



KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM ON INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Report of the INCLUDE meeting 20 November 2018 Workshop - 'Key Learnings Inclusive Development'

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Outline

Introduction	2
1. Social Protection	4
2. Strategic Actors	6
3. Productive Employment	8
Conclusion.....	10

Introduction

On November 20th the INCLUDE workshop ‘Key Learnings Inclusive Development’ took place. Researchers from NWO-WOTRO’s ‘[Research for Inclusive Development in Sub-Saharan Africa](#)’ (RIDSSA) projects, INCLUDE Platform members, the INCLUDE Secretariat and the NWO-WOTRO International Advisory Committee gathered in The Hague to prepare for the [INCLUDE conference ‘From Research to Practice: Inclusive Development for Future Prospects in Africa’](#), hosted by INCLUDE and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) the following day. This workshop provided an opportunity for the RIDSSA groups to share their final findings from four years of research and present their recommendations for development policy. These were put to discussion with the aim to distil the key messages for the conference on November 21st, where policymakers would be attending.¹

Continued engagement for inclusive development

The day was kicked off with by the chair of INCLUDE’s Steering Group Isa Baud (emeritus professor International Development Studies, University of Amsterdam) and Annelies Zoomers (professor International Development Studies, Utrecht University/NWO-WOTRO PC RIDSSA). Marking the end of the four year RIDSSA programme, this workshop as well as the conference of the following day were marked as moments of celebration. Since its conception, the RIDSSA programme has yielded positive impact through close collaboration with local communities and with policy makers and academics in the countries of research and in the Netherlands. The relationships established over the course of the programme create opportunities for realising continued impact, even though the RIDSSA projects are officially coming to an end. Continued dialogue and cooperation is essential, stressed Jean Bossuyt (ECDPM/INCLUDE), especially in our increasingly complex and interconnected world. To find solutions and policies that are fit for purpose and make meaningful contributions to inclusive development, cross-sectoral exchange of knowledge - of which the workshop and conference are exemplary - are indispensable.

As a final speaker before commencing the discussions of the day, Marleen Dekker (professor of Inclusive Development in Africa, Leiden University/coordinator INCLUDE Secretariat) presented the key findings of the INCLUDE inclusive development synthesis report that addressed some common misconceptions and lessons about development. In her [presentation](#) Dekker lent urgency to the RIDSSA findings, as she stressed that poverty and inequality will not be reduced by simply investing in economic growth or particular policy domains such as employment or social protection. There is a need for inclusive development policies based on context specific knowledge that take into account existing inequalities.²

Organization of this report

The remainder of this report is organized along the lines of the three discussion sessions that formed the core of the workshop. Each of these break-out sessions reflected on one of the three INCLUDE themes³: productive employment, strategic actors and social protection. The sessions started with brief presentations of the RIDSSA research groups and thereafter focused on three main questions:

1. *What are the main contextual **causes of differentiation** - in terms of heterogeneity of results across population groups (including intersectionality), levels of scale (micro, regional, national) and time (short/long-term) - and what can be done to address these?*

¹ The full report of that conference can be found [here](#).

² More information on the presentation by Marleen Dekker can be found [here](#).

³ Key findings and overarching conclusions relating to these themes have been brought together in three synthesis reports that can be downloaded [here](#).

2. *Under what conditions do **inclusive processes** - i.e. political participation and involvement in policy design and implementation and what this means for particular groups - lead to more **inclusive outcomes**? Is inclusion at the process level necessary to achieve inclusive outcomes? Or the other way around? To what extent are processes and outcomes complementary or mutually exclusive?*
3. *What are the **linkages across policy domains** that contribute to inclusive development, taking into account that linkages can both promote or constrain development in policy domains?*

In the chapters that follow, the key messages that resulted from debates on the above listed questions are described. Although there was ample attention for project specific outcomes, it should be noted that the scope of this report does not provide for in-depth descriptions of the 17 RIDSSA projects⁴, nor for all the debates of the day. Instead, this report focuses on the most important conclusions and recommendations for policy, which are brought together in the final chapter.

⁴ Information on the RIDSSA projects is available [here](#).

1. Social Protection

<p>At a glance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Inclusive development requires mid- to long-term perspectives. Efforts should focus on building sustainable systems that ensure continued impact after a programme has ended.● When cash transfers are complemented with context-specific policy measures they have the potential to generate so-called ‘multiplier effects’.● Although non-inclusive processes can yield positive and inclusive outcomes, inclusive processes are always preferable as they promote empowerment of the most marginalised and are a non-income outcome in itself.● To ensure effectiveness of social protection services and avoid risks of exacerbating inequalities, involving those who will use the services in decision-making processes is crucial.● To realise inclusive processes several measures are deemed helpful, including 1) training of local stakeholders in lobby and advocacy; 2) inviting representatives of local communities to the decision-making table; and 3) investing in education and awareness-raising to create a demand for inclusive processes among local communities.● As social protection has been found to contribute to economic objectives it is not only the right thing to do, but also the smart thing to do.
<p>RIDSSA project presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Social and Health Policies for Inclusive Growth (SHIPG) - Katja Bender● Social protection in Uganda - Franziska Gassmann● Social protection in the Afar region - Bereket Tsegay● Social protection through maternal health programmes - Sonja Merten and Erick Nyambedha
<p>Discussion moderator: morning session by Frank van Kesteren (INCLUDE); afternoon session by Sara Ruto (People’s Action for Learning [PAL] network/INCLUDE)</p>

Causes of differentiation

Despite their different focus areas and various findings, the social protection RIDSSA projects all concluded that, in essence, social protection works. Discussions therefore focused on what social protection interventions should look like; how they can best be implemented; and what additional activities are necessary to best realise sustainable and inclusive outcomes. First, it was argued that **alleviating inequality requires mid- to long-term perspectives**. As one-off cash transfers or short-term projects are less likely to yield lasting effects, efforts should focus on **building sustainable systems that ensure continued impact after a programme has ended**.

In addition to long-term perspectives, social protection measures also benefit from holistic approaches. That is, interventions should not be limited to cash transfers but also include additional activities such as education, training and technical assistance. Cash transfers alone run the risk of increasing inequalities, but **if complementary context-specific policy measures are applied, they have the potential to generate so-called ‘multiplier effects’**. The research project on [Social protection in Uganda](#) showed that the extent of these multiplier effects depends on pre-existing structures at community level. This finding underscored the need for complementary policy measures to be context-specific to let people in diverse regions benefit from the interventions beyond the first-hand recipients of the cash transfers.

Finally, mitigating differentiation and avoiding exacerbation of existing inequalities also requires a thorough understanding of who the most marginalised are, what kind of assistance they require and how this should be translated in well-targeted interventions. In the project on [Social protection in the Afar region](#) it was found that Ethiopia’s Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) failed to reach the

most marginalised. Women and unemployed youth were not included sufficiently, which was leading to even greater disparities than before.

Inclusive processes and outcomes

In discussing how best to achieve inclusive outcomes, participants in this break-out session agreed that non-inclusive processes *can* yield positive and inclusive outcomes. However, **inclusive processes were unanimously regarded as inherently better**, as they allow for the most marginalised to give their input and promote their empowerment in the long run. Moreover, as Franziska Gassmann (Professor of Social Protection and Development at Maastricht University) pointed out, for certain social protection services, **involvement of those that will be using the services is indispensable**. Findings of the RIDSSA project [Social protection through maternal health programmes](#) illustrate this point. Free maternal services were provided in rural Kenya, but women still faced numerous hidden costs and insufficient attention was paid to the practicalities of local implementation. Consulting local actors - including the potential beneficiaries themselves - on how services could best be delivered would greatly help in improving effectiveness of this programme.

If inclusive processes are taken as a goal in themselves, two questions remain. The first question raised was what is needed to realise inclusive processes. Several options for interventions were suggested, including **1) training of local stakeholders in lobby- and advocacy; 2) inviting representatives of local communities to the decision-making tables** at local, regional national *and* international levels; and **3) investing in education and awareness-raising to create a demand for inclusive processes among local communities**. The second question asked was what form inclusive processes should take and which actors should be included. Answers are highly dependent on the given context and the social and institutional structures in place. This point was illustrated by the RIDSSA project [Social and Health Policies for Inclusive Growth](#). Including traditional authorities in decision-making processes can be very helpful, especially if formal institutional structures are absent or lack capacity. However, the research also showed that in some communities in Ghana and Kenya involvement of local traditional authorities can have the opposite effect and hamper progress or prevent certain groups from participating. Thus, **effectively promoting inclusive processes and outcomes requires a thorough understanding of local political and institutional context**.

Linkages across policy domains

In this final part of the session, the linkages between social protection and other policy domains were discussed. Access to basic services, quality of governance and territorial development were identified as particularly relevant. Considering that social protection aligns with and contributes to economic objectives **it is not only the right thing to do, but also the smart thing to do**. Building strategic linkages across the domains is therefore key.

2. Strategic Actors

<p>At a glance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Differentiation is a fact of development. Interventions should not pursue its elimination, but rather aim for avoiding and mitigating damaging inequality.● To mitigate differentiation, one-size-fits-all approaches should be avoided. Instead, programmes should be embedded in local contexts and reflect the needs and desires of communities they seek to serve, including of those that are often left behind.● Inclusive outcomes are the end goal, but inclusive processes have great value in themselves. Therefore, top-down approaches that yield inclusive results should be critically scrutinized.● Among the key conditions necessary to achieve sustainable and inclusive development are: 1) social capital; 2) grassroots involvement; 3) institutional capacity.● Researcher and policy-makers should avoid silos, especially when synthesizing outcomes and formulating policy recommendations.
<p>RIDSSA project presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Agricultural partnerships - Annemarie van Paassen● Economic empowerment and sex work - Lorraine Nencel● Barriers to Batwa inclusion in Rwanda - Morag Goodwin
<p>Discussion moderator: Ton Dietz (ASCL/INCLUDE)</p>

Exacerbating differentiation: risks and solutions

Taking as point of departure that **differentiation is a fact of development**, consensus was soon achieved that **interventions should not aim to eradicate differentiation altogether, but rather aim for avoiding and mitigating damaging inequality**. To do so, identifying factors that may aggravate differentiation is a first prerequisite. One such factor was highlighted by the RIDSSA project [Economic empowerment and sex work](#), which showed how a failure to **recognise subgroups within marginalised groups** may have detrimental effects. It was found that homosexual sex workers are even more marginalised within the larger group of sex workers and without this understanding, interventions are likely to leave them further behind. Additionally, programmes that do not **reflect the needs and desires of participants** can cause more harm than good. Interventions informed by Western logic are unlikely to achieve economic empowerment and inclusion, as was shown by the [Barriers to Batwa inclusion in Rwanda](#) project. Notions of inclusion and identity held by the Batwa people appeared to be radically different from common Western conceptions, underscoring the need for consultation of local communities throughout a project cycle.

A final issue that was raised in the discussion was that of **vocabulary and assumptions**. Again, the project [Economic empowerment and sex work](#) was a case in point. It was found that a vocabulary of ‘reintegration’ and ‘rehabilitation’ - commonly used terms in programmes addressing sex workers - in fact emphasizes the exclusion of sex workers by society and hence reinforces the stigma that excluded them in the first place. Additionally, the goal of ‘economic empowerment’ of sex workers is often taken as synonymous for alternative income generating activities, i.e. to get sex workers out of sex works. This testifies to the underlying assumption that sex workers would prefer to do any other work if given the opportunity. This is a false assumption and denies sex workers’ self-determination and agency.

Beyond recognising how interventions could exacerbate inequalities, working towards mitigating differentiation requires an **understanding of its diverse drivers**. Although discussants named many, the most problematic drivers identified were **power imbalance, stigma and self-esteem**. Key steps to begin counteracting these drivers were put forth. First, an analysis of local power structures is vital, as they are not always what first meets the eye. **Having identified who key strategic actors are,**

working with them towards a shared goal will help to avoid exacerbating (or even creating) tensions. In the project [Barriers to Batwa inclusion in Rwanda](#) for example, the local authorities appeared to be a crucial partner in achieving inclusive outcomes. Second, to counter stigma it is **crucial to establish connections with and give a platform to key local actors**. One promising option is to work with individual ‘champions’ with a vision and connection to the local community. They can take a leading role in opening the conversation about long-held taboos or stigmas; something which is near impossible for ‘outsiders’ (i.e. programme staff). In all these endeavours however, caution is called for when particular groups or people are given a stage and treated as representing a whole community. Establishing mechanism for sound grassroots participation should therefore be priority in inclusive processes.

What all the above draws attention to is the **need for programmes to 1) be embedded in local socio-cultural realities; and 2) be flexible/adaptable**, so that they can be adjusted to changing contexts and research findings with regards to differentiation throughout the project cycle.

Inclusive processes and outcomes

The evidence of the three presented research projects showed there is not *one* ideal model to achieve inclusive outcomes. While generally there was consensus that **inclusive processes are desirable and - as some argued - should be regarded as a goal in itself**, it was also acknowledged that **in some circumstances top-down approaches may be more effective in yielding inclusive outcomes**. In the case of Rwanda, as Morag Goodwin showed in her presentation, where a *strong state* is implementing pro-poor policy that seeks to reach the most marginalised as well, inclusion is affected in a highly top-down manner. Questions remained however about the long-term effects of such top-down, non-inclusive processes. For example, will the marginalised groups eventually be empowered and get a position at the decision-making table? Additionally, evidence from Kenya showed that when appropriate state policy is lacking and marginalised groups are excluded, **bottom-up inclusive processes and self-organisation are vital to achieve inclusive outcomes**.

Jean Bossuyt (ECDPM/INCLUDE) further stressed the importance of inclusive processes by referring to examples from several Latin American Nations. There, the realisation of truly transformational economic outcomes fully relied on inclusive decision-making processes, in which ideas/visions for redistribution were born indigenously and from the grassroots. Although this Latin American process cannot be copied to the poorest contexts, lessons can be learned about the **conditions necessary to promote inclusive processes and achieve sustainable and inclusive development: 1) social capital; 2) grassroots involvement; 3) institutional capacity** (e.g. a functioning judicial system).

Finally, zooming in on the importance of strategic actors to achieve inclusive outcomes, the findings of the RIDSSA project [Agricultural partnerships](#) proved particularly informative. This project showed that different actors bring along different priorities and values, the combination of which yields specific developmental outcomes. For policymakers it is therefore **essential to ensure the involvement of actors (often NGOs) that emphasize social protection and grassroots empowerment** as these development logics will enhance the likelihood of achieving inclusive outcomes.

Linkages across policy domains

In the third and final part of the discussion, participants briefly reflected on the necessity of linkages across policy domains. As the three researches exemplified, interdisciplinarity is vital to begin to understand the complexities of development. In similar fashion, policy-makers should avoid working in silos and establish linkages across different policy domains. In conclusion, **barriers between academic disciplines, between policy domains, and between research and policy should be broken down**, with this conference and the INCLUDE platform as promising pathways towards continued collaboration.

3. Productive Employment

At a glance:

- The most important factors that can cause and/or exacerbate differentiation in terms of productive employment include asset ownership; education; social networks and connectivity.
- Understanding the influence of local social networks and power structures on matters of employment and remuneration is therefore essential when designing policy.
- Policies that focus on sustainable self-employment are particularly relevant in contexts where waged-employment opportunities are lacking.
- Such policies can also enhance autonomy and self-sufficiency, but care must be taken to avoid overly invasive interventions that may undermine people's self-determination.
- Inclusive processes demand not only to give relevant parties a seat at the decision-making table, but also to promote inclusive representation.
- Including local firms in international value chains is necessary, but insufficient to enhance productive employment and achieve inclusive outcomes. Standards for equitable private sector partnerships should be formulated and promoted.

RIDSSA project presentations:

- Dutch multinational businesses in Africa - Paul Kamau
- Empowering female Ugandan entrepreneurs - Rebecca Kiconco
- Productive employment in segmented markets - Remco Oostendorp
- Feeder road development - Crellis Rammelt (video presentation)

Discussion moderator: morning session by Isa Baud (emeritus professor International Development Studies, University of Amsterdam/INCLUDE); afternoon session by Witness Simbanegavi (AERC/INCLUDE)

Causes of differentiation

The RIDSSA projects presented in this session all provided evidence on the multitude of factors that can cause and/or exacerbate differentiation in terms of productive employment. **The most important factors included 1) asset ownership; 2) education; and 3) social networks and connectivity.** Results from the research on Avocado Contract Farming in Kenya, in the [Productive employment in segmented markets](#) project, underscored the importance of ownership (1). Farmers were found to be mostly small holders and those who owned the avocado trees were usually older men. Because of this unequal distribution of ownership, young farmers and women are often excluded from productive employment in the avocado sector. In relation to education (2), the project [Empowering female Ugandan entrepreneurs](#) provided some interesting insights. A basic level of literacy was necessary for the female entrepreneurs to be able to use mobile technology for financial transactions. Those having received some education were thus at an advantage compared to their non-educated, illiterate peers. Finally, the role of social networks and connections (3) became particularly apparent in the example of Avocado Contract Farming in Kenya. It appeared that the price farmers - without contract or side-selling outside their contract - were given for their products by brokers was more dependent on their social connections and urgency of their needs than on price fluctuations. **Understanding the influence of local social networks and power structures on matters of remuneration and employment is therefore essential when designing policy.**

Context-specific programming

Determining what type of interventions are best suited in what contexts is essential to achieve inclusive development and avoid exacerbating differentiation. To do so, **policy makers should always keep in mind relevance for (and goals of) the end users.** To illustrate, Rebecca Kiconco (Empowering female Ugandan entrepreneurs/Eindhoven University of Technology) pointed to recent findings in Uganda.

Contrary to Western understandings of entrepreneurial priorities, it has been found that for many female entrepreneurs in rural Uganda the main goal is not to grow their business, but to pay tuition fees and support their families. The assistance and services they are given must therefore differ from those provided to entrepreneurs whose primary concern is business development.

Further, in contexts where there is a lack of waged-employment opportunities - which is the case in many developing countries - **policies that focus on encouraging sustainable self-employment are most relevant.** Such policies, apart from creating new job opportunities, **can also enhance autonomy and self-sufficiency.** However, as the [Feeder road development](#) project showed, interventions that fail to take into account the needs and choices of local populations may run the risk of doing the very opposite; i.e. undermine autonomy. In Ethiopia, for instance, *non-farm* households were provided with organic fertiliser instead of food to mitigate their food insecurity. While these households had not chosen to venture into agriculture, this intervention practically forced them to do so, disregarding people's self-determination and -sufficiency.

Inclusive processes and outcomes

To achieve productive employment in an inclusive fashion, all stakeholders - including the private sector - should be given a seat at the decision-making table. Yet, **having all parties present at the table does not automatically guarantee sound representation.** The case of the flower sector in Kenya, in the [Dutch multinational businesses in Africa](#) project, showed that many associations have their own internal dynamics resulting in underrepresentation of women or the 'lower' workforces. Whilst most agreed on the importance of inclusive processes, efforts to educate and train those that are included were marked as necessary additional intervention. Insufficient knowledge and understanding of key issues - including technical matters related to economics and employment - among local communities and, at times, government officials were recognised as a major obstacle.

Achieving **inclusive economic development requires expansion of the economic space for local firms and efforts to engage them in international value chains.** International firms could play a role by establishing inclusive partnerships with local enterprises. However, inclusion in the supply chain (i.e. an inclusive process) does not automatically lead to productive employment (i.e. inclusive outcomes). Governments should play an active role in monitoring the inclusion process and **setting standards for equitable private sector partnerships.**

Linkages across policy domains

The theme of productive employment cannot be addressed in isolation. Linkages exist with other issues and policy fields, including economic development, social protection and service provision. Inclusive development demands that policymakers, academics and practitioners recognise these linkages and join forces to address contextual factors that affect employment opportunities - such as corruption and adequate governance. **Successfully addressing this multitude of interlinked challenges demands cooperation between various stakeholders,** also including the media and NGOs.

Conclusion

This final section serves to bring together the most important messages of put forward during the separate break-out sessions. Although the sessions focused on different themes and the research projects yielded a wide variety of context specific lessons, several common conclusions and lessons can be identified:

Differentiation

- There was wide agreement on the fact that differentiation is inherent to development. Therefore, interventions should not pursue its elimination, but rather aim for avoiding and mitigating damaging inequality. To do so, one-size-fits-all approaches should be avoided. Instead, programmes should be embedded in local contexts, to address the causes of differentiation and reflect the needs and desires of communities they seek to serve - including of those that are often left behind.
- The drivers of differentiation are manifold and diverse yet interconnected. The most important and problematic drivers identified in the various sessions include: power imbalance; stigma; self-esteem; asset ownership; education; social networks and connectivity.
- For interventions to be effective, they should not just address the different drivers, but they need to keep the relevance for (and goals of) the end users in central focus.
- Programmes need to 1) be embedded in local socio-cultural realities; and 2) be flexible/adaptable, so that they can be adjusted to changing contexts and research findings with regards to differentiation throughout the project cycle.

Inclusive processes, inclusive outcomes

- While inclusive outcomes are the end goal, inclusive processes were generally regarded as inherently better and possibly a goal in and of themselves as they can mitigate differentiation and lead to increased self-esteem, self-confidence, agency and resilience of communities.
- Inclusive processes demand not only giving relevant parties a seat at the decision-making table, but also promoting inclusive representation.
- To realise equitable partnerships and inclusive outcomes involving actors that emphasize social protection and grassroots empowerment is a promising way forward.
- Key conditions necessary to achieve sustainable and inclusive development are: 1) social capital; 2) grassroots involvement; and 3) institutional capacity.
- Inclusive development requires mid- to long-term perspectives, to which end efforts should focus on building sustainable systems that ensure continued impact after a programme has ended.

Avoid silos, establish linkages

- Interdisciplinarity is vital to begin to understand the complexities of development. Not only academics, but also policy-makers should avoid working in silos and establish linkages across different policy domains.
- Barriers between academic disciplines, between policy domains, and between research and policy should be broken down.
- Successfully addressing the multitude of interlinked challenges in the way of inclusive development demands cooperation across policy domains, sectors and national borders.