conscious positioning of the program within the policy arena becomes (e.g. through the use of champions or appropriate structures).**

   In South Africa, this was not done: the advisory committee was made up of sectors, not people with influence, and was ineffective.

5. **An early entry provides scope for pioneering work. Monitor the possible opening of policy windows.**

6. **Ineffective management systems and lack of communication can destroy trust.**

   It is important to communicate decisions, and the reasons for decisions, efficiently. Systems and structures must be adapted quickly in times of change. The implications of decisions should be considered carefully. IDRC should plan to do "damage control" if trust is broken. Learning systems such as ELSA should be implemented immediately, as an integral part of the program.

7. **Effective policy influence does not ensure good policy-making. For the sake of real development, the building of indigenous research capacity and in-depth investigation of policy issues are essential. This will help to ensure quality policy research capacity and could improve policy development.**

   IDRC and partners should establish institutional research and policy influence capacity that can build on these lessons learned and provide better scope for better-quality policy.

Discussion

A participant noted that this was a relatively small pool of people, and the environment was not as complex as it was in South Africa. One of the key players was well networked on the continent and was well aware of some of the ideas that had emerged regarding national communication inventories. This was significant in terms of his capacity to generate receptivity in Mozambique regarding what IDRC was trying to do.

He added that the last point made regarding policy research capacity was also significant. One ray of hope is that conscious work was done to build capacity within the university, so that when key people left, they wouldn't take all the information with them. When there is just a small pool of people, there need to be replacements when some individuals leave.

Ofir noted that this field is new for everyone, so there is not a large pool of people to draw from. She added that the international arena, and the influence of African events, raised awareness among key people. IDRC promoted and supported many of those initiatives across Africa. The value of international exposure cannot be underestimated.

A participant noted that when he was in Maputo, he also noticed "who was not involved"—for example, the state-owned telephone company. It was hard to build capacity in that context. "While the dinosaur was resting, these folks were making progress and establishing policy. When it woke up, all this had been done." The landscape in Mozambique has changed and there are now many donors. This begs the question, "What do we do now?"

The answer, said Ofir, is, "build capacity."

The case of Acacia, for the four communities targeted, is special at IDRC, said a participant. When IDRC supported the development of ICT policy in South Africa, it was a specific project, with a straightforward relationship. The telecentre project in Malaysia was a single project with a relatively small investment (and, as such, is different from a large, multi-project investment). In Mozambique, there were several projects. IDRC is comparing the impact of the program in these different contexts—but how is it possible to draw conclusions from that? There are significant differences between a single project over a fixed period and a longer-term, larger investment in a wide-ranging project with different elements (some related to policy development).

Another speaker referred to the idea that a single, national, crosscutting ICT policy would be better than several sectoral policies. He asked how much of that is specific to the simple context of Mozambique (where there are fewer players) and if there is any comparative work that investigates whether that type of policy is better. Sometimes, specific policies and well-defined interfaces are needed. Is this recommendation specific to the case of Mozambique, or is it a good idea in general?

Ofir replied that she was not an expert in the field, but suggested that when a crosscutting field is not mature, it is important to try to create synergy between different sectors. In the beginning stages, it is crucial to have an overarching regime. Sectoral policies can then fit into that framework. In Senegal, the opposite approach was taken because of government decentralization. It doesn't seem to have developed an overarching policy out of its local/sectoral policies.

Responding to another question, she noted that particular projects have specific influences. Here, there was a huge spectrum of policy involved. A program approach with many mechanisms for influencing policy will have a lot of influence. In a single project, there might only be one influence. She favoured integrated approaches that try to make sense of the bigger picture.

A participant said that he was struck by the fact that there was a lot of support for capacity building, but not necessarily for the project itself. This occurred in specific sectors: Has it transpired at the national level?

Ofir noted that there has been a lot of capacity building, which took place through these

interactions and broadening policy horizons. What was not built in was the capacity to interrogate policy issues in depth. The policy built was just the beginning of understanding the policy framework/issues that had to be addressed.

Going back to the comparison between a single project and a total program, a participant suggested that the consequences are different in different places. Development environments are messy and it is necessary to be opportunistic: the situation depends on the entry points and the trust relationships. Sometimes, one can make a profound impact with a small amount of money targeted to a specific situation. In Kenya, a small amount of money is being targeted toward rewriting specific policy. This was opportunistic: there was an entry point and there were contacts. The policy impact of projects is sensitive to those elements. One can look for a sophisticated model, but the development process is messier.

The speaker reinforced Ofir's comment on the importance of building trust and not having an agenda. IDRC has a good reputation because it has a history of doing research through local people, rooted in the context of the country. For example, in Kenya, IDRC was chosen over DFAIT and others, because DFAIT wanted to review all the resumes of the people on the task force, and IDRC did not make such stipulations. IDRC worked to find the funding that people needed to keep going forward.

"What about being open to dinosaurs?" asked another participant. At what point is it useful to slow down and build capacity at a national telecommunications institution that was once a state monopoly? This seems like a logical place to begin to build capacity, so that new technologies are later incorporated into these institutions. Do the early adopters end up working in a newly-reformed dinosaur?

Responding to the last question, Ofir said that she did not think this was likely. Another speaker said that, in the pan-Asian environment, early adopters have to find new livelihoods, because the system doesn't like them. The innovators generally don't find a way back in, because the institutions don't relate to them. Ofir noted that some of these dinosaur organizations develop their own agendas. This can be detrimental to the whole environment in which policy-making is taking place.

Group Response to the three questions:

In the sphere of policy influence, what kinds of outcomes can we identify?

A participant asked if they were using the same definition of "policy influence." He noted that they had been referring to national public policy, but policy is broader than that: it includes local government and other areas. Song urged participants to feel free to interpret policy as they use it in their everyday work.

An influence could include the creation of a network of people that may influence policy, said a participant. Outcomes could be at different levels, said another. For example, an outcome could be that a decision-maker is sensitized. At what level are the outcomes desired?

Song advised participants to think in terms of giving advice regarding program design to a new program officer at IDRC.

A participant cited an example of a project where CIDA was contributing over $900,000, but wanted IDRC to promise it would change ICT policy in India. IDRC said no, but had to look at what it expected the real output to be, using this amount of money in a specific amount of time. With this specific project, the outcome will be more modest, but it may lead toward policy change. In this case, the concrete outcome was to demonstrate a telecentre as a way of sensitizing policy-makers. Sensitization, therefore, was one outcome.

Song asked what kinds of networks it wanted to nurture as an outcome. The group agreed that networks should be nurtured with diverse actors at a relatively high level, and that work should be done to strengthen the capacity of marginalized groups to participate.

One outcome, said a participant, is to ensure a diversity of people at a relatively high level of government, so that it can bring various sectoral perspectives to the table.

Complex societies have many levels, said Song: civil society, government, and others. Should IDRC link into one of these networks? Ideally, it should mobilize and link with all of them. This is a practical consideration. It is important to say "diverse actors," and not to focus on one particular group.

A participant asked if it was necessary to have scoped out the situation in the country or sector that one is trying to influence. This would not have to be high-level work: it would be different in different countries and situations. Song noted that they were discussing things that have worked in particular situations—a menu of options that one might choose to investigate. Prior to doing any of that, said the speaker, one would need to scope out the situation that one is trying to change. Song concluded, then, that a scoping study would be an instrument of the outcome.

One goal is to focus on groups that are traditionally marginalized from processes, said a participant. For example, there was a project in Brazil focusing on engaging civil society in ICT policy, starting with NGOs and civil society organizations (predominantly of the ICT sector), and sensitizing the broad spectrum of civil society organizations so they could better understand the role that ICT may play (and, from there, engage in the ICT policy process).

A participant noted that one goal should be to expand policy capacities, including research capacity. In many cases, the contribution made by IDRC is not direct; but it is through networked research capacity that, over time, policy is built in more informed ways. This research capacity would exist across the board, not just within government institutions.

Many of the case studies discussed that morning started at the data collection level with the development of policy language and environmental information, said a participant. In some areas, IDRC is developing a whole new policy language and discourse. He spoke of a project where, at one point, a study was done to verify what was happening on the ground. In this case, the outcome would be the establishment of basic data: baseline studies, and the establishment of a common policy language (e.g. the definition of "universal access" and its concrete meaning for communities).

Demonstration projects and baseline scoping help to identify the best champions, said a participant. If a project is starting from scratch, one of the outcomes would be to figure out where to build capacity. This is a strategy for the research program to be developed. When beginning with basic data research, one must identify those who wish to carry the work forward.

A speaker noted that existing networks should be identified, involved in the process, and expanded. Others should be created.

Another speaker commented that there are now many more organizations involved in ICT in Mozambique—nationally, regionally, and internationally. Visibility on the international ICT scene can result in "trickle back" awareness, interest, and opportunities. Another outcome is that IDRC has learned better ways to program ICTs. IDRC is learning from Mozambique and has brought Mozambique's way of doing things to different parts of the world. Also, Mozambique is more involved internationally.

It is important to ensure the timeliness of ICT policies. This can help in attracting and developing the private sector in the area of ICTs by "helping to spot opportunities." This would also include rural ICTs, because private companies are starting to invest in rural connectivity.

Timely programs can have an impact on reform. For example, the deregulation of telecommunications policies has an impact. IDRC can help to ensure that policy-makers are aware of the implications.

There need to be smarter public investment policies and more effective ICT policies (i.e. more inclusive, aware policies in relation to issues such as gender).

IDRC has also played a role in promoting a more open culture of information knowledge sharing and information dissemination. They can help through the legitimization of space for dialogue

Participants agreed on the following outcomes:

- Demonstration projects
- Sensitization of policy-makers: helping to spot opportunities, and ensuring timeliness of ICT policies
- Network nurturing with diverse actors at a relatively high level
- Strengthened capacity for participation by marginalized groups
- Strengthened policy research capacity (in particular, networked research capacity)
- Baseline studies, feasibility studies, evaluative studies, and a common language for discussion
- Identification of key stakeholders/players
- Identification of existing networks and involvement of those networks in the process
- More organizations involved in ICTs nationally, regionally, and internationally
- Visibility on the international ICT scene (which can result in trickle-back awareness, interest, and opportunities)
- Learning for IDRC regarding better ways to program ICTs

- Attracting/developing the private sector in the area of ICTs, including rural ICTs
- Smarter public investment policies
- More effective, inclusive, aware ICT policies (e.g. more inclusive gender aspects)
- A more open culture of knowledge-sharing and information dissemination
- Legitimization of space for dialogue

In achieving these outcomes, what are the ways that "we" mobilized (including "we" at IDRC and "we," the partners)?

Participants identified many forms of mobilization. They distinguished between mobilization done by IDRC, by its partners, and by both IDRC and partners. They noted that many of the items under "IDRC" should be listed under "partners" as well, and vice versa. The positive qualities in each partner are two sides of the same coin.

IDRC…

- Stays in touch with partners over time, ensuring continuing dialogue, demonstrated interest, and motivation. Partners may take a long time to develop their project.

- Does not push its agenda onto partners.

- Works through local partners, ensuring that there is a real partnership.

- Focuses resources on key individuals and institutions. In the Vietnam cases, the strategy was to pick key institutions and, over a long period of time, legitimize their role locally as providers of quality research.

- Is opportunistic but not fickle. It is important to respond to the teachable moment, but not to change course so often that investments and relationships are sabotaged. The goal is to balance opportunism and longevity. It is also important not to raise expectations and then back off.

IDRC and Partners…

- Put a strong emphasis on the time involved in strategy development (in the early stages of dialogue), not trying to move too quickly, allowing time for projects to gestate (through appropriate dialogue and buy-in).

- Avoid structural rigidities. Before there can be order there must be chaos. Acacia began as a dynamic idea, even though the systems weren't in place: because of that, it was very successful.

- Encourage creativity (define basic parameters but don't put each other in a straightjacket).

- Trust each other and encourage innovation.

- Act as brokers of relationships. Some local organizations have strong connections with other partners in the region, but others do not. IDRC could help to bring them together.

- Are clear about the primary motivation, and whether there is a policy focus or not. In some cases, the goal was to build capacity, and the policy element arose later. This involves a discussion between IDRC and its partners.

- Support multi-stakeholder fora.

- Tailor dissemination to specific audiences. Communication products should be tailored to the audience (appropriate language, brevity, etc.).

- Work at multiple levels. The pilot projects and Acacia national advisory committees are complementary.

- Network projects together.

- Disseminate results in a timely and pervasive manner.

- Ensure that there is a dialogue on issues of gender and sustainability, and an understanding of these issues. "Are we building true capacity for people to continue playing a role in capacity-building even after we stop playing a role?"

Partners…

- Identify policy windows.

- Conduct national-level workshops.

- Make sure that projects are proportionate in scale to organizational capacity.

What does this tell us about our approach to program delivery in this program area? What does it tell us more generally about program delivery in the centre?

Participants listed the following lessons:

- Innovation is necessary because there are few precedents. Considering that ICT is a newer area compared to issues like environment and social equity, the program must be delivered in an innovative and creative way. History is being made.

- There needs to be a combination of old and new research approaches. The program area needs "good old research" but also "good new research"—because the environment is

changing so fast. There need to be ways of doing research faster and disseminating it more quickly.

- There need to be ways to use and demonstrate the technology as part of the project ("Demo, learn fast, or die."): "We can't just talk the game; we need to play the game using new technology. We need to know how to use the tools so that we can understand better how they might help partners."

- There needs to be a broad range of expertise (from various disciplines).

- IDRC must recognize that, within given resource constraints, it must maximize its knowledge of local political and institutional landscapes. This relates to earlier points regarding networking, identifying champions, and recognizing policy windows.

- IDRC is able to take advantage of innovations by its partners. With ICT, IDRC can learn from one country and apply those lessons to a different country/project. For example, it can apply methods and lessons learned in pan-Asia to projects in Africa. ICTs lend themselves to replication (subject to the usual caveats of context, culture, etc.).

- There needs to be a broad vision, because it is a newer field that is more innovation-oriented than problem solving.

- Regions define the policy approach: it is important to be situated in the region. IDRC is regionally based and needs to conceptualize what it does in that way, by having the regions define the basis for applied research and policy.

- Because ICTs are a tool for dissemination, there is some obligation to be effective in using ICTs for dissemination during the project!

Wrap-up and plan for Tuesday

Fred Carden thanked the facilitators for their work in the breakout groups and asked for the names of those who would present the findings the following morning. He asked that rapporteurs keep presentations to 10-15 minutes in length and focus only on the main points of discussion.

Carden then asked for feedback or questions from the group, but there were none. He briefly reviewed the agenda for March 25, which will include the group presentations, and a presentation entitled "From a Typology to Action" by Evert Lindquist. Carden said that he believed these presentations would be a good introduction to the afternoon's discussion of planning for the future.

Review of Day 1

Fred Carden, Evaluation Unit, IDRC

Fred Carden noted that the case studies discussed on Day 1 all had good policy influence. He reiterated the purpose of the workshop: to determine where and how the projects influenced policies and to allow IDRC to improve the research that supported the policy influence and to strengthen the different program areas. The three plenary presentations to follow will summarize the discussions from Day 1's breakout sessions:

- *ICT4D Program Area - The Case of Acacia in Mozambique;*
- *SEE Program Area – Financing Education; and*
- *ENRM Program Area – Arsaal;*

and respond to the three questions:

- *In the sphere of policy influence, what outcomes can we identify?*
- *In achieving those outcomes, what are the ways we mobilized?*
- *What does this tell us about our approach to program delivery?*

ICT4D Program Area—the Case of Acacia in Mozambique

Nancy Smyth, IDRC, presented the findings of the breakout discussion on ICT4D programs. She noted that IDRC achieved the greatest policy influence in Mozambique among the four Acacia countries, likening it to a "sprinter." This led to a discussion on trade-offs between short-term policy support to respond to moments in time and long-term capacity-building—it is hard to sprint and build capacity at the same time. There was also a general discussion of what is meant by policy and policy influence before reaching agreement that the group was talking about contributions that surround and add to the policy end point and—to a much less degree—direct a policy solution. Smyth summarized the group's responses to the three focus questions.

In the sphere of policy influence, what outcomes can we identify?

IDRC took a programmatic approach in establishing demonstration projects. The five-year review identified several sets of outcomes. First, in terms of stimulating the policy environment, IDRC was seen as a key player and a pioneer. It supported baseline studies, established a common language for the new "telecentre" area, performed feasibility and evaluative studies, identified and involved key players and networks, sensitized policy-makers, made the culture more open for knowledge dissemination, and legitimized space for dialogue.

Second, the pilot projects demonstrated rural access for ICTs and developed an understanding of "universal access." On-the-ground implementations led to policy offshoots and attracted and developed the private sector in ICTs, including rural ICTs.

Third, policy networks were nurtured with diverse players at high levels, and mechanisms were built to bring different stakeholders together, strengthening the capacity for participation by marginalized groups. More regional, national, and international organizations became involved. Policy research capacity was strengthened, particularly networked capacity. Visibility on the international ICT scene resulted in greater awareness, interest, and opportunities.

Fourth, the project broadened the approach from technical approaches to using ICTs for social and economic policies for development, which led to smarter public investment policies and more effective and inclusive ICT policies.

In achieving those outcomes, what are the ways we mobilized?

The breakout group considered ways in which IDRC, its partners, and both sides mobilized, including letting the partners play a greater role; staying in touch over time; maintaining staff constancy in the same country and region to develop trust; not pushing policy agenda on the partners but offering various options to stimulate the environment for discussion; being a broker of relationships; focusing on key institutions and individuals; networking projects together; emphasizing the time involved in strategy development; not trying to move too quickly but allowing time for projects to gestate, yet being opportunistic and timely with regard to the policy windows; allowing the partners to suggest the agenda for policy windows; supporting multi-stakeholder fora; holding national level workshops; and ensuring dialogue on gender and sustainability issues.

What does this tell us about our approach to program delivery in this program area?

In this program area, it was imperative for IDRC to be innovative since there were few precedents in the ICT area. It was a fast-moving field that needed new models and research approaches and the strengthening of existing models. Program staff had to learn fast, understand, and be able to demonstrate the technologies themselves. A broad range of expertise was needed in a multidisciplinary approach to integrate issues across sectors. IDRC needed to maximize knowledge of local political and institutional landscapes; be able to take advantage of our partners' innovations; recognize that ICTs lend themselves to replication, subject to the usual caveats of context, culture, etc.; and be effective ourselves at using ICT for dissemination.

Discussion

A discussion ensued about the role of policy entrepreneurs in affecting policy regimes. Phase 1 of Acacia concluded in 2002. The second phase will have a significant overlap of individuals, a factor that will contribute toward policy influence. The subject was raised about not pushing the policy agenda but letting partners take the lead. On developing universal access in Acacia, IDRC spent time on networking, sharing ideas and experiences among the countries, studying under-serviced areas and licensing issues, and generating options for the partners to consider.

The four-country focus and its effectiveness for mobilization was discussed. Sykes explained

that this concentration of resources was a decision made at the beginning and was an effective framework in the general sense. Now, five or six years later, the number of players has increased and more effort is needed to support more groups that are not serviced. Offshoots of projects contribute to a better understanding of where to focus but they should not divert IDRC's attention too much from staying on course in the countries.

SEE Program Area—Financing Education

Tahira Gonsalves, IDRC, presented the findings of the breakout discussion on SEE programs, summarizing the group's responses to the three focus questions.

In the sphere of policy influence, what outcomes can we identify?

The group identified several outcomes, including changing the policy-makers' understanding and creating awareness (Morocco); building policy research capacity and training, especially in supporting non-traditional partners; opening spaces for discussion and involvement, especially for marginalized groups (people living in poverty in Senegal); disseminating information and results; moving between researchers and policy-makers (Chile, Viet Nam); assisting in getting policy relevant proposals to the table (Guatemala), inputting into Government policy (Morocco); supporting experimentation/pilot projects (ICT).

Related issues include interdisciplinarity and width of access, supporting international-calibre research, and having the researcher act as "watchdogs" to ensure that governments are held accountable.

Some unexpected or negative outcomes included having a researcher come to occupy a key government position and researchers coming under threat in their own context (Guatemala).

In achieving those outcomes, what are the ways we mobilized?

The factors that were mobilized include a long-term commitment to the mentoring process, allowing the countries to establish their own priorities, linking researchers to civil society/advocacy groups for better dissemination, and involving researchers in capacity-building exercises.

Some tensions existed. IDRC was willing to take risks in some contexts but had an aversion to risk taking in other contexts. IDRC supported non-traditional partners in some cases but gave strategic support to strong partners in other cases. As well, IDRC's approach made wider policy linkages but also relied on already-existing networks.

Some ways in which IDRC could or should mobilize include doing more multidisciplinary and multi-sectoral work; understanding context and being strategic about sectors and institutions; supporting partners to understand their own governance systems; ensuring good understanding of policy processes within IDRC; ensuring intimate knowledge of policy context in terms of power relations, constellations, institutional workings, etc.

What does this tell us about our approach to program delivery?

First, IDRC was unable to move fast enough to target policy windows and should support groups that can. Second, IDRC is better at innovating than replicating research. Third, there is a disconnection between IDRC's understanding of policy and the reflection of this in Centre documents. Finally, a cap of RSPs (Research Support Projects) at ten per cent can be restrictive.

IDRC's approach should be flexible, achieve an understanding beyond institutional and policy processes to policy narratives and myths, assume risks gradually in long-term planning, incorporate case studies efficiently, recognize that policy influence exists at different levels, and ensure effective communication.

Discussion

Several questions were raised and responded to by Gonsalves and other delegates. A participant asked for elaboration on "assuming risk gradually." The response was that caution must be exercised when working with or wanting to support new, unknown partners. In particular, there are only a limited number of institutions that can carry out large projects, and the time frame must be considered.

A discussion ensued on the image of sprinting used for the ICT program in Mozambique versus that of IDRC not being able to move fast enough to target policy windows. One delegate commented that groups that have a better understanding of the specific context would be able to respond more readily to specific windows. Another delegate mentioned that the partner's response ability will depend on IDRC's response ability. It was noted that a policy window could be four to eight months away, and a research project window could be as long as one to two years. Also, money must be spent to achieve quick responses. Two response mechanisms exist, namely a fast, small mechanism and a longer, larger mechanism. A delegate pointed out that IDRC would be able to feed into a need much more quickly if it were creating the policy window itself.

A brief discussion took place about the negative outcomes identified. It was clarified that they were more unexpected than negative and that this topic has not yet been discussed at length.

ENRM Program Area—Arsaal

Daniel Buckles of IDRC presented the findings of the breakout discussion on ENRM programs. He first defined ENRM policy influence as influence on public policy or collective action at various scales that is concerned with equity amongst social actors and emphasizes change in the who and how of the decision-making process. He noted that ENRM policy influence examined local implementations of larger, broader, and often vague national policies and principles and built capacity for policy work.

Buckles then summarized the group's responses to the three focus questions.

In the sphere of policy influence, what outcomes can we identify?

The outcomes included processes for participatory decision-making at various levels; levelling of the playing field and empowering stakeholders; changes in organizational practices (multi-disciplinary, gender sensitive, participatory); new mentality and ways of doing things, becoming more holistic; changes in governance of public services and collective institutions; governments (local/national) sharing experiences and committing resources; new items put on local, national and/or global policy agendas; new alternatives for problem solving; help to reframe or improve problem understanding; new research methods; other development agencies adopting ideas; enlarging or linking from local to larger scales of analysis and action; operationalizing broad or vague national policies at the local level; new legislation; changes in land and water tenure regimes; individual partners later assuming policy positions, although without causal links; development of capacity and shared language; and building confidence to deal with external groups. Many outcomes came well after the project.

In achieving those outcomes, what are the ways we mobilized?

The list includes networks; critical and diverse thinkers; information sharing; the media; persistent support; research democratization; policy and managerial capacity-building; engaging key stakeholders early and identifying their power, roles, and interests; viewing conflicts as possible catalysts for change; analysis of natural resources in the management process; responding to opportunities; and not always targeting policy or pushing too hard for change.

What does this tell us about our approach to program delivery?

Implications for programming include focusing on public policy at various scales and on outcomes and applications during project development; recognizing the role of local governments; distinguishing between public policy and decision-making; designing projects to be models of good research to policy practice; providing special resources needed to realize a policy potential; developing indicators to select when to target policy; mapping outcomes to policy behaviour; recognizing that not every project has to influence policy and that expectation of influence will be different for marginalized groups; and developing a control strategy for each policy influence.

Other implications include always having some immediate policy-relevant results to share, changing gears efficiently; using opportunism and flexible responsive mechanisms; being cautious about bandwagons (use CAP or RSP); having patience for long-term efforts; and creating space for things to happen.

As well, it is important to provide training on policy influence tools and on methods and facilitation of stakeholder analysis, participation, and scenario analysis. The difference between training on understanding the problem and on doing something about the problem must be recognized.

Discussion

One delegate asked about ENRM adding to the global debate. Buckles gave the example of the global commitment to biodiversity in which local expression of broader policies gave substance and details to national agenda principles. Local implementations that manifested indigenous knowledge, resource protection, etc. showed what the principles meant on the ground and were recognized at the national levels. Another example was conflicts over water resources in the Andes. The issue seems local in nature but actually affects multiple countries because water is linked to transboundary aquifers.

On the subject of always having some immediate, useful policy-relevant results to show, however modest, Buckles commented that this is helpful in engaging decision-makers in discussion and in providing opportunities that may lead to a broader set of policy impacts. In long-term interactions with partners, information sharing that takes place helps partners keep policy ideas in mind for review when the opportunity arises.

A discussion ensued about scaling local research to the international level to influence global research agendas, such as in the issue of eco-health. Carden replied that not a great percentage of IDRC's work has scaled up to a global nature. Few studies have been done in this area, and ENRM has only seen some small initiatives.

There was further discussion on reframing questions in order to understand a problem differently, for example, looking at a land tenure issue from an agricultural perspective. The tobacco-health issue is another example that can be viewed in different ways such as environmental effects, malnutrition and poverty, and trade. When framed as an issue affecting trade, efforts can be made to insert the health issue into the trade agenda. Good examples need to be studied about this important issue.

Facilitated Discussion

SEE
Brent-Herbert Copley, Director, SEE Program Area

Copley noted that the individual initiatives and projects within SEE are far from homogeneous—there is a lot of variation. He then listed some ways in which SEE might differ from other program areas:

- Unlike ICT, SEE is not quasi-experimental, so the dictum of "demo or die" does not apply to the same degree.

- Programs are organized globally rather than regionally, so there is more emphasis on sharing experiences across regions rather than on regional tailoring.

- The focus of SEE work is on formal policy processes. It focuses more on public policy than on other forms of collective action, and it tends to be oriented toward the national

policy arena.

IDRC has a sophisticated understanding and analysis of processes, and the debate has moved away from overly simplified instrumental approaches, Copley noted. IDRC is interested in capacity building, the spread of new ideas, and policy influence. Increasingly, it describes policy influence in terms of those other categories, which provides an interesting interplay.

It may be too harsh to suggest that there are few instances of direct policy influence. IDRC does not have the tools to tell where that has happened—it may exist more frequently than IDRC is able to capture. Also, the sophistication of the analysis done at this meeting is not matched in internal documents within IDRC. People tend to lapse back into more instrumental views when producing reports.

The challenges for IDRC include:

- **Persistence**: IDRC needs to be able to support institutions over a long period of time to give them opportunities to influence policy. IDRC isn't able to respond fast enough to target all policy windows, but can develop capacities in its partners so that they are able to plug into policy processes. There are geographic exceptions (e.g. South Africa) where windows stay open longer, and thematic areas where IDRC is instrumental in opening the window itself (e.g. eco-health). Time constraints must also be kept in mind: the definition of a long-term investment is going to vary.

- **Synthesis and meta analysis**: If a lot of IDRC's policy influence results from broadening policy horizons, then there needs to be more of this. It comes from being able to replicate successful projects, and test conclusions from one location in another location. IDRC also needs to look at specific platforms to promote synthesis and meta-analysis (e.g. a GEH "Research Matters" platform).

- **Communication**: Many of the first-stage lessons have been learned and absorbed at IDRC (e.g. involving decision-makers at the outset and throughout projects). But IDRC and its partners are still not necessarily able to put research results into an appropriate form and get the information into the right hands. IDRC needs to help its partners do this.

Discussion

A participant asked if IDRC should be doing more in terms of capacity building for its partners. Copley said that IDRC has moved away from this focus, and this can be seen in the distribution of its recipients. However, capacity building needs to become more central again. This includes helping partners to do the political analysis that goes along with research and identify areas for advocacy and policy change. As IDRC gets into that area more, the risk profile of its work changes, something it needs to keep in mind.

All this work seems intellectually intensive, said another participant: What are the implications for workload, and how can IDRC reconcile these challenges with the other things it is doing? Copley acknowledged the point, but said that some of these measures should lighten the

workload (e.g. working with a partner for a longer period of time, building capacity).

Policy champions are key, said another participant. IDRC may persist over time with certain leaders—not just institutions—because people carry those skills onto new institutions.

Copley agreed that the key is to identify pockets of capacity to continue over time. These may be individuals or institutions. IDRC doesn't want to be tied to an institution that may have lost its leadership capacity. But it is also a principle that IDRC funds institutions, and not individuals. Another speaker added that IDRC should focus more on teams, although there may be one person who is a policy champion.

Working sectorally is important but can be a challenge, said another speaker. This relates to the issue of working across program areas. For example, IDRC is doing work with partners on rural development strategies, but is not addressing how that issue relates to trade. IDRC needs to have those discussions in-house.

Copley suggested that there does not need to be complete coherence among all the programs that IDRC is supporting. There should be an awareness of areas where different conclusions and areas of emphasis are emerging. But the point about inter-sectoral coherence is important. For example, methodologies being developed in GEH could also be applied in public service areas.

This is also a time management issue, said a participant: it would be good to have someone to pass the baton to within IDRC when the project ends, for the sake of sustainability. Copley noted that inter-program collaboration is a great idea, but warned against the complications of joint funding arrangements.

ENRM
Simon Carter, Team Leader, MINGA

Carter highlighted some key areas of consideration:

- The importance of time, trust building, and the facilitating role played by IDRC

- The impact of tensions, such as the issues raised in the previous presentation (the cost of building relationships with non-traditional partners versus trusted partners who may be caught in a rut): Those trade-offs have to be managed somehow

- The importance of interdisciplinarity: The PI (Program Initiatives) system was built to encourage this and it is central to what IDRC does.

- The way that IDRC thinks (or doesn't think) about policy making: For SEE, there has been a tendency to work with formal policy-making at the national level. Those working with rural institutions are challenged by this approach and need to discuss the issue more with IDRC. The fact that policy-making can be legitimized at local levels, as much as at national levels, is key.

IDRC must explore what it means by policy, norms, and institutions. Identifying gaps is key in generating awareness that different types of institutions are necessary for managing different areas. The argument needs to be strengthened for the complementary role that different types of institutions can play. IDRC needs to question the role of central government in relation to issues like land tenure policies, where government cannot generate policies that reflect all stakeholders. How can policies be created that have legitimacy for everyone?

It is also important to help partners be explicit about how they will make a difference. There tends to be a naïve approach to policy-making: people come to policy-makers with ideas that are out of context or unrealistic, given the existing agendas. These approaches need to be challenged.

Discussion

A participant asked how to determine what kind of influence is possible at each policy level, and focus efforts accordingly. Carter responded that it might be necessary to operate at different levels. For example, the land reform process in Bolivia seems to be halted at the national level, but municipalities have decision-making power. This provides an opportunity.

Noting that the case of Bolivia was presented to a meeting of the Inter-American Development Bank, a participant said that the new ministers of agriculture in both Brazil and Ecuador asked those working on the IDRC project in Bolivia to provide them with input on what they are doing in their own countries. The systems there may be more ready for the kind of results that IDRC is trying to implement in Bolivia. The project will have an impact in Bolivia, but it will follow an unexpected path.

National policies may be useful as a framework but seldom apply to specific conditions on the ground, said another participant. When looking at alternatives, it is important to step back and ask what good governance would look like for a particular resource. IDRC has typically assumed that good governance would come out of local management, but without defining "good governance." Should IDRC encourage discussions of good governance at the local level, and how would that be built into a typical project?

Carter responded with an example from Northern Ecuador, where space was created so that communities could consider these issues. At a higher level, can IDRC encourage other partners to promote that sort of process? In other contexts, where there is support for the development of spaces locally, central government support might be sought.

Another participant asked about processes that would address rights and responsibilities regarding resource management. Could IDRC be doing something to extract messages from these processes that are more broadly applicable? There may be key elements that would help stakeholder processes in multiple settings. Carter agreed that this was possible and suggested asking external evaluators to help in identifying those opportunities.

ICT4D
Richard Fuchs, Director, ICT4D Program Area

Fuchs said that, in this program area, the goal is to cross-train and work across areas. For example, they are working with government health people to introduce technologies in the area of health services. Another project looks at how ICTs affect policy and the distribution of wealth. In an urban agriculture project, work is being done to help cities use these higher speed technologies to mount their sustainable agricultural programs on the Internet and market them internationally. These are great opportunities, but IDRC is not organized to pursue them as successfully as it could.

At the Kyoto world water forum, ICT offered a new way of disseminating knowledge fast through Web cast. That was a cross-divisional activity in IDRC, done quietly and successfully.

ICT projects are very different from socioeconomic projects. ICT is a unitary idea with regional applications and expressions. Often, when "developed" countries ask "developing" countries if they are "e-ready," that means, "Are you ready to adopt our policies?" It is important for ICT programs to be regionally based, so that policy people can decide on their own priorities.

ICT may be seen as experimental, but many people are working on information technologies. The question now is what IDRC can offer (since IDRC is no longer a pioneer in this area). Is IDRC participation a way to influence policies?

Technologies are more affordable, accessible, and appropriate to the developing world right now. It is appropriate now for projects to "sprint." For example, in Mozambique, there was a policy window, and a sprint to progressive policy outcomes. The challenge is, "If you are sprinting, how can you create a policy window?"

Fuchs highlighted some key strategies shared with other program areas:

- Support a sector champion: This needs to happen in every case. Find people with "missionary zeal" and help them move forward.

- Build strong relationships: These endure as technology changes.

- Find a teachable moment—a time when the intervention will be necessary, welcomed, and likely to be utilized. Architectural work needs to be done to help IDRC think outside its program areas, and to help it become "opportunistic, but not fickle."

- Disseminate: The more this is done, the more one realizes how important it is. The communications division has made great strides in helping IDRC to be more opportunistic and to get better at disseminating in non-traditional ways.

- Policy needs to be complemented by experiential aspects that help people understand its importance. "Policy is not a head without a body."

Discussion

A participant noted that it is challenging to make the link between research and policy: research is often seen as a luxury that poor people can't afford. Does this make it more difficult to argue for research? Fuchs responded that most of the research partners and institutions involved in ICT projects do not question whether ICTs relate to poverty. In this area, others have already done the missionary work to prove that ICTs need to be considered.

From a Typology to Action

Evert Lindquist, Director, School of Public Administration, University of Victoria

Evert Lindquist explained that he would set out a framework outlining the factors leading to different types of policy impact for IDRC projects, review some different ways in which academics have sought to conceptualize the impact of research on policy-making, and help participants think about the tradeoffs they need to consider.

He began with some cautionary observations. This strategic evaluation is undertaking a difficult task: it is an especially complex task to demonstrate how "outputs" such as research affect "outcomes" and "policy impacts." There are many possible methodological approaches, and there are limits to the qualitative approach: observations on concrete moments of policy impact cannot be taken back to Treasury Board. Assessments of the effectiveness of research funding are difficult due to the multiplicity of actors, the diversity of projects, the dynamics of policy processes, and the differences between Northern and Southern contexts.

Several frameworks inform this study:

- Knowledge utilization
- Policy communities and networks
- Values, conflict, and policy-oriented learning
- Different modes of policy inquiry
- Routine, incremental, and fundamental decisions
- Agenda-setting and policy-making processes

Lindquist showed a diagram outlining the actors involved in policy-making. He noted that, in some communities, there is not enough institutional infrastructure. This framework focuses on the public and private sectors. It does not reflect the public or loosely organized groups of citizens, but it does show the dynamic between the needs of decision-makers and the competitive environment of policy inquiry (as opposed to the normal course of academic research). IDRC may forget how competitive that environment is when setting expectations regarding policy influence.

Showing a picture depicting an alternative interpretation of the policy community, he noted that the power distribution varies considerably. It is rare that regimes change, but external events can trigger change, providing an opportunity to recalibrate or reset policy.

There is a tension between the different projects and program areas within IDRC regarding the issue of IDRC's general posture and the question of whom it is trying to influence. There is competition in the world of ideas: dominant coalitions have their hands on the reigns of power, and other groups are always vying to put new policies and programs in place. In some cases, IDRC is allied with the underdog (identifying an emerging coalition of interests and trying to put new ideas on the agenda). IDRC may work with the dominant actors and try to bring them around to different ways of thinking. Even if IDRC is not trying to have a policy impact now, but aims to strengthen the capacity of actors, it must aligning itself with the perspective of one set of groups. IDRC may perceive itself as neutral when it has aligned itself with certain groups, but there are choices to consider: Is IDRC associated with one coalition? Is it building new capacities? Is it developing new networks? Is it building brokering capabilities?

The time horizons for policy change are another factor to consider. Policy change may involve a 10–20 year time horizon. This is an argument for building capacity over the longer term, but things can happen in the short term to create policy windows.

International influences (e.g. networks, researchers from other jurisdictions, international tribunals) can have a remarkable impact in terms of moving things along. These are subtle and powerful forms of leverage. IDRC and its partner institutions are adept at creating policy windows by going to the international level, or by creating regional networks to generate moral support for ideas.

Lindquist then displayed another diagram, depicting information-generation beyond research. Before publications result, there are often products already (e.g. people and findings). This means that there is a capacity to be opportunistic, even though the final products have not been completed. Convocation activities (e.g. workshops, briefings, e-connections) and publication activities (e.g. memos, reports, Web sites) can be used strategically for different purposes.

Discussing expectations, he noted that consensus on the policy base, number of actors, and type of information should logically change for different decision regimes. In other words, "Look at how much is up for grabs." Is this a mature regime with a lot that is already defined, or is there an opportunity for fundamental change? It is important to think about that systematically.

There is more than one type of policy influence, and they have often been discussed in isolation from one another. However they all have to work together, and could be clustered more. Lindquist identified three types: broadening policy horizons, expanding policy capacities, and affecting policy regimes.

Displaying a framework for strategic evaluation, he noted that the quality of the case studies was amazing. This framework lists questions under three headings:

- Describe the policy problem and the nature/evolution of the associated network.
- Describe the intention and scope of the IDRC project.
- Describe the project cycle, key outputs and events, and policy influence.

In order to better manage projects, one must be clear about the objectives, resources, and expectations. The continued "layering on" of additional expectations to already crowded agendas

is frustrating. Key questions to consider regarding goals and inputs include the following:

- Do you intend to have any policy impact?
- What is the level of funding?
- What people will you involve?
- Do you plan to engage elites or communities?
- Do you plan to be a broker of some kind, or throw in your lot with a coalition of interests for a given project?
- What is your time horizon (2–20 years)?
- Are these new partners, or is this a well-developed relationship?
- How can contracting rules be structured at the beginning of the relationship so you can goals can be better accomplished?

Lindquist then displayed a comprehensive outline for "making the most of research." Considerations include goals and inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes.

He noted that there has been some concern that IDRC's interest in assessing policy impact reflects a desire to move away from research and focus more on policy. It is important to be clear that IDRC is still focused on promoting high-quality research.

He then outlined key project dimensions and possible elements, noting that it is important to be aware of the tradeoffs in each area:

Research:
- Experienced researchers
- Training junior, local ones
- Building receptor capacity
- Tapping into or generating original research?
- Building epistemic communities: local, regional, international?
- Pilot projects to test concepts, and new approaches

It is difficult to balance efficiency with appropriate investment in capacity. Also, it should be anticipated that some talented and experienced people will join government. In fact, this ought to be a goal

Data:
- Researchers, communities, government agencies?

Reliable data is a separate enterprise. Research can tap into existing data sources or may need new material; but investing in new streams of data is a tradeoff.

Convocation:

- Workshops and conferences
- Researchers, communities, decision-makers?
- Formal versus informal events and discussions

What is the purpose of involving researchers in this type of communication? How much time should they spend on it? How formalized is the process?

Communications:

- Planning (*ex ante*, in parallel, *ex post*, emergent)
- Targets (elites, researchers, communities, etc.)
- Capacities (researchers, partners, IDRC, etc.)

There is a tradeoff between doing a project perfectly and sponsoring more work. Is there a role for a partner institution (e.g. one that may take the research in an unexpected direction)? Should there be a planned *ex ante*? All these decisions are planning decisions at the front end.

Leadership and management:

- Entrepreneurial, flexible
- Engenders trust, builds credibility
- Consultative, builds networks
- Project management

Many case studies look at projects over a period of time. Leaders come and go, and the fortunes of the projects wax and wane. There have to be appropriate expectations. Although IDRC is good at attracting quality people, it should not set up a regime that counts on them always being there. IDRC's expectations of its leaders are quite high: it expects them to build networks on the ground, to build epistemic networks with other researchers in other countries, and to develop informal networks in tricky political circumstances. Are people with these skills also good systematic researchers? Do they have the time to do a solid five-year project? There are many tradeoffs to consider.

Policy windows:

- Regularity: anticipated versus unanticipated?
- Locus: national, local, international?
- Policy-making: clear or murky?

Lindquist then discussed outputs, noting that these can include events, studies, options, researchers, officials, communities, and Web sites.

This model still evaluates the project on its own terms, but it provides the tools for a good discussion about expectations for policy impacts.

Critical perspectives include:

- The importance of time: What are the time horizons? What is the minimal amount of time needed to roll out a project?
- The question of "fit": How will the mix of these elements work in different countries at different times? The answer will change IDRC's strategy, which should change its expectations.
- Network management: Is IDRC a reflective practitioner when it comes to network management? Are program officers learning from each other as much as possible and being supported by their institution?
- International dimensions
- IDRC capabilities
- Tradeoffs, choices, and risk

There are potential tradeoffs in improving research, Lindquist noted. One priority can be to train and sensitize researchers who don't know a lot about the policy context. Other projects focus on building the technical capacity to generate better researchers. These are distinctive exercises. With a limited budget and time frame, one has to make choices.

Lindquist concluded with some strategic improvements to consider:

- Develop realistic expectations for research.
- Identify the requisite roles for desired policy impact.
- Better structure contracts at the outset.
- Ensure that project officers/leaders are good network and system facilitators.
- Provide policy/process training to research teams.
- Maintain commitment to high-quality research.
- Build communications into research planning (have stories ready to tell Treasury Board that go beyond the numbers).
- Engage target audiences as early as possible.
- Cultivate informal networks at all levels.
- Do regular scanning for policy and other "windows."
- Tap into regional/international networks and resources.
- Question if short-term research projects should be done at all. Opportunistic short-term projects should be weighed against the need for longer-term projects.
- Cultivate trust and open communication.
- Balance "forays" with sustained "investments."
- Continue to facilitate learning across projects.

Carden said that Lindquist's presentation gave participants many things to consider and highlighted many challenges. He first asked for any questions of clarification.

Discussing the chart about policy and process knowledge ("There are potential trade-offs in how to improve research"), a participant commented that there seemed to be an assumption that one person would be able to do both policy and process, and technical knowledge. He asked how

Lindquist expected IDRC to have all those skills in one research institution.

Lindquist agreed that that was a good point, but that it would not change the bottom line. If IDRC is designing a team to meet that challenge, he said, it would still need policy people and technical people and there would be the same overall management challenge. In essence, all that expertise doesn't have to be in one person.

One participant noted the similarity of the chart to a project he worked on. In that case, researchers dealt with problems and once a solution was found, they were no longer a part of the process. Policy-makers do not want to spend time in the "problem zone," which can sometimes be a challenge. He said that IDRC ended up dealing with researchers separately, used and analyzed their information, then met with the decision-makers. Often terminology was changed from one group to the other (i.e., researchers and decision-makers), and this ruptured causality linkages. Researchers, he said, are also frustrated by a change in terminology. The longer the chain of command, the harder it is to ascribe responsibility and accountability.

Another participant agreed, saying that the way IDRC speaks of a research project is not what happens. For example, a project could be 10 years in length, but a program initiative may only have two years' worth of research support.

Another commented on the chart, stating that the amount of time and money must increase if IDRC is striving for excellence. IDRC builds capacity in its technical people, he said, and in order to make that happen, it must ensure that the capacity is sufficiently great and is properly controlled. IDRC does this through workshops to educate researchers on all aspects because it knows if the institutions are not strong enough, the research will not happen. He noted that IDRC needs to ensure that it has highly competent researchers in order for the researchers' peers to recognize good research results. He said that IDRC must stress a trans-disciplinary system.

Carden asked if there were any strategic considerations or issues to debate.

A question was raised regarding the fourth point of Lindquist's presentation ("Ensure project officers/leaders are good network and system facilitators"). The participant noted that this point was contradictory; for example, in regional work IDRC does not look for good facilitators, it looks for good researchers. Another participant asked if that point actually referred instead to IDRC staff.

Lindquist said that it refers to both IDRC staff and facilitators/researchers. He noted that even if a project officer is not conducting network management work, that officer should be a good "coach," especially if the project researchers do not have those skills. Although the responsibilities of project officers vary, the coaching function must be there in order for all to work in network-based terms.

One participant noted, however, that a program officer will look for a good researcher first, not a good facilitator, saying, "Would you pay someone that has the right answer, or one who could find the right answer?"

Lindquist noted that those decisions will vary between projects, depending on its objectives.

Another participant believed that it was merely nuance, i.e., that in many contexts, IDRC is looking for an assurance that the networking aspect is prominent. Although all researchers are not good networkers or coaches, it is necessary to have those skills somewhere in the project.

A participant asked if Point #3 ("Better structure contracts at the outset") referred to flexible contracts, and noted that getting contracts out quickly is a challenge for IDRC.

Another participant said that the presentation was a good review, but wondered what IDRC was to do with it in a practical sense. For example, if it depended on the target audience, how would IDRC take this to that audience and devise a specific framework for IDRC to implement?

Carden noted that ultimately that is what IDRC planned for the case studies. One piece that IDRC wants to publish is information on management issues, e.g., administration, liability implications, flexible structures, etc.

One participant then asked if all three program areas have the same approaches so that one set of guidelines would apply to all.

Carden noted that this had come up in discussion during the morning session. The program areas do not work the same way, he said, but he wanted the group to discuss Lindquist's points to see if there were any outstanding issues.

One participant noted that the points raised by Lindquist could be applicable to any project at any given time and said that they all have implications for IDRC workload and impact. That is where the case studies will come in use in order to make those connections between what worked and what did not. Carden agreed, saying that because there are continuous trade-offs, there is no way to come up with one set of rules.

A participant asked which of the points in the Strategic Improvements list of Lindquist's presentation were unique to achieving policy outcomes. He cited #1, 2, 5, 7 and 10 as being unique to this, but wondered if there were others.

One participant said that, in several presentations, policy was looked at from a research viewpoint, but that research was not looked at from a policy viewpoint. Were there policy streams IDRC could influence, he asked, i.e., to determine the needs of policy-makers, and then bring researchers in. Research would then become instrumental in policy change, he said, and set the expectations.

One participant said that he was uncomfortable with IDRC becoming oriented to policy research and was not sure if it was appropriate. In the end, he said, Lindquist's presentation is a useful guideline, but IDRC needs to reach its own conclusions on the level of the organization, the program, and the program initiative. What guidelines would IDRC use? And how strategic ought IDRC to be?

Lindquist agreed, but said that his list only reflects what IDRC colleagues have already mentioned. He noted that one has to look at it from a project/program level to determine which points on that list are already under control. It would help to highlight what IDRC is good at and

what it's not. Overall, these are simply good management techniques. Finally, he said that he sensed some nervousness when participants spoke of having a policy impact since other projects may have other influences in mind. He stressed that he was not suggesting a new model.

One participant stated that IDRC needs to understand that projects that aim to impact policy over technical knowledge feed into policy-makers who need quick answers. He reminded the group of the need to compromise, e.g., partnering with others who may not be as convinced as IDRC of the value of research.

One participant asked for clarification on the chart ("Potential trade-offs") regarding the term "Low Quality Research." Lindquist admitted that it was not a good choice of phrase, and suggested that it should read "Original Research" as opposed to one who taps into existing research.

What are the implications for IDRC?

Carden asked the Regional Directors to speak on their reflections of what they had heard so far, and what implications or issues have arisen so that IDRC can do a cross-case analysis.

Connie Freeman spoke first. She summed up what she had heard at the workshop and from her own policy position background in one phrase: "Think Policy."

She asked participants to keep that phrase in mind as they prepare programs since it would allow for better integration. The broader concept is whether policy only affects high-level policy in government. Although she admitted that the group did not need to definitively decide on that, she said that she keeps the policy element in mind at all times and integrates it through the program.

As people plan, she recommended they involve organizations in the process so that IDRC knows what interests policy-makers. She also suggested this as a way to connect to the disenfranchised, especially when IDRC is perceived as "being in bed with government."

She then linked this to capacity building. As the process proceeds, she said, IDRC must consider how capacity building will be packaged, and how results will be delivered. It used to be IDRC's standard approach to provide the research and then ask the organizations to implement it. That, in turn, led to policy briefs, and she suggested that everything IDRC does should have a policy brief attached to it. She posed the question of whether IDRC needs to retrain researchers to write for policy-makers.

Freeman also stressed the need for IDRC to take advantage of policy windows of opportunity as they arise. Although IDRC cannot plan for every contingency, it needs to be ready for them. As an example, she cited a major corruption study conducted in Kenya. At the time the study was completed, it was dangerous to publish its findings. However, once the government changed, the study was published in the newspapers immediately, and IDRC was prepared for that contingency.

She did caution, however, that IDRC will not always know what effects its research has on future

policies.

Federico Burone then provided his overview of the last two days. In general, he said that more support was to needed for IDRC staff to perform meta analysis, and that IDRC needs to be "enlightened" so that it has a greater political impact. Programmers need more resources, time, and a more complex devolution approach. In particular, he cited the need for a two-way communication process between policy-makers and researchers, and then in turn between policy-makers, researchers, and IDRC, which is currently lacking.

From a practical standpoint, Burone said that IDRC needs more active and interactive management, saying that there was no clear demand on how to help IDRC staff and researchers understand what is happening in the field.

He also said that IDRC needs to improve its capacity to explain past and present activities in order to create regional clusters and innovators. All activities are key pieces, he said, and regional networks should be a clear component of that strategy.

Eglal Rached then discussed the need for IDRC to go beyond policy change to implementation.

Pilot projects are fully funded and IDRC-supported, she said, but once a policy is changed it is up to the country to implement the change. Often times, they do not have the resources to do so, and the program, project, or policy fails. She argued that IDRC must consider the implementation stage—and in particular the need for facilitation skills in a region—to gain more stakeholder input. To address this issue, she suggested that IDRC fund "training the trainer" courses in regional institutions.

Stephen McGurk took the discussion in a different direction, praising IDRC for doing a better job than it thinks it is doing. Although he admitted that IDRC needs to stretch the way it communicates and obtains information, he said it must also celebrate what it is doing right.

McGurk supported Lindquist's earlier suggestion that IDRC's research partners need a better understanding of their own governance systems and government processes. He noted that IDRC often does not understand those systems and processes well enough itself, or at all, and that by training or supporting research partners, IDRC would also benefit.

At this point, one participant noted that many societies do not operate as networks and that IDRC provides a valuable service in bringing organizations together. This, he said, provides the momentum that local organizations can then build upon.

Another participant said that if the intention of the IDRC study was to influence policy, IDRC needed to be clear about its intent. He noted that IDRC might not need to change its own policies, but should focus on changing some of its practices and tailor its communication products to particular audiences. He pointed out that as IDRC moves ahead, it will require policy briefs on a number of issues that outline what it has learned in order to take advantage of policy windows of opportunity. He also added that the substance of Lindquist's presentation might mean the addition of responsibilities to already-busy IDRC program officers.

He then stressed the dichotomy of persistence versus seed money, noting that in order for IDRC to have an impact, it must be in it for the long term. He noted that research is not linear, i.e., that research does not go directly to the minister responsible. Instead, capacity must be built over time to give IDRC the ability to respond effectively to ongoing challenges. In conclusion, he said IDRC must embrace the concept of continuous learning.

One participant asked if any trends currently exist that would allow IDRC to have an impact, if regional directors had a different viewpoint from program officers, and whether there were any specific policy windows IDRC should focus on.

Asked by Carden for her thoughts on this question, Freeman indicated that it depended on the situation and used the unexpected election results in Kenya (as discussed above) as an example. Those results, she said, will have an impact on the model Kenya eventually uses, and if successful, will be something that other countries or regions will want to emulate. Specifically on the issue of the viewpoint of regional directors, she said that IDRC needs to keep up with things locally by talking with local people, because directors are not there to see for themselves.

One participant brought up the fact that each regional office has a Regional Activity Fund (RAF) and although it is a small amount, it can help. He noted that it is easier for staff in specific regions to pinpoint issues and that the RAF is sometimes enough to start and finish small projects. For longer projects, he said, it could be used as "starter" funding. He acknowledged that the RAF provisions are not well communicated across all program areas, but that there is a great possibility for synergy with the RAF on policy windows of opportunity. He suggested that better coordination of communication could take advantage of these types of supports.

In light of the discussion regarding variations across program areas, the way in which policy influence is defined, and the fact that IDRC does not just deal with policy influence but other types of decision-making as well, a participant asked if the current terminology would be appropriate for the next CSPF (Corporate Strategy and Program Framework).

One participant suggested that the World Bank country-by-country reports could be emulated by IDRC at a regional level to show the key policy issues coming up. Many other participants agreed with this concept, saying that it would help in the discussion of what IDRC has learned over time.

One participant expressed concern with how political reality is taken into account, and how that affects the windows of opportunity. IDRC, he said, could risk taking an unexamined worldview, one that did not include a diversity of perspectives.

Carden reviewed some of the highlights of this discussion and noted that the workshops held over the past two days had been designed to communicate the raw data of the case studies to all participants. He said that the next step would be to distill those ideas and share them with all IDRC partners so that they could be implemented.

One participant said Lindquist's list of points ("Strategic Improvements…"), could be used to find promising areas to build on, e.g., types of policy thinking, and then prioritize some of these activities based on needs.

Another participant complimented the Evaluation Unit on its work, saying that the workshop had been a very useful event. He noted that the Unit's role across all three program areas is unique, and said it had been useful to talk about future needs based on what had been discussed. He also hoped that the rapporteurs' summaries could be rolled into training, supporting documents, etc., as a way to leverage the material.

Carden replied that funding for the workshop came from both the Evaluation Unit and each of the three program areas. He said that it would be critical in future on how the results of the study would be used.

Planning for the Future

Carol Weiss and Fred Carden

Asked to provide some final comments on how IDRC should best use the study and the findings from the workshop, Carol Weiss noted that the study served several important functions. It provided reassurance that IDRC is on the right track and gave examples of positive effects. It did not impose IDRC's own wants, but instead, was very participatory. She pointed out that many participants had equity concerns, as well as concerns that projects continue long enough to develop researchers so that they can have an influence on policy.

The study also challenged current issues and raised new ones, for example, the need for multi-sectoral work, the need to strike a balance between established and non-established or marginal research partners, the need for better dissemination of information, and the need for communication from the inception of a project onwards.

Weiss said that IDRC's next steps fall into three categories: Journalism, History, and Social Science.

Under the first category, she noted that IDRC now has a number of very good case studies that each participant can learn from, and act upon.

She also said that the policy influences of IDRC research is an attempt to document history, allowing for the development of a narrative of what IDRC was, is, and should be. This narrative, is transmitted from the Centre out to its regions and its partners and shows IDRC's values and how it works, and helps to avoid repeating past errors.

Weiss said that the workshops would allow for further input into analysis and interpretation of the case studies. The next step will be to conduct further analysis across cases, meta analysis, and synthesis, e.g., a systematic analysis of the data. This would then allow the material to be more easily digested and communicated. She noted that, raising the detail of the case studies to theory, one could begin to talk in terms of concepts, ideology, and social movements using the language of social science and culture. The constructs used in social science might be used to create theoretical constructs.

She asked why IDRC should do this, and then answered that not only is it interesting,

provocative, and intellectually engaging, but IDRC could use the theory and a particular situation and to conduct deductive decision-making. Theoretical models can apply lessons to new contexts. Although social science has been trying to do this, its theories have not been strong enough to lead to deductive reasoning; however, she said, the process may enable people to think more deeply about the work that they are doing.

Weiss noted that this study could be used as the basis for further study, that it could be followed up in a few years to see if the situation has changed, or whether any changes IDRC institutes as a result "changes the landscape."

She reminded participants that the studies chosen were not a random sample, but purposefully selected to show policy influence.

The discussion over the last two days, she believed, has raised the possibility of conducting a second study on implementation of policy change to determine how IDRC's efforts on projects have influenced policy.

Close

Rohinton Medhora, Vice-President, Program and Partnership Branch, IDRC

Rohinton Medhora reiterated the feelings that many participants had already expressed—that the two-day event had seen many thoughtful points raised and that it should be seen as a "step along the way." He noted that since IDRC is in the research business, this study was not finished, but that IDRC is able to link research with policy and can bring policy influence closer to reality. He believes that IDRC's concentration in this regard has made research more relative.

Research is a public good, he said, but little is done unless there is a push behind it. The question of managing trade-offs comes first and should be managed at the program, not the project, level.

He noted that IDRC needs mechanisms in place to seize opportunities. As an example, he reported that in one project, officers specifically set aside funding to address side issues they knew would arise. This, he said, was a good example of the flexibility inherent in IDRC's system.

He highlighted the lack of access to data and to other researchers, and pointed out that IDRC networks work best when their memberships are open to all.

On the communications side, he said that IDRC should be doing more to build its own skill sets and those of its partners. He suggested that policy research and projects need a cradle-to-grave approach. He also said that IDRC must focus on helping researchers understand their own governance systems, not just the technologies of research.

Finally, he said that research and policy linkages must be internalized, and that he supported Weiss's comments about using this study as a baseline and to periodically review it in order for IDRC to understand its work better.

Terry Smutylo, Director of the Evaluation Unit

Terry Smutylo said that the more support IDRC can provide, the more value it will eventually have. This workshop, he said, modeled what is happening in the world, i.e., using evidence to prove what IDRC is doing allows IDRC to reflect on its work.

He thanked all of the case study authors for their work, and recognized IDRC for taking the time to make this event possible. He noted that time for interaction and reflection is an important management concept that IDRC takes seriously.

Over the last few days, he said, IDRC has "increased its collective sophistication" by discussing policy influence, not policy impact. This reflects realism and a sense of humility of the part that IDRC plays.

He noted that IDRC is now entering into a new five-year planning cycle and that what transpired at the workshop and the materials produced will influence those negotiations.

He cautioned, however, that pushing researchers and partners into the policy formulation sphere could have huge implications and that IDRC will need to become more knowledgeable in that area.

Smutylo reviewed some of the study's next steps, which include finishing the case studies, conducting cross-case analysis, publishing various communication products aimed at different audiences, and continuing to build the evidence. He said that the Evaluation Unit's role is to foster and support feedback and evidence to improve what they are already working on.

Finally, he thanked all the participants and acknowledged the Evaluation Unit team, stating that the work done over the last two days will resonate inside and outside IDRC.

Appendix 1: List of Participants

Berranger, Alain (PBDD)
Bowry, Rita (SID)
Burley, Lisa (PBDD)
Buckles, Daniel (MINGA, SUB)
Caicedo, Sylvia (Bellanet)
Carman, Bill (Communications)
Carter, Simon (MINGA)
Charbonneau, Robert (Communications)
Cliche, Gilles (PAN)
Cooper, Peter (ENRM)
Davy, Brian (SUB)
Dole, Pauline (Communications)
Dottridge, Tim (SID)
Duggan, Colleen (PBR)
El-Rifai, Roula (Middle East Initiative)
Fleury, Jean-Marc (Communications)
Flynn-Depah, Kathleen (PPG)
Fuchs, Richard (ICT4D)
Fullan, Riff (Bellanet)
Golah, Pamela (ROKS, Gender Unit)
Gonsalves, Tahira (PBR)
Guilmette, Jean-H (OCEEI)
Hamadeh, Shadi Kamal, (PLaW)
Hardie, John (PPG)
Herbert-Copley, Brent (SEE)
Hibler, Michelle (Communications)
Kilelu, Catherine (CFP)
Kllimenko, Elena (OCEEI)
Kosolvijak, Alisa (PAN)
Ladikpo, Morenika (ICT4D)
Lafond, Renald (PAN)
Lebel, Jean (EcoHealth)
Medhora, Rohinton (PPB)
Melesse, Martha (GEH, MIMAP)
Mougeot, Luc (CFP)
O'Manique, Erin (SUB, Office of the President)
O'Neil, Maureen (President)
Orosz, Zsofia (PLaW, EcoHealth)
Ospina, Angelica (ICT4D)
Parkinson, Sarah (Acacia)
Redwood, Mark (CFP)
Roca, Carmen (PPB)
Rusnak, Gerett (TEC)
Scholey, Pamela (PBR

Schonwalder, Gerd (PBR)
Smyth, Nancy (ICT4D)
Song, Steve (CCA)
Taboulchanas, Kristina (CFP)
Thompson, Claire (CBNRM, SA)
Todd, Graham (ICT4D)
Tulus, Frank (ITMD)
Tyler, Stephen (CBNRM)
Vernooy, Ronnie (CBNRM)
Waverley-Brigden, Linda (RITC)
Zarowsky, Christina (GEH)

Regional Directors:

Burone, Federico (LACRO)
Finan, Roger (SARO)
Forget, Gilles, (WARO)
Freeman, Connie (ESARO)
McGurk, Stephen (ASRO)
Rached, Eglal, (MERO)

Evaluation Unit:

Carden, Fred
Corsius, Celine
Deby, Denise
Gillespie, Bryon
Kelpin, Kevin
Neilson, Stephanie
Smutylo, Terry

Consultants:

Argueta, Bienvenido
Brooks, David
Lindquist, Evert
Loayza, Fernando
Lyzogub, Iryna
Ofir, Zenda
Saumier, André
Weiss, Carol

Appendix 2: Acronyms

AUB	American University of Beirut
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resource Management
CGE	Computable General Equilibrium
CIUEM	Centro de Informática Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (Mozambique Centre of Computer Science)
COPMAGUA	Coordination of Organizations of the Mayan Peoples of Guatemala
CMS	Chronic Mountain Sickness
CSPF	Corporate Strategy and Program Framework
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
EEPSEA	Economy and Environment Program for Southeast Asia
ELSA	Evaluation and Learning Systems of Acacia
EMDU	Environmental Management Development in Ukraine
ENRM	Environment and Natural Resource Management
ESCUAB	Economic and Social Council at AUB
ICTs	information and communication technologies
GDNet	Global Development Network
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IWT	International Water Tribunal
LABOR	A Peruvian NGO
MIMAP	Micro Impact of Macroeconomic and Adjustment Policies 1995-2001
MINUGUA	The United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala
OCEEI	Office for Central and Eastern Europe Initiatives
ODA	Official Development Assistance
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PCR	Project Completion Reports
PI	Program Initiatives
RAF	Regional Activity Fund
RITC	Research for International Tobacco Control
RSPs	Research Support Projects
SEE	Social and Economic Equity
SPCC	Southern Peru Copper Corporation
TIPS	Trade and Industrial Policy Secretariat
UMC	Ukrainian Management Committee
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
URNG	National Guatemalan Revolutionary Unity
VEEM	Vietnam Economic and Environment Management (1997-2002)
VISED	Vietnam Sustainable Economic Development (1993-97)
WTO	World Trade Organization