



KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM ON INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

WORKSHOP REPORT

Knowledge Activities for Inclusive Development in Africa
20 October 2014



Introduction

The INCLUDE Policy Research Workshop “Knowledge Activities for Inclusive Development in Africa” was held on 20 October 2014 at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague, The Netherlands. The aim of the workshop was to bring together and stimulate a forward-looking debate among the research projects that are part of the research agenda of INCLUDE and representatives of Africa’s major policy knowledge networks, Dutch academic and policy stakeholders, and invited guests.

An executive summary and a full report on the Policy Research Workshop are available, as well as the presentations and a video compilation.

Highlights

Kenya’s policy **process** is participatory, and partners can engage government agencies in any of the policy-making and evaluation activities. The government particularly welcomes evidence on job creation in the formal sector, on the impact of some government policies, and on how to transform the informal sector and the economy at large.

A demand-driven approach to **policy influence** is preferable to a supply-driven approach. For policy influence, research uptake can be enhanced by the following: mapping stakeholders and knowledge gaps; building an epistemic community; availing of rigorous evidence and embedding it in policy debates; innovatively packaging knowledge by adapting it to different policy actors; and engaging the most appropriate policy actors.

The **studies commissioned by the Platform** on production employment focus on the impact of road construction, labour market conditions in fresh produce markets, the role of multinational enterprises, and entrepreneurship development, while those on strategic actors focus on marginalized groups, informal sector organisations, business strategies, and the role of partnership arrangements in inclusive development. Because all research groups aim to influence policy through these studies, they should share ideas to improve synergy, link their evidence to existing policies and gaps, and situate their research within a wider sectoral context.

The **Platform has an important role** to play in facilitating knowledge processes between different research groups and countries. To achieve this, the Platform should link research groups to stakeholders, build research and knowledge management capacity of research groups, facilitate debate and exchange of information, and address emerging challenges.

Executive summary

The Knowledge Platform on Inclusive Development Policies (INCLUDE) held a workshop and Platform meeting at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), The Hague on 20-21 October, on Knowledge Activities for Inclusive Development in Africa. The Platform aims to promote inclusive development in Africa by facilitating evidence-based policy processes on productive employment, strategic actors, and social protection. It focuses on 7 countries: Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Benin, Uganda, and Rwanda.

The workshop and Platform meeting were held in furtherance of the agenda of the Platform following 6 successful meetings previously held, 10 research projects launched, and on-going processing of received proposals on social protection. The workshop was structured, and deliberations involved presentations followed by plenary debate by participants, which helped to enhance understanding of knowledge activities for inclusive development. The workshop was convened to deliberate on the knowledge needs of policy makers in Africa, on the organisation of flows of knowledge to enhance its uptake, and on how the Platform can contribute to these knowledge flows. The meeting also provided a platform for presentations by the 10 research consortia (RCs), with 5 presentations on productive employment and 5 on strategic actors.

The keynote presentation was given by Mr. Charles Ombuki from the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Services in Kenya, who gave a presentation on policy process in Kenya, one of the 7 focus countries. He pointed out that the policy process in Kenya was anchored in the new constitution and that government agencies initiate policies in the context of the country's long-term development blueprint (Vision 2030). He explained that the policies are outlined in 5-year medium-term plans. Being anchored in the constitution, it is a constitutional requirement that policies be made in a participatory process. Because of this open nature of policy making in Kenya, partners can share evidence with government agencies during formulation and evaluation of medium-term plans. Mr. Ombuki also pointed out that most of the workers in Kenya are employed in the informal sector, which is characterised by low labour productivity. The social protection programs in place involve cash transfers to children, older persons, and people with disabilities. Knowledge gaps in Kenya include understanding the informal sector, explanation of jobless growth (especially in the formal sector), economic transformation, and impact of government policies.

There were extensive discussions on knowledge uptake with innovative and practical suggestions from HIVOS. One of the institutions with extensive experience in policy outreach is the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC). AERC's capability in knowledge brokerage lies in its more than 25 years of experience in collaborative research, its network of alumni (who are policy makers in many countries in Africa), and its regular policy engagement activities. Emphasis is placed on employing creative approaches to influence policy by adapting evidence for identified policy actors and involving influential regional bodies. It was emphasised that although research uptake can be based on supply-driven or demand-driven approaches, a demand-driven approach is desirable because it is participatory and strengthens evidence-based processes. Delegates pointed out that in research uptake it was important to (i) map stakeholders and knowledge and build an epistemic community; (ii) avail of rigorous evidence and knowledge and embed it in policy discussions; (iii) package evidence concisely and innovatively; and (iv) engage the most appropriate policy actors. Notably, research groups may experience challenges in knowledge uptake processes. To overcome such challenges, WOTRO provides guidance and training on appropriate approaches to enhance knowledge uptake processes. In addition, the Platform will provide further support to researchers to facilitate policy engagement and thus policy impact for inclusive development.

The 10 studies commissioned by the Platform were presented and discussed, and suggestions on how they can enhance their contribution to policies for inclusive development were made. The 10 RCs were divided into 5 groups of 2 studies each. Delegates highlighted similarities in themes, common areas of policy focus, and cross-linkages in each group. The 2 studies paired in Group 1 focus on value chains. One study seeks evidence on labour and market conditions of the fresh produce sector in Kenya, while the other focuses on partnership arrangements. Both studies focus on governance and trust relationships between partners. Notably, partnerships can be sought so long as they are meaningful, last for some time, and do not prevent each member from undertaking their activities. In Group 2, one study focuses on the IT sector in Kenya and seeks to understand what makes entrepreneurs successful, while the Ethiopian study looks at the impact of a feeder roads project. The thematic focus of these studies is different although both aim to influence policy. Delegates proposed that the impact of these studies can be enhanced by identifying existing policies and gaps, linking them with other sectors, and framing policy debates appropriately. Group 3 studies focus on sex workers in Ethiopia and the Batwa community in Rwanda. The research studies an area that is under-researched, employing participatory methods, focusing on sensitive issues, and involving vulnerable groups. Policy debates in these studies are adequate compensation, capacity development, and unprotected labour. Delegates proposed that the groups should focus on translating these major issues into local/national policy contexts and empowerment. Paired studies in Group 4 focus on inclusive businesses. One study is on the impact of local and global partnerships, while the other looks at whether businesses create inclusive development. These studies can be improved by elaborating on the concept of inclusive business and how inclusivity can be attained. Group 5 studies focus on informal sector workers and female entrepreneurs. Both studies use the same methodology and focus on gender, livelihood improvement in the informal sector, working conditions, capacity building, and provision of public goods.

Similarities were discussed in research themes and the policy debates which research groups in each country intended to influence. Delegates learned that in Kenya the studies should incorporate elements of the wider context of the sectors they are focusing on and engage stakeholders early. In Uganda, the broader policy debates are gender, the post-2015 development agenda, and marginalisation. In Ghana, although the informal sector is not yet an important issue for policy debate, linkages can be made to a value chain approach, which is already under discussion in policy debates. In Ethiopia, the projects focus on areas that are under-researched and ethnically and politically sensitive. The policy themes are remuneration, social protection, and gender.

The Platform has an important role to play in facilitating flows of knowledge both at the level of different research themes and at different country levels. The Platform should (i) link research groups to key stakeholders or convene them as necessary; (ii) assist

research groups to manage their knowledge processes; (iii) build the capacity of non-research organisations to conduct research; (iv) encourage research groups to share information by facilitating debate, promoting the role of the website, providing links to other knowledge platforms, sharing lessons learned, and maintaining contact with research groups; and (v) propose creative approaches or strategies to enhance the use of knowledge in policy making for inclusive development and to address challenges that may arise.

Overall, INCLUDE's work, including the research projects discussed during the workshop, is relevant not only to important policy debates in various countries in Africa but also to the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Trade and Development Co-operation, as was highlighted by Deputy of DGIS Reina Buijs from the Ministry.

Full Report

Workshop: "Knowledge Activities for Inclusive Development in Africa"

Monday, 20 October, International Institute of Social Studies in The Hague

1. Welcome and opening by Chairperson of the Platform Rob Bijl

- Why the Knowledge Platform?

The aim of the Knowledge Platform is to promote more inclusive development in Africa. Non-inclusive development is a serious social and economic problem. There is a need for evidence-based knowledge—new and existing—to inform policies.

- What has been done so far?

For the last 3 years the Platform has held 2 meetings a year, one in Africa and one in the Netherlands. The thematic focus is on productive employment, strategic actors, and social protection. So far, 3 calls for proposals have been issued and 10 research projects have already started: 5 on productive employment and 5 on strategic actors. The proposals on social protection are being processed.

- About the Knowledge Platform

Focus on 7 countries: Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Benin, Uganda, and Rwanda. The Platform also welcomes comparative studies that include more than one country. The Platform has a practical focus. It derives from the need to make existing knowledge available to policy actors/makers and to generate new knowledge (through the aforementioned projects).

- Key issues for this meeting:

- What are the knowledge needs of African policy makers?
- How to organise these flows of knowledge to enhance uptake?
- How can the Platform contribute to these knowledge flows?

2. Keynote by Charles Ombuki, Senior Economist, Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Services, Kenya

The policy-making landscape in Kenya has changed since 2010 with the new constitution. The policy-making process is anchored in the constitution. Policies are initiated by government departments and agencies—in line with their mandates and Kenya Vision 2030. They are outlined in the medium-term plans, which are rolling 5-year plans. As a matter of constitutional requirement, members of the public are invited to provide their inputs to draft policies before these policies are finalised.

There is a large demand for knowledge. The formal sector accounts for 2.3 million jobs, representing 17% of employment; the informal sector accounts for 11.2 million jobs, representing 83% of employment. There are several challenges posed by the informalisation of the labour market:

- Low productivity and poor quality of employment in the informal sector
- Shrinking tax-base, posing fiscal challenges for government

There are several questions that the government will want answers to. For instance:

- What is causing the stagnation of formal employment growth in Kenya?
- Can one transform the informal to the formal sector? If so, how?
- How does one identify the sectors/industries that are transformable?
- How can the transformation be achieved? Which informal sector entities can be targeted?
- Transformation of the agricultural sector has not quite taken off. Why?
- Why do we see growth without development?



The issue of the business environment in Kenya: how does Kenya's business environment compare with that of its neighbours? There is a dearth of research that evaluates the impact of certain policies government has been implementing. There are challenges on data and a deficiency of funds to do certain surveys that are critical to policy making—for example, labour market information surveys.

- Social protection:
 - Cash transfer to children—started in 2004 (253,000 beneficiaries to date, against a need of around 2.3million).
 - Cash transfer to older persons—started in 2010 (164,000 beneficiaries to date, against a need of 1.3 million; 4000 KES every 2 months). This is rather small.
 - Cash transfer to people with disability (in-kind transfers)

According to the World Bank, life expectancy has improved between 2009 and 2012: (57-59 years for males; 60-63 years for females). This may place significant demands on the country's budget as the proportion of older people in society increases. There is, however, a lack of studies on these important policy issues.

Comments by Robert-Jan Scheer

Planning of ministries plays an important role in many countries. This involves setting goals and designing instruments. There is a tendency to want to measure and to know the impact of several policies. Is there any flexibility in the way Kenya plans? Is goal-setting open enough to allow for changes induced by things that cannot be predicted? Does the government have full knowledge of the informal sector and how to influence it?

As a specific note, he added that policy makers do not read research papers. This means that packaging of research is important.

Responses by Charles Ombuki

Vision 2030 is broken down into 5-year plans, and there is an evaluation after every 5 years. So there is sufficient flexibility. Policies are subjected to stakeholder validation workshops before they are promulgated. There is not enough information about the informal sector. The last survey was conducted in 1999. The key challenge is the lack of funds necessary to undertake surveys.

Other comments

One Platform member stressed that the description of the policy-making process was rather simplistic. How long does it take to finalise a policy? Response: it is a participatory process. Development partners with an interest in certain areas are permitted to participate, and research can be shared with the Ministry either directly or indirectly.

3. Experiences with knowledge activities in the Platform

Two members of the Platform shared experiences about knowledge activities conducted by their own organisations. Lemma Senbet first discussed AERC's longstanding experience on capacity building to conduct quality-oriented research and training. This was followed by a presentation by Josine Stremmelaar on the experiences of HIVOS in ensuring that research outputs have impact.

Lemma Senbet, Executive Director of the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC)

Presentation on "Research meets policy in Africa". Three dimensions were emphasised: (i) AERC's capacity-building framework of the past 25 years; (ii) modalities to deliver products; and (iii) sharing knowledge products. AERC's capacity-building framework consists of three related pillars: research, training, and policy outreach. Collaborative research is important as results are taken to policy makers, often starting with a 1-day conference on a theme and followed by bi-annual meetings. In addition, individual training (collaborative Masters and PhD programmes) is vital for influencing policy, as many current senior politicians across Africa were trained by AERC and are members of the AERC alumni network. AERC aims to create a critical mass of individuals who engage with policy makers. Alumni are messengers of research who assemble and (re) visit ministers, deputies, etc. on a regular basis, providing them with policy options. Next to this network approach, modalities of knowledge sharing include senior policy seminars, national workshops, and bi-annual research workshops in which policy makers and stakeholders are brought together in the same room.



Josine Stremmelaar, Coordinator Knowledge Programme at HIVOS

Discussion of the various stages of the research process and its possible outputs.

A plea was made for more creative ways of doing research and presenting results in order to gain more impact. She first detailed what in her view research output is: not only paperwork (articles, books, policy briefs, etc.) but also conferences, digital maps, and even theatre and cartoons. Also, the research process can be considered an output in some cases. The first stage of a research process is the mapping of knowledge and debates and the identification of key stakeholders. For example, HIVOS undertook a sex education project among youth by using cartoons. The second phase is the research design. She emphasised the multiple engagement of stakeholders at an early stage. Research designs can also be published, but only a few researchers do so. The third stage is knowledge sharing, which she advised doing at the earliest possible stage. Forms include seminars, 'writeathons' (co-creating reports), safari (social innovation process), fairs, and book printing. The fourth stage is debate. Researchers can engage in policy debate in a more dynamic way—for example, by organising provocations in several cities by using livestream chats. The fifth stage is the publication of results through books, articles, radio, video (YouTube), policy briefs, toolkits, websites. The sixth stage is research uptake, by using a tailor-made approach. Uptakes can also be considered an output that can be published on a website. In conclusion, Josine summarised what can be learned from HIVOS experiences from output to impact: (i) know your beneficiaries; (ii) diversify and customise; and (iii) be creative.



In the discussion that followed, the following issues were raised: ways to influence regional bodies, which have a growing impact on national policies; policy makers choosing the wrong policy options for the wrong reasons; the role of social media in engaging policy makers; and identifying the knowledge needs of policy makers.

4. Research uptake and stakeholder mapping

Nicholas Awortwi, Director of Research at the Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR)

There are two approaches to the uptake process of policy influencing: (i) a supply-driven approach; and (ii) a demand-driven approach. The second approach was given particular emphasis. Through meeting with policy actors (a broader term than policy makers, as it encompasses not only public officials but also actors from different sectors), the demand-driven approach seeks refinement of policies through interaction. It facilitates discussing ideas and refining research approaches in order to strengthen eventual policy relevance.

The relevance of stakeholder mapping was emphasised. Different actors in society can be identified in this process, such as government, civil society, private sector, international organisations, influential individuals, political entrepreneurs, and opposition political parties. The exercise, however, does not end with identifying the actors, but with understanding their influence by determining their **interests**, **motivation** to act, **power** to influence discussion, and **capacity** to act within a political context.

The focus of the presentation then shifted towards action: after mapping the stakeholders and understanding their influence, what should be done next? It was argued that an *epistemic community* should be built, which is a network of actors that touch both the demand- and the supply-side approach. In the specific case of the INCLUDE Platform, this could entail the research groups together with actors encompassing existing research and knowledge.



In order to convince policy makers that the research and its outcomes are valid, researchers need to show that their research will have an impact. The quality of the research is important: the evidence, the way it is packaged, and to whom it is disseminated are

crucial. Also, research needs to be embedded in the policy discussion, and thus preferably demand-driven. Through convincingly strong methodological approaches and detailed and concise packaging, policy actors will be more likely to uptake research evidence.

Uptake does not only mean being cited; researchers should wonder how to get the results that they have found into implementation. To achieve this, the policy engagement process should (i) start with forming an epistemic community; (ii) develop different policy alerts; (iii) engage policy actors; and (iv) have findings taken up in policies.

Response of Han van Dijk, Senior Policy Officer at NWO/WOTRO

WOTRO is actively engaged in trying to implement knowledge uptake in WOTRO projects. Different roads are taken—for instance, through administrative measures. This could mean WOTRO sets specific conditions in the calls for proposals, or requires applicants to elaborate uptake strategies. As a funder, WOTRO has the potential to guide people in this process. However, it remains a challenge to achieve actual policy uptake.

In practice, it often appears more challenging for the project holders. Sometimes they are not able to communicate at all with the respective targeted agencies or departments. Therefore, WOTRO has been working on building in new steps to facilitate project holders in this process. It now offers training courses in proposal development to engage stakeholders, and it also offers courses in monitoring and evaluation, which are essential components to measure a project's effect and impact. In this process, WOTRO feels that the Knowledge Platforms facilitate efficiency across the board and provide the opportunity to see how research uptake can work.

5. Short presentations of research projects on Productive Employment

The RCs pitched their research proposals. On productive employment, these are as follows:

- Maggie Leung: Feeder Road Development for Inclusive Productive Employment in Ethiopia
- Chibuike Uche: Dutch Multinational Businesses, Dutch Government and the Promotion of Productive Employment in Sub-Saharan Africa
- Bekele Shiferaw: Productive Employment in the Segmented Markets of Fresh Produce
- Henny Romijn: Changing the Mindset of Ugandan Entrepreneurs: From Muppets to Gazelles
- Harry Barkema: Multipliers for Employment Creation: The IT Sector in Kenya



Ton Dietz wrapped up the presentations and noted that the RCs cover only 3 of the 7 partner countries.

6. Launch of the new Platform website

Isa Baud announced the launch of the INCLUDE website. The Platform welcomes the new style and the new name INCLUDE, as well as the interactive character of the new website.

7. Short presentations of research projects on Strategic Actors

The RCs pitched their research proposals. On strategic actors, these are as follows:

- Mayke Kaag: Increasing Political Leverage for Informal and Formal Workers' Organisations for Inclusive Development
- Annemarie van Paassen: Partnership Arrangements as Strategic Action for Inclusive Development: Practice and Outcome
- Felix Ndahinda: Investigating Structural Barriers to Batwa Inclusion in Development in Rwanda
- Rob van Tulder: How Inclusive Business Strategies Can Contribute to Inclusive Development in Sub-Saharan Africa



- Lorraine Nencel: Creating Opportunities? Economic Empowerment, Political Positioning and Participation of Sex Workers in Kenya and Ethiopia

Ton Dietz wrapped up the presentations and noted that the RCs on strategic actors provide a representative overview of inclusive development challenges in Africa, as they:

- cover all 7 partner countries
- cover different sectors in the economy
- include different types of research centres

8. Round Table 1: Thematic focus

Group 1. Research consortia of Dr I. A. van Paassen & Dr B. Shiferaw

The coordinators of the projects provided brief introductions to their projects. Shiferaw reported that the actors in the project are, among others, the Fresh Producers Association of Kenya (FPEAK), the Ministry of Labour, and the Ministry of Planning. Within the fresh produce sector, there are modern and traditional sectors. How are the sectors growing? Are they inclusive? And if they are growing, would inclusion make them grow faster?

The questions are the following: Are the farmers meeting the global-level GAP standards? Are the labour conditions fair? The issues include income, payments, working conditions, and gender. He went on to point out that the horticultural sector will not be studied in isolation. There may be a need to focus on the broader employment/labour issues. Issues/questions discussed include (i) the role of women and youth in the fresh produce sector—the main issue is how to attract youth into agriculture; (ii) why wages are low; and (iii) creation of more remunerative employment in general is more important than focusing on an individual sector.

On the partnership with value chains project, Paassen reported that the issue is not to sustain partnerships forever but to keep people doing what they are doing. Changes will always occur as value chains continue changing. It was also noted that it is difficult to form partnerships and that efforts are needed to make changes in policy in order to create more space. Some of the issues discussed include (i) linkage to partners and training; (ii) how to create appropriate governance by involving multinational firms and local partners to create sustainable partnerships; and (iii) the need to combine efficiency with employment. There is also a need to collaborate with other stakeholders to create meaningful partnerships with value chains.

Some of the common issues in the two projects include (i) power/governance issues; (ii) trust relationships between the different partners; (iii) how beneficial relationships can be developed for the value chains; and (iv) the crucial role of training and skills. It was noted that the conditions manifest in a sector may reflect the general conditions in a country, and therefore one need not be specific. Hence, the sector should not be studied in isolation. A participant in the meeting asked to what extent productive employment is relevant to people in a country where more people are in the informal sector. There is thus a need to dialogue with actors in each country so that the Knowledge Platform can help in bringing together the stakeholders, including the Dutch embassies.

Group 2. Research consortia of Prof. Dr Barkema and Dr M. Leung

1. Broader policy debates

The coordinators of the projects provided brief introductions to their projects.

IT-sector project, Kenya: What makes entrepreneurs successful? What policies are you trying to influence? Important issues are:

- Skills training
- Financing
- Incubator spaces
- Building links with other activities
- Developing courses on entrepreneurship—working with Strathmore College.
- Understanding what enables people to be successful entrepreneurs

Comments:

- You need to identify existing policies and gaps, and what the study is likely to impact.
- Issue of linkages with other sectors and activities—for example, ICT, mobile money.

Feeder roads project, Ethiopia: Partners, including the Road Development Department. The current project focuses on hydrological aspects of road construction. This new project looks at the employment impact. Expanding the stakeholders is the major issue. How to bring policy makers on board? The interest is already there. An important issue is that of scaling up. Approximately 4 case studies will be undertaken. The impact of feeder road construction will be mapped out during and after the construction. Important issues are:

- Jobs created
- Mobility

- Hydrological, etc.
- Road planning and building requires a holistic approach.

2. Cross-linkages

Research areas are quite different; there is no scope for convergence, aside perhaps for some in the area of entrepreneurship. A common agenda among all projects is how to influence policy making.

3. Support platform

Access to stakeholder groups in the respective countries.

Group 3. Research consortia of Dr L. Nencel & M. Goodwin

1. Broader policy debates

It is difficult to engage with a broader policy debate because of the lack of a coherent body of research. An important debate is translating sensitive issues around framing of identity into local/national policy contexts. Empowerment (economic, socio-political) also plays an important role.

2. Cross-linkages

Both research projects use participatory research methods and follow a bottom-up approach. Another similarity is that both projects work with vulnerable groups. Key issues that both projects raise are the following:

- Theories of vulnerability
- Marginalisation
- Framing of identity

3. Support platform

- Continuity of networks formed after the project ends (sustainability)
- Capacity building in non-research organisations to carry out or have control of research
- Consortia are meso-level networks between research and policy makers which can be broadened out by the Knowledge Platform to influence policy
- Platform needs to think of creative, outside-the-box solutions
- Presence of strategic actors in consortia who have their own interest in following up

Group 4. Research consortia of Rob van Tulder & Chibuike Uche

1. Broader policy debates

Rob van Tulder (EUR): the research deals with partnerships, not only between governments and business but also North-South, etc. It is about direct and indirect impact and whether this can be managed by the investor. To what extent can it be controlled for negative impact?

Chibuike Uche (ASC): Can business create inclusive growth/development? Discussion on indigenisation (adapting to/cooperating with local actors). Discussion on what are the underlying assumptions of the research: who is to blame for an eventual local negative impact?

Difference in approaches between the research of Van Tulder and Uche: Van Tulder looks at the impact of partnerships, while Uche studies the relationships within inclusive business. Discussion on the role of diplomats and the changing nature of diplomacy. Will there be clear messages to diplomats? Van Tulder takes a broader scope than diplomats in politics and also looks at NGO diplomats, etc. Discussion on the role of honest and dishonest, knowledgeable and non-knowledgeable brokers.



2. Cross-linkages

Discussion on early exchange of ideas. Will research proposals be shared and posted online? Why not? Han van Dijk has no problem with sharing them. Rob van Tulder will put his research proposal online, but without the budget.

3. Support platform

- Website as mechanism of dissemination of early research output. RCs need to share information.
- The stakeholder mapping is interesting because of the networks that are made visible. The Platform can thus help making them visible to RCs. Platform members can make their input to the mapping.
- Platform can help RCs engage with networks that are difficult to enter (for scientists, networks such as ambassadors' meetings of NABC), association of African ambassadors, etc.
- Suggestion of Paul Engel: perhaps the Secretariat or Platform members could call all RCs every month and ask them about the most interesting issue that they discussed for their research. Even if the most interesting issue was a certain theory specific to the research of that RC, it may also be interesting for other RCs.
- There was also a suggestion that what is published on the website should not only be what has been very well thought through. This may not evoke much debate.

GROUP 5. Research consortia of Dr M. Kaag & Dr H. Romijn

1. Broader policy debates

- International: Gender, increase livelihood through decent work
- National/Dutch donor: Focus on long-term investment in public good rather than short-term commercial returns. Dutch Ministry too occupied with output; however, culture changes slowly. At the same time, politics change quickly and Ministry is interested in research that 'doesn't miss the boat'. Therefore, invest in follow-up research.

2. Cross-linkages

Both research projects focus on empowerment. The project of Romijn focuses on the empowerment of female entrepreneurs, while the project of Kaag focuses on the empowerment of informal sector workers (to a large extent these are women). It is important to note that both projects look at these actors (female entrepreneurs and trade unions of informal workers) that want to be empowered (those women that want to be entrepreneurs and can become 'gazelles'). Also important to note is a focus on specific sectors that have potential to employ people.

Furthermore, both projects look at the role of social networks. How do female entrepreneurs and informal workers use their networks? Often these networks are counterproductive. Thus, both research projects focus on the constraining and enabling roles that the institutional context plays in this respect (for example, male dominance, focus on household).

Gender plays an important role in both projects. What conditions constrain the development of women? What institutional barriers do they face? Under what conditions can empowerment take place (dynamic rather than static approach)?

To sum up, 9 main cross-linkages were identified:

- Focus on empowerment
- Social network analysis
- Dynamic instead of static approach
- Focus on institutional environment
- Focus on gender
- Focus on the informal sector
- Focus on job creation
- Focus on working conditions
- Aim to influence the global debate

3. Support platform

- Website needs to be more interactive; increase access for RCs
- Stakeholder mapping valuable > link to networks of RCs
- Mapping existing knowledge
- Learning from failure > also report 'negative' research outcomes



9. Round Table 2: Country focus

GROUP 1. Kenya. Research consortia of Prof. Dr H. Barkema, Dr B. Shiferaw & Dr C. Uche

1. Broad policy debates

- Early engagement of stakeholders. Planning of inception workshop.
 - Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Devolution and Planning, producers, media
 - Plan policy uptake together
- Productive employment = decent compensation + working conditions + stability/instability of income
 - Compare modern and traditional sectors. How do employment conditions vary, and what policies are required to close that gap?
 - Objective is to narrow the gap with policy instruments, incentives, etc.
 - Want to have growth and inclusion
- Need support from Knowledge Platform, in the form of its convening power
- Big exporters (Fresh Producers Association) as a partner in the project helps with policy relevance
- Challenges: possibly divergent interests between the large and small producers
- Assess whether farmers selling in a chain are better off than those selling locally. More capital inputs.
- Compare Kenya with Peru. Peru seems to be better organised, perhaps taking the market from Kenya? Quality of jobs.

2. Cross-linkages

- Understand what makes entrepreneurs successful in the Kenyan case
- Role of incubators
- Possibility of scaling up and growing their businesses
- Broaden the study to more areas, beyond IT, and how government can support them

- Case studies

3. Support platform

- Education system
- Target upcoming entrepreneurs for training
- Understand government policy and policy gaps
- Kenyan and Nigerian manufacturing associations as stakeholders
- Need entry points (e.g. Embassy, as project involves Dutch MNOs)
- Resources
- Partnerships in influencing policy jointly?

GROUP 2. Uganda. Research consortia of Dr H. Romijn & Prof. R. van Tulder

1. Broader policy debates

- Gender
- Post-2015 (business environment for long-term results)
- Marginalisation

2. Cross-linkages

- Female entrepreneurship research: look not only at self-employed people but also at chains (e.g. suppliers that offer services)
- PPP research: also include gender/diversity/community
- Leadership
- Institutional: Uganda Investment Authority is partner in both projects
- Methodological: action research
- Business climate
- (non-)inclusive business models: does PE promote growth? There may also be harm in terms of inclusiveness

3. Support platform

- Facilitate debate like this
- Knowledge on investors (sources)

GROUP 3. Ghana. Research consortia of Dr I.A. van Paassen & Dr M. Kaag

1. Broader policy debates

Both research groups have applied to the 'strategic actors' call. They clearly argued that they do not fall within the other theme of 'productive employment'. However, both realised that aspects of their research and subject touch upon issues that are covered by the other thematic areas of the Platform.

Regarding relevant policy discussions in Ghana, little was discussed about what broader thematic debates would be relevant to these research groups. Regarding the informal sector, it was argued that this is not yet an actual debate in Ghana. The value chain approach is a continuation of a multi-year project and has thus already set in motion some discussion.

2. Cross-linkages

Both projects aim to 'empower' (not a preferred term) marginalised groups at different levels of society (local, national, regional). Some potential overlap could be found here between the groups, and there was consensus that both would discuss further what potential overlap could be identified.

3. Support platform

In certain cases it could be beneficial to the researchers to be able to say they have a Platform supporting their efforts. This could give more weight to their outreach activities. Not only their overt support could be useful, but also their potential to convene stakeholders to discuss with policy makers.

It also could be relevant to link to other existing Knowledge Platforms, such as the Food & Business Platform, which also focuses on the cacao value chain in Ghana. WOTRO could assist the researchers in identifying these linkages.

It would be good to explore what potential benefits the website could offer the research groups in sharing and managing their knowledge processes.

The HIVOS presentation was perceived as especially insightful and inspiring in the development of other types of knowledge activities.

GROUP 4. Ethiopia. Research consortia of Dr M. Leung & Dr L. Nencel

1. Broader policy debates

Both projects look at payment conditions. What type of payment will attract what kind of workers? In both projects inequality plays an important role (ethnic, gender). Both informal construction workers and sex workers have no social protection. This is an important mobility constraint.

In summary:

- Payment/remuneration
- Social protection
- Gender

2. Cross-linkages

A very basic link between the two projects is that where roads are being built, there are sex workers. Both projects focus on highly sensitive issues. In the feeder roads projects, ethnic differences play an important role. The sex workers project is highly political: prostitution is illegal in Ethiopia, but it is more or less tolerated as different parties have a clear stake in it. Corruption also plays an important role. What can we tell the government? Researchers have freedom in Ethiopia, as long as results are not published in the public domain.

- Focus on sensitive issues
- Capacity building
- Under-researched topic
- Under-regulation
- Sharing information
- Mobility

3. Support platform

- Think outside the box
- Meso-level policy uptake
- Institution building
- Broker between embassies and RCs



10. Feedback from round table discussions. Moderator: Nicholas Awortwi

Feedback from the thematic session

Group 1 (on value chains) focused on whether it was suitable to have a broad policy question and whether people prefer decent employment or growth. How useful are these concepts if 75% of people are unemployed?

Group 2 (IT sector Kenya and feeder roads in Ethiopia) noted that there was little linkage between the two projects. It was reported that the Knowledge Platform will be involved in mapping of the actors. There is a need to frame the policy debates in terms of economics and political representation. The issue is how the research process will take place, including advocacy. The Knowledge Platform is to help build the capacity of the communities of practice to do the research and also enhance social memory. The central focus is how to help sustain the networks that are being created or developed.

On the sex workers in Ethiopia and the Batwa community in Rwanda projects (Group 3), the major issues are compensation (whether it is correct) and capacity development. Other issues include unprotected labour with no social protection. There are push factors in these two projects. The cross-linkages in the project are several, such as being severely under-researched, mobility, under-regulation, and the sectors being treated as sensitive. The Platform should therefore think outside the box, encourage sharing of information, facilitates linkages, and broker between the RCs and the embassies.



Group 4 (on inclusive business) reported that a large number of countries are involved in the projects. The concern here is what inclusive business is and how one can ensure inclusivity. The group reported that the Knowledge Platform should continue with stakeholder mappings and create/facilitate linkages in the project countries. The Platform should help to form a community of practice. The Platform/Secretariat should periodically check with the research groups on the intensity of policy debates and then have them posted on the Platform website.

Group 5 was composed of projects on informal sector workers and female entrepreneurs. These projects focus on institutional environments and disadvantaged groups. The policy debates will be on the informal sector, capacity building, and the provision of

public good. As for donors, it was reported that the Dutch are interested in the integration/inclusion of the informal sector in the policy debate. At the international level (World Bank, IMF, etc.), decent work and gender issues attract attention. It was noted that the Knowledge Platform can help foster linkages and document failures: people can learn from failures. Mapping past experiences with certain policies can also be helpful. Issues raised included the need to make the website of the Platform more interactive so that the research groups can be linked together.

Feedback from the country sessions

The research groups that focus on Ghana are the ones on the informal sector and partnerships in value chains. It was noted that the Knowledge Platform can help facilitate contacts and organise activities to bring policy makers into the discussions. It was also reported that policy makers can contribute to the choice of topics for Knowledge Platform activities. It is proposed that the two groups pursue linkages further.

On Kenya, the main actors for the fresh produce project are the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Devolution and Planning, the media, and FPEAK. These stakeholders, among others, will be invited to the kick-off inception workshops planned to take place before the end of the year. The Platform is expected to leverage on its convening power. As for the MNOs project, it was noted that it is difficult to create linkages in the project. Perhaps there is a need to create economies of scale in influencing policy.

With Uganda, the two projects involved are on female entrepreneurs and the PPPs. For these projects, it was noted that there is a need to build the capacity of students and women when looking at the value chains.

Reactions from Reina Buijs, Deputy of DGIS, Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The themes that the Platform is addressing are clearly of interest to DGIS. Combating high inequality and promoting inclusive development is a key policy concern of Minister Ploumen for Trade and Development Cooperation, as evidenced by the commitment of the Minister to send Parliament a letter on how inclusive development can be embedded in Dutch development activities.

The research projects are highly relevant for the Ministry's work, particularly those focussing on employment and entrepreneurship of women and young people, such as in the Kenya avocado sector and the project on women entrepreneurship in Uganda, as well as the focus on strategic actors such as workers/farmers organisations and how they can be supported to make real change happen. It was encouraging to hear that Dutch companies also want to be included and to contribute to inclusive development.



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will use the research products such as policy briefs, research reports, etc. to better inform policy. This is evidenced by actual representation from the Ministry in the meeting. Ms Buijs also noted that 90% of what policy makers want to know is already there and encouraged the Platform to get the knowledge flowing. In this process it is important to focus not only on the technique of communication and networking, but on effective, tailor-made interaction between those who need to know and those who know.



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