

Evaluation of the Information and Networks in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa (INASSA) Program

Final Report

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Kallick Russell Consulting

Judith Kallick
Manuel Acevedo
Patrick Breard
Patrick Mc Namara



Acronyms and Abbreviations

ARIPO	African Regional Intellectual Property Organization
BoG	IDRC's Board of Governors
CAMES	Conseil Africain et Malgache de l'Enseignement Supérieur
CEA	Connectivity and Equity in the Americas (former regional IDRC program on ICT4D)
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
COL	Commonwealth of Learning
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DECI	Developing Evaluation and Communication Capacity in Information Society Research
DFID	Department for International Development
DL4D	Digital Learning for Development
ER	External Review (evaluative process for some IDRC programs)
EU	European Union
FPR	Final Prospectus Report
FRIDA	Regional Fund for Digital Innovation in Latin America and the Caribbean
GEM	Gender Evaluation Methodology
I&N	Information and Networks program (IDRC)
ICA	Institute for Connectivity in the Americas
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
ICT4D	Information and Communication Technologies for Development
INASSA	Information and Networks in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa
IODC	International Open Data Conference
IP	Intellectual Property
IPB	ICT price basket
IPS	Innovation, Policy, and Science
ITS	Innovation, Technology, and Science
IT4C	IT for Change
ISIF	Information Society Innovation Fund Asia
ISOC	Internet Society
ITU	International Telecommunications Union
LIRNEasia	Learning Initiatives on Reforms for Network Economies Asia
MIDO	Myanmar ICT for Development Organization
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise
NE	Networked Economies program (IDRC)
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NROER	National Repository of Open Educational Resources
NTC	National Telecommunications Commission
OBM	Open Business Models
OCSDNet	The Open and Collaborative Science in Development Network
OD	Open Data
OD4D	Open Data for Development program (IDRC)
ODDC	Exploring the Emerging Impacts of Open Data in Developing Countries
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OER	Open Education Resources
OGP	Open Government Partnership
Open AIR	Open African Innovation Research and Training
PAD	Project Approval Document

PCR	Project Completion Report
PI	Privacy International
PO	Programme Officer
Prodoc	Project Document
ResCom	Research Communications
RIA	Research ICTs Africa
ROER4D	Research on Open Educational Resources for Development (a network)
RQ+	Research Quality + (IDRC framework for assessing development research quality)
SAIDE	South African Institute of Distance Education
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEED	Alliance to Scale Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
UFE	Utilization Focused Evaluation
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	United States
USP	University of the South Pacific
WB	World Bank
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WRMPP	Western Region Megapolis Planning Project

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Executive Summary

The Information and Networks in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa (INASSA) program, with funding from the UK Department for International Development (DFID), was set out in 2013 to build and strengthen evidence on the connections between the growing use of digital information networks and economic growth, democratic reform, and educational opportunities in the developing world. It aimed to understand the complexity of these opportunities, identify effective strategies to harness them and provide a critical perspective on potential negative impacts.

In doing so, the program sought to promote positive social and economic change through governance, education, science and entrepreneurship by:

1. Generating and improving research on linkages between socio-economic change and diffusion of networked technologies, led by networks and institutions based in the global south;
2. Developing researchers' capacities in the global south in conducting and communicating research; and
3. Improving research uptake into policy and practice, particularly towards evidence-based policy and decision-making.

INASSA was implemented during the Information and Networks (I&N) program, and has carried into the successor Networked Economies (NE) program, thus being part of a programmatic continuum. INASSA consisted of 17 projects in total, falling within the following implementation modalities: (i) networks; (ii) think-tanks or individual organizations; and (iii) service projects, which provided specific capacity building support across the portfolio. All projects have been included in the data analysis; 12 directly examined by this evaluation and five included the results from recent evaluations.

Methodology

The objectives of this evaluation are to assess the program's implementation and delivery of results, while identifying areas for learning and improvement.

Data collection was carefully designed to triangulate results from a range of perspectives. The evaluation drew from the stakeholders' experiences – both directly and indirectly connected to INASSA – to gain a rich and complex understanding of the program and its impacts.

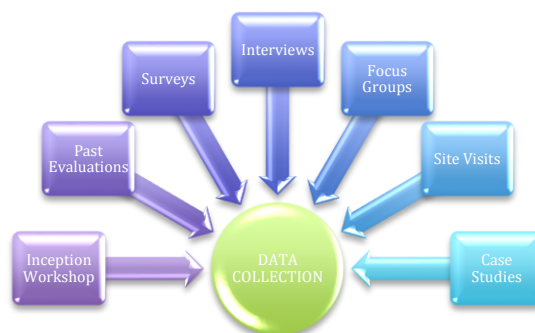


Figure 1: Data Collection Methods

Data analysis was layered and highly collaborative within the evaluation team and with the INASSA team, in alignment with the approach and complexity of the INASSA program.

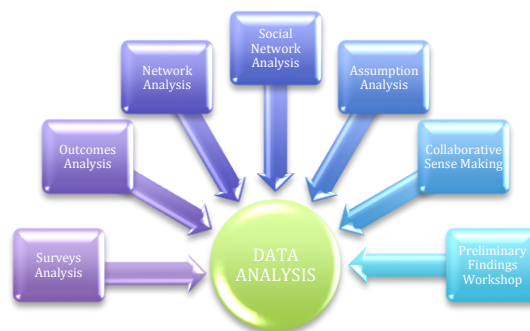


Figure 2: Data Analysis Methods

As with all evaluations, there are some **limitations and risks** regarding this methodology that the team attempted to mitigate. In this case, there was a limited time frame for an evaluation of this magnitude and complexity. Conducting the evaluation 6 months prior to the end of a 5-year research program limited the ability for the evaluation to capture all expected outputs and impacts. And, achieving an adequate sample of end-users was challenging, given their more remote connection to the project.

Findings

Research Quality

Development research is one of the distinguishing features of IDRC initiatives, and it was central to INASSA's work. The body of research produced by INASSA projects was deemed to be of high quality while achieving a significant production volume. Its developmental relevance and timeliness were among its highest rated attributes across the entire portfolio, indicating that its innovative topics were strategically and successfully chosen. The scientific merit (including a healthy critical perspective on development consequences of Openness) and the general accessibility of its research products were also generally strong, yet a centralized program portal would facilitate access. Though registering advancements from previous programs, its gender-responsiveness stands for improvement.

As for the contextual factors influencing research, (i) research capacity strengthening was uniformly integrated into research work, (ii) the low maturity of the fields chosen (mostly around Openness) allowed for field building, and (iii) the environmental risks did not generally pose a significant constraint to research activities.

Additional factors contributing to research quality were intellectual contributions from IDRC program staff and initiatives designed specifically for research capacity development ('service projects'), like the one on Systematic Reviews or DECI-2 about research communications and evaluation. IDRC's integrated, multi-dimensional concept of development research quality, embodied in the RQ+ assessment framework, provided an advanced, meaningful notion of research quality, with potential to be further incorporated by researchers and research

managers. The value of a program like INASSA undertaking research on these technology-related development topics was also lauded by external experts, given their rapidly evolving pace and the paucity of funding and interest for such research over recent years by other international organizations.

Research Capacity Development

The evaluation found that INASSA's emphasis of capacity strengthening at the individual level was effective. There was also some evidence of institutional capacity development at the organizational level. Overall, there was room for improving setting goals and documenting progress, aligned with changing needs. Developing individual researchers' capacity was key in achieving program results and was in alignment with a main outcome for the program's theory of change. A wide variety of research capacity development approaches were used, tailored to project needs.

The capacity development methods employed in projects ranged from a more traditional approach (such as having a capacity development officer) to a more dynamic approach (such as mentoring an interactive network of new researchers or organizational learning). The more dynamic approaches were most effective in building the capacity, confidence and visibility of researchers that better positioned them to influence policy. The evaluation also found that activities in organizational development helped projects build more management and institutional capacity. In addition, a traditional approach to capacity development used by some projects lacked traditional tools such as capacity needs assessments, learning goals, and monitoring.

In exploring research aspects (technical, ethical, positioning for policy uptake), which featured more prominently in research capacity development activities, the evaluation team found that the focus of capacity development has been technical and has concentrated on research design and the efforts reached researchers in hubs and main locations. Partners preserved their autonomy in determining what was researched and how it was researched. The INASSA team's support for capacity development was effective in most cases, although not having conducted a program-wide learning needs assessment, there was no ability to track progress or ensure a strategic approach for support in tune with specific needs. Finally, partners called for more focus on enhancing capacity development for policy impact and reflecting on the changing needs that projects are facing in research uptake. Requested approaches included increased training on "soft skills" (communications, emotional intelligence, building relationships and trust) and more robust research into use framework that acknowledge the multiple points of influence and capacities needed to create conditions for research into use.

INASSA made some progress toward its goal to build **collaborative capacity** for research and to counteract the issue of researchers working in silos. The structure of projects tended to influence *how* collaborative capacity was developed: networked projects tended to have more informal collaboration initiated by any point in the network and 'think tank' projects, such as RIA and LIRNEasia, tended to have more formal collaborations and development of collaboration capacity tended to be more on-the-job learning in a project or partnership context. Most collaborative capacity building occurred within projects, rather than across projects. Overall, INASSA's emphasis of the importance of collaboration and interdisciplinary research encouraged projects to attempt to address this as appropriate to their context.

Having introduced an NE gender strategy in the last two years of the INASSA program, some efforts were undertaken towards building **capacity in gender-responsive research** but

there was not sufficient time to achieve broad impacts. More is anticipated with the recent contract with the organization 'Gender at Work'. Projects are already making efforts to address institutional sexism through its participation on international task forces at the International Telecommunications Union and at the OECD. Others are working to support government researchers on the ground to help ensure that gender barriers are addressed at the local level. Yet, more support is needed to address root causes directly.

Policy Influence and Other Impacts

The evaluation assessed a positive contribution of INASSA to influencing policies and practices. About 83% of the partners and grantees that responded to the evaluation survey indicated a high to moderate contribution of the program to **broadening policy horizons** (e.g. by incorporation of new topics and innovations into policy fields, or strengthening relationships between researchers and policy makers, etc.). Over the course of program implementation, 22 cases were collected that evidenced a contribution of INASSA to broadening policy horizons, with most cases guided by those projects prioritizing policy influence and impact. Similarly, a significant contribution by INASSA projects affected **policy regimes** (e.g. in terms of the improvement of policies or legislative frameworks, or the adoption or implementation of practices emerging from research, etc.). About 68% of the partners and grantees that responded to the evaluation survey indicated a high or moderate contribution of their projects affecting policy or frameworks. About 26 cases of new or reformed policies or programs were reported by INASSA funded projects compared to an initial target of 20.

Cases of both broadening policy horizons and affecting policy regimes were identified across the four INASSA thematic areas, with a prevalence of examples from Governance and Education and, to a lesser extent, from Science and Entrepreneurship. Multiple **instruments and channels** were used by INASSA projects to ensure that user-friendly knowledge was provided to decision-makers, such as project websites, social media, videos, blog posts, or policy briefs. Face-to-face contacts with policy makers and practitioners were effective means to convey research findings and new ideas to decision makers, and facilitated influencing their understanding and use of the evidence in their decisions.

The program was able to build on several intermediate outcomes to foster an enabling environment conducive to policy influence. The modalities of intervention of the program contributed to increase the **visibility and credibility** of the researchers and therefore their capability and opportunities to inform and influence policies and practices. Building and nurturing **relationships** with decision makers has also been an effective means implemented by INASSA projects to influence policies and practices. Several projects strongly committed to the objective of influencing policies have developed and provided a **portfolio of services** that amplify or complement research activities. This would include for instance some capacity development activities delivered to policy makers or advisory services provided to decision makers to facilitate research uptake. Several projects have also set up **partnerships** or initiated institutional collaborations with the media, government agencies, private sector actors, policy networks, among others to influence policies and practices.

Network and Think Tank Modalities

INASSA research networks were generally more effective for field-building, whereas think-tanks (LIRNEasia and RIA) proved more effective for policy influence. Both modalities showed similar results on research quality and for research capacity development. Yet, when examining more in

depth the potential characteristics attributable in principle to a given modality, it was found that the type of modality was in itself seldom determinant of their operational behavior. For instance, think-tanks might show superior knowledge management behavior than networks, while network researchers might have limited interactions in some projects. Also, neither research networks nor think-tanks followed a standard, modality-specific structural or process pattern. Moreover, the third modality, the so-called ‘service-projects’ showed to be a source of valuable support for many projects. Therefore, when exploring various project implementation modalities in upcoming programming cycles, findings suggest that adequately assessing their individualized behavior (against a given set of project or program objectives) may be more effective to program design and performance than to base expectations on the type of modality usually linked to a specific project implementation partner.

Networking was an important dimension of INASSA operational behavior, meaning the extent, type and frequency of active connections between INASSA program actors, within and across projects, and also with outside organizations. By and large, it was done implicitly, without explicit strategies or guidance. Findings from a social network analysis of the INASSA ecosystem, complemented by other information sources, indicated that there were significantly higher levels of information and knowledge sharing across projects than collaborative actions between them (as indicated by the diagrams below). Networking instances such as all-partner meetings or involvement in program publications were highly appreciated by program actors, who also felt they were too few or sporadic to enable sustained, productive interactions across the portfolio.

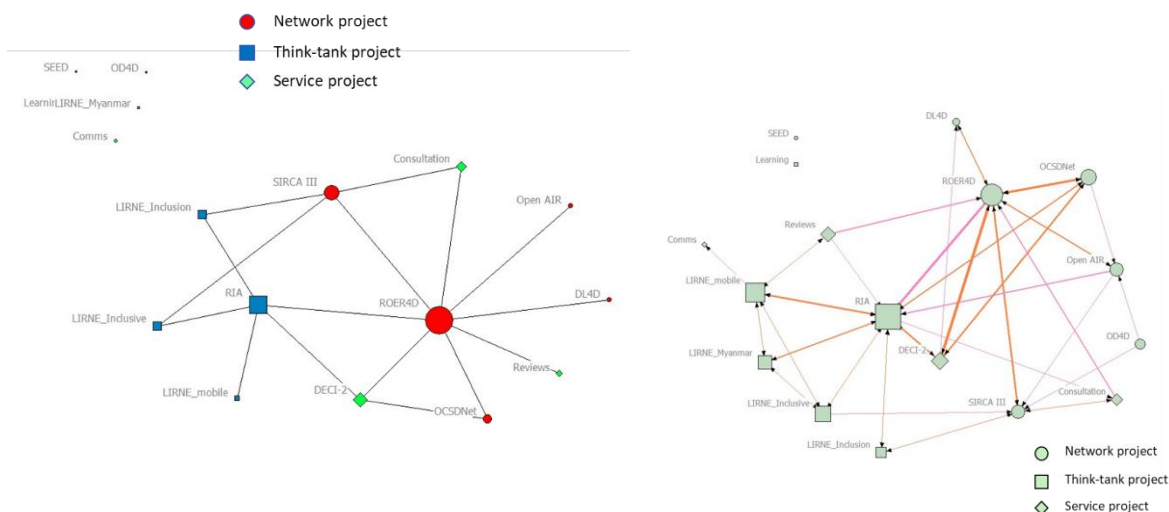


Fig 3 - Basic network representation graphs for Resource Exchange (top) and Collaboration in the INASSA ecosystem

Program Management

The program was efficient in its implementation, with a strong, consistent focus on its overall purpose and intentions. Inherent throughout program management were the following underlying themes.

1. INASSA was fully integrated into the core work of I&N and NE, leveraging IDRC resources beyond the program and presenting challenges conducting this evaluation as a separate program.

2. Tensions between IDRC's commitment to encourage locally driven, partner independence with IDRC's commitment to transparency and openness. In practical terms, this translated into the balance between flexibility with structured guidelines and accountability, which necessarily varied according to the needs of each project in a particular moment or aspect.
3. The natural power dynamics between those who provide resources and those receiving them, occurring between IDRC and their partners, and DFID and IDRC.

The INASSA team was highly in-tune and responsive to partners' needs, creating strong, trusting relationships in which there was space for risk taking and innovation. Their approach hinged on developing an **enabling environment** they defined as including flexibility, responsiveness, leadership, prioritization of issues and commitment of resources to build solutions. This approach was actively employed across the INASSA team and with their partners, translating into substantive collaborations that included flexibility in complex, changing contexts. Partners appreciated opportunities to connect with others across INASSA projects through global meetings and service or capacity building projects, expressing an eagerness for IDRC to provide even more opportunities to share experiences and learn from each other.

The INASSA team also exhibited a strong commitment to continual learning and improving, demonstrated through on-going curiosity about each project's complexities and dedicated projects specifically focused on capacity building, and developing policies based on their learnings to encourage improved programming across NE. The INASSA team reported utilizing evaluation processes to facilitate their learning, such as developing a new Gender Strategy launched in 2016 for NE based on recommendations from previous IDRC evaluations and a recently increased national political interest.

Although the INASSA team was very strong in understanding the nuances of the projects through regular communications, they were less effective in documenting their discussions, decisions, and the actions and results in response to those decisions. One inefficiency was in their need to implement two monitoring systems; one fulfilling requirements for IDRC and the other for DFID. In another example, DECI-2 was dedicated to building communications and utilization-focused evaluation capacity, and yet no monitoring process was developed to document the ways in which participants employed their new skills. In addition, the evaluation processes that support program learning and reflection did not have tracking systems for recommendations after the management response is articulated. The team's on-going learning, reflecting on how that learning applies to their work, and then taking meaningful actions is integral to the way the team functions. However, the documentation of these processes will enhance transparency, evidence-based decision making, and accountability.

Monitoring overall program management was complicated and could be more efficient. The INASSA team created a separate monitoring and reporting system geared toward DFID's requirements that were in addition to IDRC's requirements. The INASSA team tried to create a system that would be sufficient for DFID, while attempting to minimize any addition to partners' workloads. This resulted in a log frame that was only used for reporting purposes to DFID.

Given that IDRC does not use log frames, the INASSA team employed a nuanced and fluid monitoring and decision-making process aligned with IDRC requirements. This process provided in-depth understanding of the projects and their contexts. However, limited documentation of the process inhibited higher levels of transparency and institutional knowledge and learning.

Overall, the INASSA program has a strong value proposition. The program was aligned with IDRC's strategic objectives, contributing to the organization's ability to achieve its goals. It was also developed based on I&N's program strategy and then influenced the design of NE's ToC. The program successfully leveraged resources beyond the program across IDRC and particularly the entire NE team. The program also leveraged their long-standing relationships with partners and partners leveraged their pre-existing resources, although each project had limited leveraging of expertise across projects. Finally, DFID has assessed the INASSA program as a good value for money in each of their annual reviews, stating the program has been economical with its investments, efficient with use of funds to produce high quality research outputs, effective in the level of research uptake, and improving the capacity of researchers from the global south.

Conclusions

Since its inception, the INASSA program has effectively strengthened ICT4D fields with high quality research, developed the capacity of researchers from the global south to produce high quality evidence and enhanced research uptake by national and international practitioners and policy-makers. Furthermore, the value proposition of the program was solid and durable.

The modalities of intervention of INASSA have been largely localized and adapted by the projects to effectively respond to specific contexts and needs. This has equipped the program with a richness of approaches, tools, and instruments that partners and researchers are eager to share and replicate.

Recommendations

INASSA has shown significant achievements in its five years of implementation. This is partially due to its forming part of a programmatic continuum, seeking similar goals and involving some common stakeholders – in some cases over a decade-long relationship. From that perspective, we hope that the following recommendations are helpful to the NE team at this midway point of their program cycle, as well as for future program development.

1. Improve strategic, effective and efficient implementation through further utilizing systematic program management tools

The INASSA team continuously gathers information about their projects, developing a deep understanding of each context and supporting flexible management. However, much of this information is not formally documented. To enhance evidence-based decision-making, institutional knowledge, transparency and scaling activities, further systematic documentation of program management is recommended.

2. Develop and implement a Knowledge Management plan

INASSA promoted knowledge sharing through meetings and conferences as well as in two projects that fostered collaboration across projects. While these efforts were successful, there is room to become more systematic at collecting and sharing good practices and lessons learned as well as practical information about upcoming events and data availability from research. It is suggested that formalizing a Knowledge Management approach could support programmatic efficiency and effectiveness on project management and shared learning outcomes. It could also amplify the knowledge residing in projects in order to enhance spillover and network effects.

3. Develop and test an explicit, programmatic networking approach

Research networks have become a fundamental implementation modality and IDRC program officers have dedicated significant attention to the creation of the INASSA networks. Yet there is potential for delivering even more value from existing networks and connections among program actors. It is suggested to explore how the performance of the NE program could be enhanced through a more systematic, explicit networking approach at two levels: individual projects, related to the *internal processes and connective behavior* regardless of the implementation modality; and the program level, to facilitate the *generation of collective added value*. This is envisioned to contribute to the generation of network effects, and to the program having greater value than the sum of its projects.

4. Promote and operationalize an integrated view of development research quality

The integrated concept of development research quality, crafted by IDRC based on many years of supporting research, and embodied in the RQ+ mechanism, is valuable and relevant. It is suggested that this concept be actively promoted in new initiatives by being purposefully shared and operationalized among projects and partners. This would help both to develop research capacity and to improve overall research quality.

5. Support efforts to carry out the gender strategy by engaging in a participatory approach to examine root causes and prototype solutions

INASSA and NE have made significant efforts in developing a gender strategy. It is recommended that INASSA leverage expertise and current good practices by partners and also engage in analysis of the root causes blocking their progress in achieving these goals in order to develop a different approach.

6. Continue developing capacities to build partnerships and mobilize resources

The evaluation notes the benefits of partnership engagement, especially with projects seeking to influence policies, mobilize resources, and strengthen the enabling environment for policy uptake in an increasingly complex context. Formalizing and implementing a partnership-building plan can serve as a modality to further enable research uptake, leverage the existing web of NE's partners, foster the creation of new bridges with policy-relevant stakeholders, and therefore contribute to broader shared-ownership, stronger institutionalization, increased capacities for and more sustainable development outcomes.

7. Establish a service project that builds adaptive capacity in order to enhance research uptake and increase project effectiveness

While some projects are already using aspects of adaptive management and a meta-analysis has been conducted to explore synergies, the evaluation recommends a project be established to share and develop adaptive capacity, accelerate learning and effectiveness, increase research uptake and policy influence and enhance the quality of Openness. The project would build on existing efforts, help understand the complex ecosystem, sense what is emerging, and create prototypes or new models that are adapted over time.

1. Introduction

1.1. Objectives of the Evaluation Report

This evaluation report presents the findings, analysis and recommendations of the evaluation of the Information and Networks in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa (INASSA) program. The purpose of this assessment is to respond to DFID accountability requirements, to convey insights on the program's results for learning and to inform potential future contributions. Furthermore, this report is provided to IDRC Networked Economies management and program staff to generate lessons and inform potential future programming. The INASSA evaluation is a component of Networked Economies five-year learning plan and the evaluation findings are expected to contribute to a key moment of reflection at the mid-point of their 2015-2020 strategy period. Secondary users of this evaluation also include IDRC's Board of Governors.

1.2. Program Overview

INASSA is a five-year research program that built and strengthened evidence on the connections between the growing use of digital information networks and economic growth, democratic reform, and educational opportunities in the developing world. It aimed to understand the complexity of these opportunities, identify effective strategies to harness them and provide a critical perspective on potential negative impacts.

The management and implementation of the program was carried out by IDRC Canada. DFID was the leading funder, with a £6.3M contribution to INASSA. IDRC also provided CAD 3.5M (~£1.9M) of funding over the course of the program, bringing its total value to £8.2M. INASSA began in September 2013 and ends March 2018.

The program sought to promote positive social and economic change through the areas of governance, education, science and entrepreneurship. (See fig 1, theory of change, below) To contribute to or influence these changes, INASSA supported three primary activities:

1. Generating and improving evidence on the linkages between rapid socio-economic change and the increasing diffusion of networked technologies in the four areas above, through southern-led research networks and institutions;
2. Building and strengthening capacities of southern researchers in conducting research and research communications; and
3. Improving research uptake into policy and practice, particularly towards evidence-based policy/decision making.

INASSA is a programmatic complement to two global programs managed by IDRC's Science and Innovation Unit: Information & Networks (I&N) running from 2011 to 2015, from which INASSA was built, and Networked Economies (NE), presently under implementation (2015-2020). INASSA shares their basic conceptual approach. Additionally, it allowed them to extend their research and policy influence work into lower and lower-middle income countries in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. The present evaluation, in fact, will feed into the NE program as a key reflective and learning exercise at its mid-point.

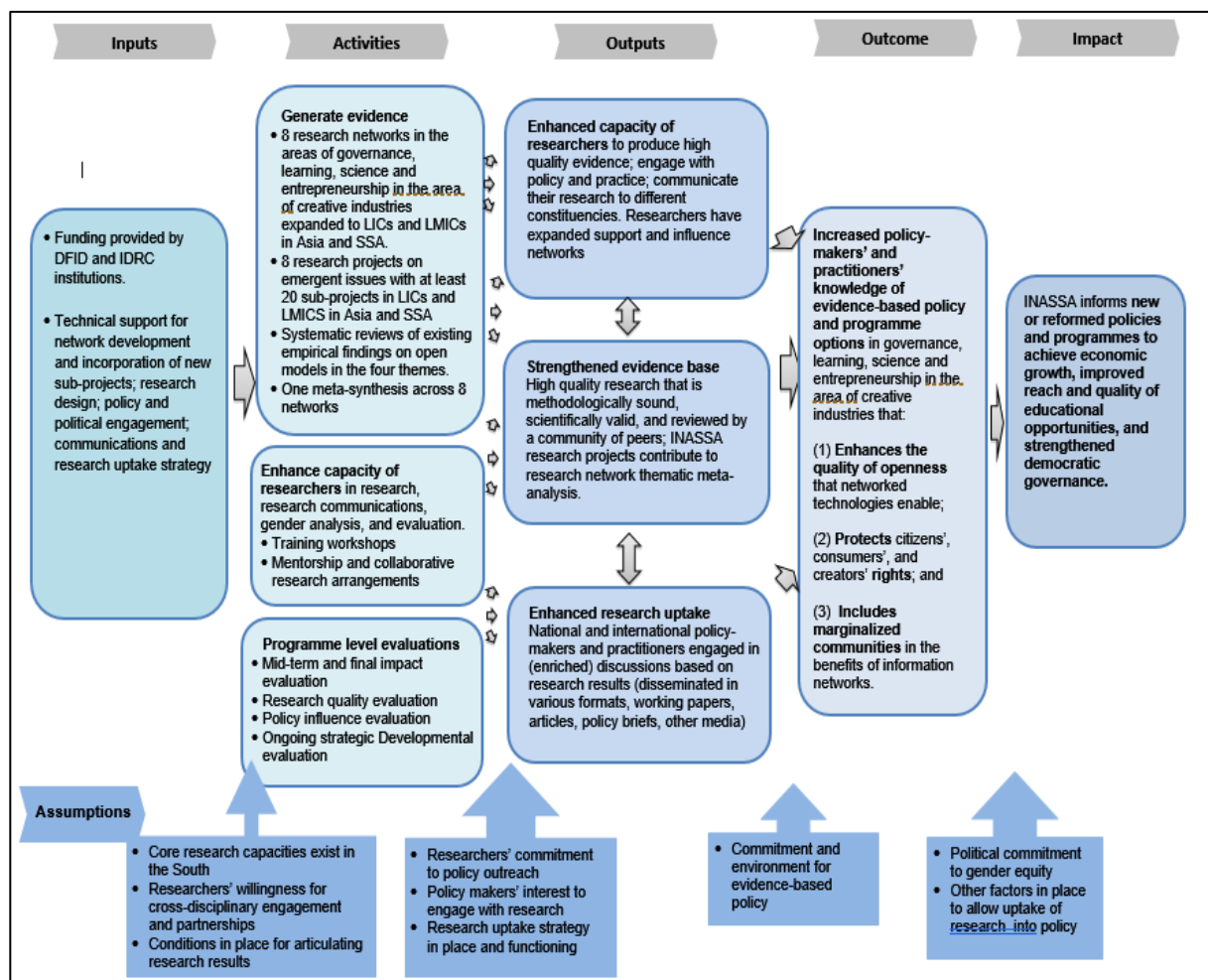


Figure 3. Graphic representation of INASSA's theory of change
(Source: INASSA Program Document)

INASSA's project list is shown in table 1 below. It contains all projects that have received INASSA funding from 2013-2017, ordered by initial implementation date. All projects have been included in the data analysis. Those that have been directly examined by the evaluation, eleven in total, are marked in blue. Most of the other projects had been recently evaluated; a preliminary assessment of those results was highlighted in the inception report and then more deeply incorporated into the analysis and results for this report.² Additionally, two that were implemented early on were incorporated into the data analysis of the later more robust projects in this evaluation that they were designed to inform.

There were three project implementation modalities: (i) through networks, mainly research networks; (ii) via think-tanks, or individual organizations; and (iii) service projects, which provided specific support functions to projects in the portfolio, mostly for capacity building purposes. Their different approaches will be discussed in detail in section 3.4.

² See Annex D for a summary of results from previous relevant evaluations.

INASSA PROJECT LIST				
Projects	End Date	Implementing organization(s) and modality	INASSA Funding (CAD)	Other Donor Funds (CAD)
The Alliance to Scale Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship (Seed Alliance) (#108044)	Nov 2017	APNIC, Australia AFRINIC, Mauritius NETWORK	\$529,386	\$180,000 (USAID/ AusAID)
Developing Evaluation and Communication Capacity in Information Society Research (DECI-2) (#107064)	April 2018	New Economy Development Corp, Canada SERVICE PROJECT	\$322,900	
Inclusion in the information society in Asia (#107077)	March 2015	LIRNEasia, Sri Lanka THINK-TANK	\$371,795	
Research on Open Educational Resources for Development (ROER4D) (#107311)	Jan 2018	University of Cape Town, South Africa and Wawasan Open University, Malaysia NETWORK	\$1,427,400	
Building Research Capacity for Systematic Reviews (#107548)	Dec 2016	LIRNEasia, Sri Lanka SERVICE PROJECT	\$268,150	
Strategic Communications for INASSA and I&N programs (#107613)	Aug 2017	IDRC, New Economy Development Corp, Canada SERVICE PROJECT	\$395,539	
Catalyzing Open and Collaborative Science to Address Global Development Challenges (#107650)	Feb 2017	University of Toronto, Canada and iHub, Kenya NETWORK	\$1,500,000	
Harnessing open data to achieve development results in Asia and Africa (#107574 component 5-OD4D program)	Dec 2016	The World Wide Web Foundation, USA NETWORK	\$1,214,400	\$1,457,103 (World Bank); 900,901 (DFATD); 600,000 (Omidyar Network); 112,613 (Treasury Board Secretariat)
Consultation on Inclusion in the Network Society (#107734)	Jan 2015	IT for Change, India SERVICE	\$57,938	
New learning opportunities in a networked world (#107628)	Nov 2015	Open University Netherlands and FIT-ED Philippines THINK-TANK	\$175,947	
Catalyzing broadband in Africa (#107383)	Sept 2017	Research ICT Africa, South Africa THINK-TANK	\$1,728,800	
Strengthening information society research capacity III (SIRCA) (#107708)	Aug 2017	Nanyang Technological University, Singapore NETWORK	\$200,000	
Inclusive information societies: Creating growth and employment opportunities in Asia (#108000)	Dec 2017	LIRNEasia, Sri Lanka THINK-TANK	\$725,000	
Leveraging mobile network big data for development (#108008)	Feb 2017	LIRNEasia, Sri Lanka THINK-TANK	\$725,000	
Toward a Networked Economy in Myanmar (#107970)	Dec 2017	LIRNEasia, Sri Lanka THINK-TANK	\$200,000	1,500,000 (SIDA); 500,000 (Omidyar Network)

Scaling technology start-ups in Africa (Open Air) (#107956)	March 2018	University of Cape Town, South Africa NETWORK	\$1,168,900	\$2,500,000 (SSHRC)
Digital Learning for Development (DL4D) (#108045)	Nov 2017	FIT-ED, Philippines NETWORK	\$1,000,000	\$200,265 (USAID/ World Vision)

Table 1. INASSA project list (various sources)

2. Evaluation Scope and Methodology

2.1. Scope of the Evaluation

The **objectives** of the INASSA program evaluation are to assess the program's implementation and delivery of results, while identifying areas for learning and improvement. The process was framed around the following six **evaluation questions** posed in the Terms of Reference, seeking deeper understanding about the evaluation objectives of accountability and learning. The questions provide a broad view of the program being evaluated, and are consistent with IDRC's holistic approach to evaluating research.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS
Accountability
Q1. Research quality: Overall, was the quality of the research produced by INASSA research networks and think tanks acceptable (given the context/intended purpose/etc.)?
Q2. Research capacity development: To what extent and in what ways was INASSA capacity strengthening of southern researchers effective, relevant and significant?
Q3. Research to policy influence: To what extent and in what ways were the INASSA supported projects successful in achieving relevant and significant research to policy influence? Where policy influence was below expectation, were there ways in which INASSA could have been more effective in supporting research to policy uptake?
Q4. INASSA implementation and management: To what extent was the implementation of INASSA efficient and economical, relative to its purpose and intended outcomes? Were resources (e.g. staff) used efficiently to manage the projects and programme? What have been the strengths and weaknesses of the programme's management? (and/or the value proposition of funding (e.g. business case, leveraging existing programming).
Learning
Q5. Project modalities (network- and institution-led): How did the modality of projects (network- versus institution- led) contribute (or not) to achieving project outcomes? What worked? What did not? How could the modalities be improved?
Q6. Role of IDRC staff for project outcomes: To what extent was the role of the IDRC staff significant in contributing to project outcomes? (e.g., formative learning, meta-synthesis, network buildings, networking, building credibility/legitimacy of the field). How could these contributions be improved?

Table 2. Evaluation Questions

2.2. Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation has been guided by the Terms of Reference³ and Evaluation Matrix⁴, and followed IDRC's approach to evaluation⁵ - including the evaluation principles of utility; quality; collaboration and shared benefits; and knowledge sharing and transparency. The program's Theory of Change acts as a framework for the overall understanding of the INASSA program. The evaluation's appreciative, participatory approach encouraged meaningful engagement beneficial to participants, a deeper understanding and utilization-focused recommendations.

Data collection was carefully designed to triangulate results from a range of perspectives. The evaluation drew from the experiences of stakeholders⁶, including IDRC and DFID staff, INASSA project partners, and end-users (such as, universities, students, policymakers, ICT actors, private sector, etc.), to gain a rich and complex understanding of the program and its impacts. An inception workshop⁷ with INASSA staff in Ottawa provided an initial introduction to the program and informed the evaluation design. Data collection tools were developed with overlapping, interrelated questions. Two surveys⁸ were conducted targeted at INASSA partners and sub-grantees (94 respondents) and end-users (31 respondents)⁹, providing insights and broader understanding of participants' experiences. Interviews¹⁰ (111 participants) were conducted virtually, in-person during site visits, and through on-going dialogue with IDRC, allowed for a deeper dive into particular aspects of the program. Case studies on ROER4D and Research ICT Africa¹¹ were developed to demonstrate impact pathways from INASSA projects to policy changes to improvements in people's lives within the complexities of their contexts. In addition, a review of previous relevant evaluations¹² illuminated the history and context of the program.

³ See Annex K

⁴ See Annex E

⁵ IDRC. 2017. *Evaluation at IDRC*. Ottawa.

⁶ See Annex F

⁷ See Annex G

⁸ See Annex I

⁹ Of the 94 respondents to the Partners/sub-grantees survey, 70 came from tracked questionnaires to 245 project actors (about 29%), while the remaining 24 came from non-tracked questionnaires (accessed via a generic URL). The respondent sample was fairly representative of the portfolio, with an average of 13.4 responses per partner (the smallest response volume at 8 and the largest at 26), taking as reference their relative sizes based on project funding). On the other hand, for the 31 respondents to the Users survey it was not possible to know the number of recipients of the questionnaires as they were sent directly by the projects.

¹⁰ See Annex H

¹¹ See Annex A

¹² See Annex D

EVALUATION PARTICIPANTS

(N=236)

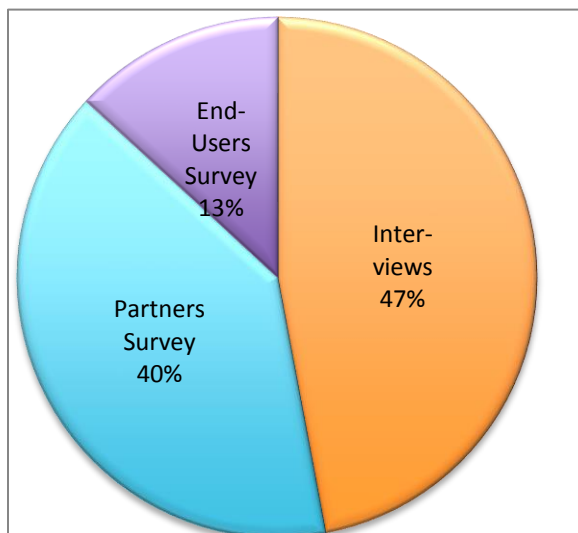


Figure 4: Data Collection Method

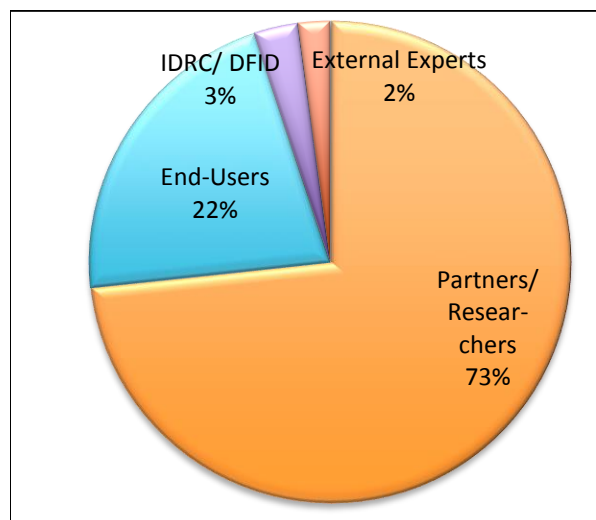


Figure 5: Relationship to INASSA

The **data analysis** process was layered and highly collaborative, in alignment with the complexity of the INASSA program and intention of this evaluation. In addition to data analysis of surveys, interviews, and case studies, the evaluation team conducted a series of cross-cutting analyses. The **RQ+ tool** (developed by IDRC) was adapted to gauge research quality across INASSA projects through the assessment of 35 diverse research outputs. The evaluation also explored the **contributions** being made by INASSA projects to longer-term outcomes through an analysis of the projects' Theory of Change, based on survey results and interviews with external experts, policy makers, academic researchers and other end-users. A **social network analysis**¹³ mapped and assessed the relationships and flows between people, organizations, and computers to examine the dynamics of the INASSA ecosystem, providing both a visual and a mathematical analysis. Finally, INASSA **Web Metrics**¹⁴ were analyzed from the INASSA Twitter account, IDRC Online library, Google Scholar, and the Internet through a webometric analysis to reviewing the online activity of the INASSA program. The evaluation team members conducted a series of discussions organized around each evaluation question and the preliminary results were then deepened and contextualized during a 2-day workshop¹⁵ with INASSA staff in Ottawa.

As with all evaluations, there were some **limitations and risks** regarding this methodology that we attempted to mitigate. First, the time frame for conducting this evaluation was rather limited for a program of this magnitude and complexity; dividing responsibilities across the team and remaining efficient and focused on each activity and its added value to the evaluation lowered this risk. Timing was also a factor; given that the evaluation was conducted six months prior to the end of a 5-year research program limited the ability for the projects to produce all expected outputs and to demonstrate impacts of those outputs. Six months is a long time in the context

¹³ See Annex B

¹⁴ See Annex C

¹⁵ See Annex G

of a five year research program, especially at the tail end. Although concerns about the validity of overall qualitative assessments are likely minimal, conclusions based on quantitative assessments, such as logframe indicators or RQ+ assessment, should note the timing issue as a caveat. Secondly, the availability of actors during site visits was another limitation; duration of site visits was slightly extended and partners facilitated schedules. Finally, achieving an adequate sample of end-users in particular was challenging; partners played a key role in encouraging end-users to respond to the survey and participate in interviews. Given the significantly lower number and larger spread of responses compared to the Partners survey, (minimum per partner 1, maximum 10), the data from the Users survey had secondary importance for the evaluation findings and analysis, and was used only as a complement to that of the Partners survey.

Reflecting on the methodology, the overall process worked quite well. The combination of expertise that each senior researcher brought to the team was critical to the success of this process. The breadth and depth of data collected and analysis tools allowed for nuance and insights to emerge. The site visits were particularly critical in providing a deeper layer of understanding about how and within what contexts projects operate. Participants found the participatory focus groups to be engaging and useful; and, had there been more time and resources, it might have been helpful to extend the level of partner participation during the design and analysis stages.

3. Findings

3.1. Research Quality

*INASSA was, above anything else, a research program, i.e. rather research-intense in comparison with IDRC-managed ICT4D programs that have featured a larger share of practice or application-related work. Assessment of the quality of research is therefore one of the key accountability aspects of this evaluation. The evaluation attempted to answer the following questions: **Overall, was the quality of the research produced by INASSA research networks and think tanks acceptable (given the context/intended purpose/etc.)?***

The overall body of research produced by INASSA projects is deemed to be of high quality

- In terms of key influencing factors, (i) research capacity was uniformly integrated into research work, (ii) the low maturity of some research fields (mostly around Openness) still allow for clear contributions to field building, and (iii) environmental risks did not generally pose a significant constraint to research activities.
- Very high (i) inclusiveness, (ii) developmental relevance and (iii) timeliness were consistently found across the INASSA portfolio.
- Strong (i) scientific merit, (ii) originality and (iii) accessibility were generally found.
- Gender-responsiveness remained unsatisfactory, with some improvements related to previous programs
- Evidence of a healthy, dispassionate critical approach was noted on the development consequences of Openness
- Lack of collective understanding of an integrated quality concept for development research was perceived

The evaluation used the **Research Quality Plus (RQ+)** framework to assess how research was designed, carried out, and placed for uptake. RQ+ includes the consideration of both (i) key contextual influences likely to affect the quality of research for development; and (ii) dimensions and sub-dimensions that characterize research quality including research integrity, research legitimacy, research importance, and positioning for use. A sample of 35 research outputs from nine INASSA projects were examined, to complement information obtained from interviews, site visits and documentation. It was a purposeful sample, incorporating a variety of output types in recognition of the diversity of research products formats.¹⁶

¹⁶ The distribution of research output types was: (i) book chapters, 3; (ii) technical papers, 9; (iii) formal reports (e.g. case studies, research reports, etc.), 7; (iv) conference presentations, 6; (v) policy briefs, 3; (vi) videos, multimedia, 2; (vii) blog posts (extended), 2; (viii) magazine/newspaper articles, 3. The aggregate scores were calculated from the outputs, i.e., n=35.

While the evaluation was asked to focus on research quality, it is worth noting that **the volume of research outputs had been significant**. INASSA's logframe indicators for Output 2¹⁷ (on research production) have already largely met or exceeded the targets in most instances, targets that themselves had been increased from years past¹⁸. At the time of the evaluation, they included 46 articles in peer-reviewed journals (from 40), 22 chapters in books (from 15), 248 conference pieces/presentations (from 250) and 51 syntheses documents (from 55). More outputs are planned for 2018, including some 4 edited volumes which will synthesized research over an entire project, a significant measure of added value, such as SIRCA's book contrasting theoretical and empirical approaches to Open Development (to be published by MIT Press).

A conducive research context based on key influencing factors

The research supported by INASSA continues to support **field-building**, (related to the 'maturity of the research field' factor), largely on fields which are either still in their early stages and/or where there was an insufficient body of research in the global South, as indicated in the first column of the graph below. Work continued from previous IDRC programs on various facets of Openness and Open Development¹⁹, and extended into little-explored topics like Open Science (OCSDNet) and Openness-driven start-ups in Africa (Open AIR) or mobile-source big data in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh (Mobile Big Data). The program also included further work in more established topics like broadband access, extending for example the range of national household surveys (Catalyzing Broadband in Africa) directly aimed toward pro-poor telecommunication policies.

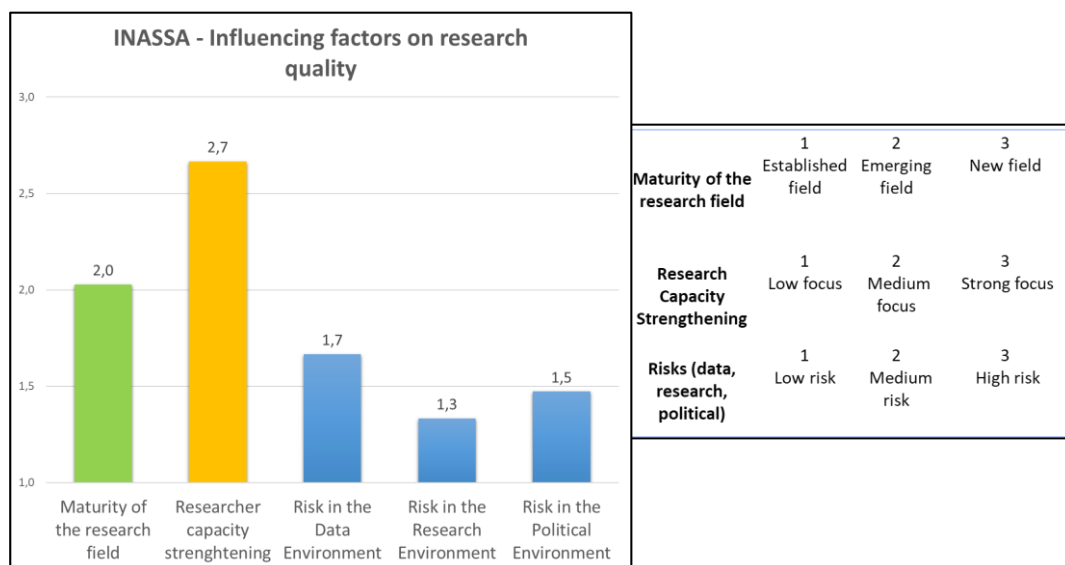


Figure 6: Results of the RQ+ assessment for key influencing factors

¹⁷ Output 2 was formulated as: "Strengthened evidence base - high quality research that is methodologically sound; scientifically valid and reviewed by a community of peers."

¹⁸ The program formally ends in March 2018, so there will likely be more research outputs produced by then. Figures mentioned above are from November 2017.

¹⁹ See, for example, the Information and Networks program (2011-2015) <https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/bitstream/handle/10625/55332/IDL-55332.pdf>

INASSA consistently coupled research generation with **research capacity strengthening**, as will be explored in the next section. The evaluation found integration of capacity strengthening activities for researchers in essentially all projects, as underlined by the graph in fig.4 above, with a very high rating of 2.7 out of 3. In terms of **risks** assessment, it was found that there were no significant constraints overall for undertaking quality research, with some higher territorial instances of political risk (for research undertaking or its positioning for use) in research sub-projects in countries like Syria, Myanmar or Pakistan, but which constituted a minute fraction of the entire body of INASSA research.

The limited extent of **interdisciplinary research** found by the evaluation is likely affected in part by institutional or research environment risks. Interdisciplinarity refers to the crossing of boundaries among traditional academic disciplines, integrating different approaches or methods²⁰ The evaluation of the 'Information and Networks' program (2011-2016), INASSA's parent initiative, had already found challenges related to interdisciplinary work. Arguably, the field of study of the network society is strongly interdisciplinary, involving elements from ICT, social and political sciences and, in INASSA's specific context, development studies. However, most universities and professional journals presently do not tend to be supportive²¹ of interdisciplinary work – including in the global North. Despite a more welcoming discourse about the benefits of interdisciplinarity, in practice there are often barriers on the extent of research undertaken across university departments, and a tendency for journals to favor publication within established thematic boundaries. There were some instances of interdisciplinary outputs, such as in the Systematic Review project or the Open AIR project (the latter even for framing research problems/questions). Instances were also found in OCSDNet given the confluence of social, anthropological and 'hard' sciences factors when inquiring about enabling conditions and limitations of Open Science, reflected on the upcoming book 'Contextualizing Openness.' Section 3.2 further discusses capacity development aspects related to interdisciplinary research.

Solid overall research quality criteria

Figure 7 below presents the aggregated, averaged data on the nine quality sub-criteria from the **RQ+ assessment of the 35 research outputs** reviewed by the evaluation. The outputs were in their majority technical papers, book chapters or reports, but they also included other less formal formats like blog posts, media articles, etc.²² or conference presentations.

²⁰ Oxford Handbook of Inter-Disciplinarity, 2nd edition, 2017 (<http://bit.ly/2mUEv67>). By contrast, INASSA could be said to carry out more of 'multi-disciplinary' research, in that it involves various traditional disciplines, but maintaining them separate and identifiable.

²¹ The term 'supportive' refers, in an institutional context, to priorities, incentives, and infrastructure.

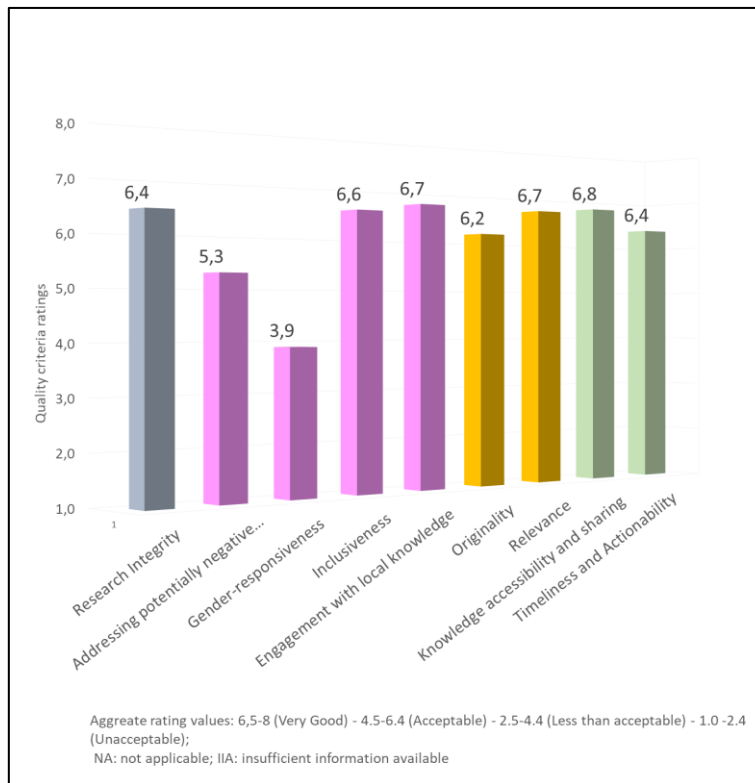
"RQ+ : A Holistic Approach to Evaluating Research"

<https://www.idrc.ca/sites/default/files/sp/Documents%20EN/Research-Quality-Plus-A-Holistic-Approach-to-Evaluating-Research.pdf>

²² The distribution of the outputs samples was: Book chapters: 3; Technical Papers: 9; Reports - (incl. guidebooks, case studies, research): 7; Conference presentations: 6; policy briefs: 3; Video / multimedia: 2; Blog (extended) posts: 2; media articles: 3.

Integrity

Research integrity refers to what is traditionally viewed as the attributes of good scientific research, i.e. structured design, methodological rigor, literature review, and logical links between evidence and conclusions or claims made. **The evaluation found that most of the projects supported by INASSA had very high levels of integrity or scientific merit.** Some of the outputs are exceptional and will likely have important repercussions, such as two edited volumes focused on open development accepted for publication in 2018 by MIT Press²³, big data epidemiological models developed by LIRNEasia to predict the spread of dengue in Sri Lanka, or the household surveys research conducted by RIA used, among other purposes, by the ITU for pricing ICT price baskets more accurately and inclusively²⁴. Some informants expressed concern about the challenges in delivering high research quality while working with some ‘junior’ researchers. But the evaluation observes that the capacity development purpose of INASSA more than justifies possible effects on overall quality levels, particularly given that the research quality has been shown to be satisfactory enough. Moreover, assuming that those young or junior researchers were carefully selected by project managers, they would already be showing significant talent and potential.



	NA	IIA
Research Integrity	1	2
Addressing potentially negative consequences	3	10
Gender-responsiveness	3	2
Inclusiveness	1	3
Engagement with local knowledge	2	3
Originality		1
Relevance	1	1
Knowledge accessibility and sharing	1	1
Timeliness and Actionability	2	3

Figure 7: Results of the RQ+ assessment for research quality of INASSA projects²⁵

²³ One edited volume will be a successor to the 2013 groundbreaking book ‘Open Development: Networked Innovations in International Development’, and will include contributions by INASSA actors. The other one will synthesize the results from the SIRCA III project.

²⁴ The research showed conclusively how usage patterns differ significantly between global North and global South countries.

²⁵ RQ+ provided discrete individual research output rating values: 8, 7 (Very Good) - 6.5 (Acceptable) - 4.3 (Less than acceptable) - 2.1 (Unacceptable), and also N/A (not applicable); IIA (insufficient information

Legitimacy

The research legitimacy criteria refers to the extent to which research results have been produced by a process that took account of the concerns and insights of relevant stakeholder and was deemed fair based on the values, concerns and perspectives of that audience. It consists of four components: *(i) addressing potentially negative consequences, (ii) gender-responsiveness, (ii) inclusiveness of vulnerable populations and (iv) engagement with local knowledge.*

Significant differences were noted in the assessment of these subcriteria. The latter two can be taken together as an expression of overall ‘inclusiveness’, whether it was of the people and targets involved or of local knowledge. **It was found that the projects across the board gave high consideration to inclusiveness**, which is coherent with the attribute of Openness that permeates across much of INASSA’s work. The ratings for both these subcriteria scored high in the RQ+ procedure and slightly lower on ‘local knowledge’ as some projects (like Systematic Reviews) were sourcing information across countries and even globally. Projects like OCSDNet, the two on open educational resources (ROER4D and DL4D) and certainly the one in Myanmar were all strongly grounded on local contexts.

Potential negative consequences were generally considered, but not consistently in all projects. To adequately appraise the consideration of potentially negative consequences was challenging. There appeared to be insufficient information about this in some of the outputs (mostly from one partner). On the other hand, direct contacts with the projects and other documentation pointed to well-defined critical approaches by some of them about Openness and digital development, particularly on issues of inequality and how it could benefit some groups more than others – e.g. it was central feature of OCSDNet. More comments on these critical approaches are provided in ‘additional findings on research quality’.

In terms of the **gender-responsiveness of the research²⁶, the evaluation found improvements in relation with previous programs²⁷, but still insufficient compliance levels.** This appeared to derive less from lack of interest or awareness about its significance than from insufficient knowledge on how to adequately integrate it into research design and processes. A new and well-crafted gender strategy was generated by the NE program halfway through INASSA, but its implementation had not yet shown a significant effect across the portfolio. The wide dispersion

available). When the ratings are aggregated, this introduces an element of ambiguity: should a 6.3 be interpreted as ‘acceptable’ or as ‘very good’? To partially address this inconsistency, a different scale has been provided for aggregate values, as indicated in the graph’s legend. The aggregation was done at the output level for the whole sample. What’s more important, however, is to consider the relative variations across the parameters, rather than their absolute values. The N/A and IIA occurrences are reported because they are deemed to be informative (i.e., how many of the examined outputs did not contain enough information related to a given parameter to make an informed judgement about it). They were excluded from the ratings aggregation (i.e., not given a ‘zero’ numerical value) because they refer a different type of information.

²⁶ According to IDRC, gender-sensitive research incorporates gender factors into the design, data collection, analysis and interpretation of findings. It provides insights applicable to address gender discrimination, support women’s empowerment, and facilitate social or technological change.

²⁷ The evaluations of the Information & Networks and OD4D programs noted significant limitations in terms of gender-responsiveness. Learnings from the I&N program, in particular, were credited for helping formulate the new NE gender strategy.

in these RQ+ ratings (from 1.8²⁸ to 7.5, on a scale of 1-8), by far the highest of all sub-criteria, point to a direct dependency on the projects' own existing capacities on gender analysis. However, a clear indication of program-level improvement on this front is that about nearly 40% of the sample outputs rated satisfactorily on this sub-criterion (compared to about 10% in the I&N evaluation). It would be worthwhile to carefully monitor the implementation of the NE gender strategy to learn in detail about the new processes and resulting outcomes.

Importance

This criterion considers the value to key intended users of the knowledge and understanding generated by the research, in terms of the **originality** of the work and its perceived **relevance** to the needs and priorities of potential users. Thus, research importance is fundamental from a policy-making perspective. **The evaluation found that INASSA research showed high levels of originality and, particularly, of developmental relevance.**

While originality stems mostly from the topics rather than the approaches taken by the projects, the relevance needs to be tailored to users' needs in every project and it was the highest rated sub-criteria in the research sample. The SIRCA III project provides an example of an original approach, by articulating six teams of theoretical-empirical research sub-projects to test theoretical frameworks about Openness, and at the same time using a mentoring scheme involving more experience researchers (on the theoretical side) with more novel ones (doing the empirical work).

The developmental relevance of the research (e.g. to the 2030 SDG agenda) was high and consistent across portfolio, with some types of outputs more relevant to specific stakeholder groups (e.g. researchers, policy-makers). This can be illustrated by responses to the work carried out, such as researchers from ROER4D presently in about half of the panels of the 2017 OE Global Conference in Cape Town, the demand for RIA contributions in various countries in Africa (or the aforementioned ITU ICT price standards), and the wide expanse of open data research products and services from the OD4D project (including the Open Data Index or the development of the Open Data Charter).

Positioning for use

This quality dimension refers to the extent to which the research process has been managed to enhance the likelihood on the use, influence and impact of research products. The subcriteria include **knowledge accessibility/sharing** and **actionability/timeliness**. This a different type of research quality criterion, and possibly a key distinguishing feature in IDRC's integrated research quality concept (integrity, legitimacy and importance tend to appear in other assessment frameworks). It has direct bearings on enabling policy uptake, which will be discussed in depth on section 3.3. **INASSA produced a voluminous body of research and evidence, and the extent of knowledge accessibility and sharing was generally high.** Knowledge sharing to external actors was delivered mostly through conferences (over 90, and nearly 250 presentations), and via the partners/project portals. The effects of DECI-2, a project that developed research communications capacity, was deemed influential – e.g. some the most attractive/functional project web sites were supported by DECI-2, such as ROER4D, DL4D and OCSDNet. INASSA

²⁸ The ratings' average for the research outputs reviewed for a given project.

lacked, however, a central knowledge portal that could help increase visibility for the program and improved access to its resources.²⁹

In relation to the other sub-criteria, **the evaluation found that the timeliness and actionability of INASSA's research were overall appropriate**, with some of the partners strategically delivering their work to enhance policy/practice uptake, such as (i) LIRNEasia's initiative in Myanmar on ICT needs and usage, (ii) OD4D's support of the Open Government Partnership, or (iii) ROER4D's scaling of initial successes with teacher development in the state of Karnataka (India) into other states. There could have been more systematic work to analyze what was most needed and taken up by policy makers³⁰. While a fair level of synthesis documents and other policy-oriented materials were produced, the translation of the rich body of evidence generated by INASSA into formats that are user-friendly for policy-makers could have been more uniform across the portfolio. Research communications were not consistently a parallel endeavor during the research process (sometimes being done after most of the research had been completed) possibly because not all projects benefitted from DECI-2 or other research communications support.

Additional findings on research quality

There are some additional findings about INASSA's research that are transversal to the research quality assessment.

- **The program has displayed in various instances a dispassionate critical approach on the development consequences of Openness.** This is a healthy contrast with a less critical, more laudatory view often surfacing in the ICT4D field, propagating a “technology-solves-all” narrative for development. For instance, the concept of ‘Situated Openness’ put forth by the OCSDNet project refers to potential detrimental consequences of Open Science related to inclusion and accessibility, unless there is greater awareness about contextuality. SIRCA III interrogates theoretical propositions about Open Development by testing them empirically on the ground (their results will be published in one of the two MIT Review books mentioned above).
- **An integrated vision of research quality is gaining ground, but has not yet been internalized by the projects.** Many informants still base their understanding of research quality on traditional academic standards (rigor, methodology, peer-review, etc.). But there is growing recognition that such notions are insufficient and constraining. As one project manager expressed, *“we want to move beyond traditional measures of research impact (number of publications or citations), and (...) want to shift the focus to processes, although there are not good indicators for them”*. While the research outputs examined rated well across the quality criteria contained in the RQ+ framework, wider awareness of an integrated view for the quality of developmental research is bound to help those researchers/projects that tend to ignore some non-traditional aspects (e.g. timeliness) or that want to consistently incorporate such a view into their research planning and design.

²⁹ IDRC's INASSA web page (<https://www.idrc.ca/en/initiative/information-and-networks-asia-and-sub-saharan-africa>) or its corporate digital library referred only to a few of the generated research outputs.

³⁰ Informants suggested international comparative benchmarks, cost effectiveness studies, impact studies, etc.

- **Two contributing factors to INASSA research quality were (i) the intellectual contributions from IDRC program staff**, e.g. such as about theory-building on Openness or supporting research design in some projects, **and (ii) initiatives for supporting capacity development (the ‘service projects’)**, such as Systematic Reviews or the DECI-2 (on communications and evaluation). These are examined in sections 3.5 and 3.4, respectively.
- **Outside expert informants contacted by the evaluation continue to view IDRC as a key supporter of research in ICT4D³¹**. These informants (who are not linked to any of the INASSA projects), also underlined the importance of research production in this area given its rapidly evolving pace and emerging topics, and that funding for such research has decreased over the last few years

Finally, the survey data complements this exploration of INASSA research quality. The graph below on the left shows that the views of project partners and sub-grantees about their research quality corresponds relatively well with what we found in examining the research outputs (e.g. ‘legitimacy’ criteria receiving the lower scores). The graph on the right depicts that the users³² of the research seemed to be more satisfied with the research than the project actors themselves.

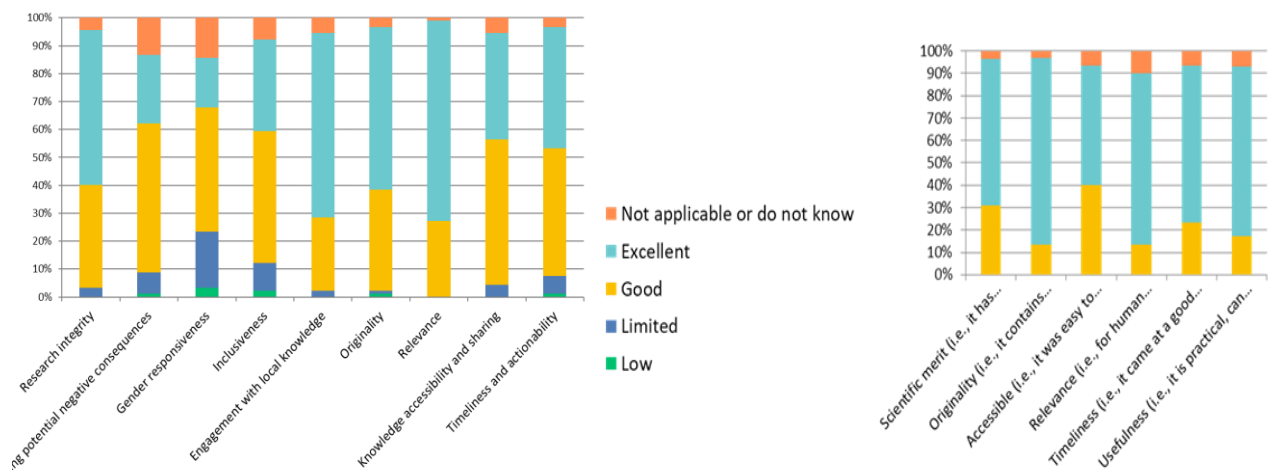


Figure 8: Results from evaluation surveys: perception of research quality:
(a) left - partners/sub-grantees; (b) right – users of project results³³

³¹ They also indicated that funding for such research has decreased over the last few years

³² Most of the informants from the end-user survey were researchers, very few were policy-makers. The size of the end-user sample, as mentioned in the Methodology section, was neither distributed or large enough to be truly representative of INASSA research users.

³³ The formulation of the question on research quality to the Users was a bit simpler and with less categories. Essentially, it removed the research legitimacy points, as the Users would not know about the ethics and inclusivity of the research process.

3.2. Research Capacity Development

Developing individual researchers' capacity, in alignment with a main outcome for the program's theory of change, was key in achieving program results. The evaluation attempts to answer the question related to research capacity development: ***To what extent and in what ways was INASSA capacity strengthening of southern researchers effective, relevant, and significant?*** In examining the specific activities of INASSA projects' work on research capacity development and the intended/achieved results, the evaluation found that a wide variety of research capacity development approaches were used, tailored to the needs of each project, and that INASSA's emphasis on capacity strengthening at the individual was effective. Additionally, there was some evidence of organizational or institutional capacity development and room to set goals and track progress, aligned to changing needs.

INASSA's capacity development was effective at the individual level, where it placed its emphasis. Some evidence also demonstrated institutional capacity development. Overall there was room for setting goals and documenting progress.

INASSA's support emphasized the importance of rigorous research and provided partners with information on inclusion and gender-sensitive research. INASSA has also funded capacity building opportunities for new and emerging researchers.

- Dynamic methods such as mentoring and new researcher network were found to be effective
- Limited incidences of capacity-building across projects led to increase effectiveness when present
- Strong need for capacity development specifically geared toward policy influence was noted, including soft skills
- Much room to build capacity to advocate for, design and conduct gender-related research among projects was perceived
- Evidence of integrated, interdisciplinary approaches, collaboration, organizational learning, and other methods that address complexity was limited

Capacity Development Activities and Results

The capacity development methods in projects ranged from a more traditional approach, such as having a capacity development officer or doctoral supervisor to real-time development, such as on-the-job training or how-to guides or webinars to a more dynamic approach, such as mentoring or engaging with experts at conferences or an interactive network of new and emerging researchers. In one case, an INASSA partner focused on being a learning organization and embedding continual learning in the process of how projects were managed represented a more comprehensive method of drawing out and integrating capacity development at an organizational level.

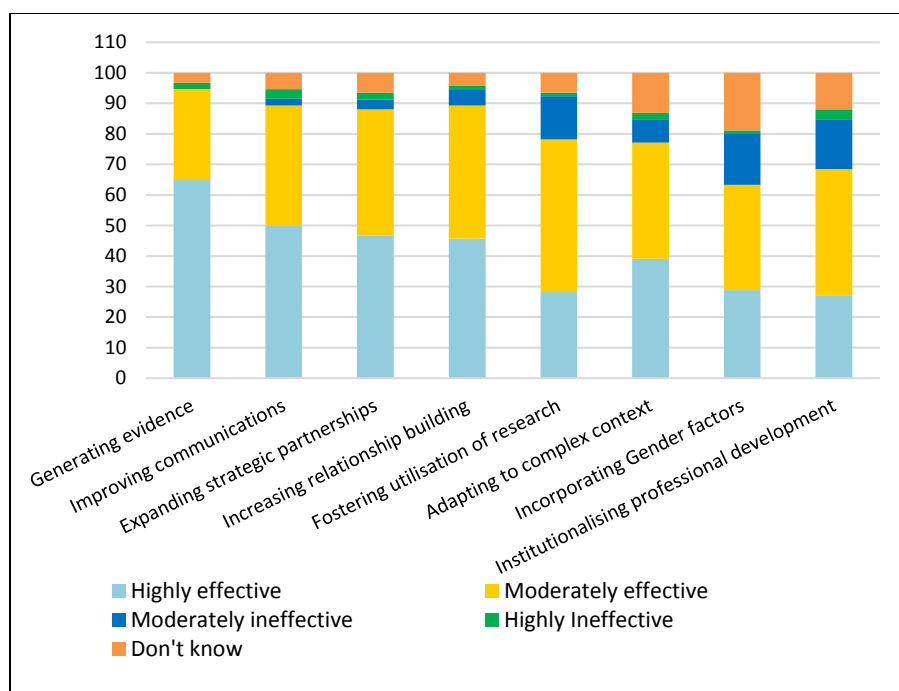
In terms of results, the evaluation found that the more dynamic approaches (such as mentoring that included developmental editing, goal-setting, and theme development as well as twinning with highly-regarded international experts) best achieved the intended results of increasing the capacity, confidence and visibility of researchers to better position them to be able to influence policy. An excellent example of taking a dynamic approach further was the New and Emerging Researchers Group (NERG) of Open AIR. This network allowed young researchers to identify and take the initiative on capacity development opportunities, such as working on papers together, that was supported by mentoring and theme experts on an institutional level. The evaluation found that traditional approaches to capacity development used by some projects, such as having a capacity development officer, lacked traditional tools such as capacity needs assessment, learning goals, and monitoring. Further, they used more didactic methods resulting in less robust results.

It is interesting to note that one organization, LIRNEasia, has taken an organizational learning approach, which allows them to be more responsive, to include a broad range of interventions, and to imbed learning within projects as a way to encourage continual improvement across their project portfolio. This approach emerged out of their own work and initiative and serves as a strong example for how to develop a layered, learning organization. For example, colloquia draw out learnings from projects and industry trends, and help adapt future projects based on this expanded knowledge. Organizational development activities help them build more institutional and management capacity. And, topical training is tailored to the position level and changing needs of the audience. For example, content of training on ICT for development moved from ICT literacy to communication with media to advocacy – and could deepen toward knowledge of policies for improved advocacy.

The more dynamic approaches, especially mentoring and organizational learning, were informed by the DECI-2 program, a capacity development initiative that was also an INASSA project. Its purpose was to support research projects funded by the NE programme in Utilization Focused Evaluation (UFE) and Research Communication (ResCom). Its goal was to enhance the internal learning culture within projects and to enable projects to focus on early communication planning to enhance their reach. The DECI-2 evaluation found that the “crux of the value [of DECI-2] that is added is not the UFE or ResCom capacity per se but the critical thinking that is embodied with the DECI-2 approach. Participants across the board have benefitted from questioning the way they do things – not just by improving to better achieve their objectives but also by building this reflective way of working into their approach so they continue to benefit.”³⁴

The partners survey (Figure 9) asked about perceptions on the effectiveness of the INASSA program on developing research capacity. The informants indicated that INASSA was very effective in developing capacity to generate credible, relevant and contextualized evidence; 88,9% were moderately or highly effective in the areas related to policy uptake (increasing relationship building, expanding strategic partnerships, and improving communications), and relatively less effective in developing capacity to adapt to and understand complex contexts, institutionalize policies and practices for professional development, and incorporate gender factors. While these are perceptions from a sample of 90 grantees and sub-grantees and results are generally positive, the data infer where opportunities for improvement may lie.

³⁴ Evaluation of DECI-2, S. Hearn and S. Batchelor, April 2017.



*Figure 9: Results from the partner survey:
perception of research capacity development effectiveness*

Research Aspects in Capacity Development

In exploring research aspects (technical, ethical, positioning for policy uptake), which featured more prominently in research capacity development actions, all projects included research methods in some way and the importance of rigour of research had been communicated by INASSA. In general, the focus of capacity development has been technical and has concentrated on research design and the efforts reached researchers in hubs and main locations, however in some sub-projects researchers in remote locations were not always included. Projects tended to want to preserve their autonomy in what research aspects were included and how, thus INASSA's more indirect approach to capacity development seemed to fit the projects' style of engaging in these efforts. More specifically, INASSA's efforts to create an enabling environment for capacity development were effective in most cases, however a learning needs assessment might have been useful for new projects, based on the objectives and theory of change, to determine if a project with limited research or management capacity would benefit from a more directive approach. A learning needs assessment would also have provided a basis for measuring progress in capacity development over time.

INASSA provided strong emphasis in the areas of inclusion, gender, and ethics. While the capacity building focused more on the content and importance of these areas, projects took what they learned and ensured ethical procedures were included; and, they found creative, innovative solutions to address inclusivity and gender aspects of research that worked in their context. For example, one project worked behind the scenes to support champions of gender-sensitive research as they attempted to include gender in their research design despite institutional sexism in some government and ICT industry contexts.

It is interesting to note that elements of shared-learning culture and infrastructure deriving from the collaboration with DECI-2 led to a wide variety of ‘communication’ activities and helped create a learning culture in some projects. Some of these activities included online chat groups, newsletters, openly viewable online reporting and feedback, open process of peer review, and regular online blogs that capture project and network lessons. The impact of this INASSA “service project” has had positive consequences that have supported a culture that values and builds capacity.

For example, two projects in Cape Town are supporting each other by one providing mentoring to the other on these issues, so the capacity development is happening across projects in an informal way. This is addressing a need that was expressed by informants for more formal training for new principle investigators and project managers. It was felt that “principal investigators need to know so much, from the academic knowledge to understanding networking, understanding research capacity building, and having the ability to do that, and the communication, and the curation, and the editing, and the open data and the evaluation” (principal investigator, female).

Finally, there was a call to enhance capacity development for policy impact, including increase training on “soft skills (communications, emotional intelligence, building relationships and trust), presentation skills, and the importance of considering policy/election cycles in research design. One informant stated that, “It would be good to have ‘soft training’... What I’m thinking about is we went to parliament and I learned that in order to ‘translate’ parliament principle to parliamentarians, don’t use jargon... make it relevant... in order to have meaningful political influence there is a way that you want to get your point across to the parliamentarians... (there are) people (there) who are scathing, sarcastic, and parliament rejected them... (new researchers) saw that the way you make your point can be critical and convincing in your approach...” (researcher, male). It is not surprising that these skills are being called for increasingly in order to improve “science, literacy, and numeracy”³⁵ as well as influence.³⁶ Many of these skills are requisite for stakeholder engagement in the CARIAA research into use (RiU) framework for capacity development, for example.³⁷ The RiU framework, developed by a different IDRC-funded program, is especially useful in this case because it acknowledges the multiple points of influence needed to create conditions for research into use as well as specific capacities helpful in effecting RiU in a complex world, such as relationships, trust, and ongoing, diversified feedback.

The DECI-2 project included some of these skills, utilized an integrated approach combining Utilization-Focused Evaluation (U-FE)³⁸ and Research Communication (ResCom)³⁹ yet its main focus was building capacity on how to develop and adapt strategies, targeting external

³⁵ Skills for a Changing World: Advancing Quality Learning for Vibrant Societies, Center for Universal Education, Brookings Institute, Rebecca Winthrop and Eileen McGivney, (2016).

³⁶ A Soft Skills Training Model for Executive Education. In: Human Centered Management in Executive Education. Humanism in Business Series. Palgrave Macmillan, London. Massaro M., Bardy R., Garlatti A. (2016).

³⁷ The CARIAA RiU Learning Guide: Guidance Note, Collaborative Adaptation Research Initiative in Africa and Asia, March 2017.

³⁸ Michael Quinn Patton, Essentials of Utilization-Focused Evaluation, Sage, 2012

³⁹ <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/198.pdf>

communications as well as a utilization-focused monitoring and evaluation within projects, relying on mentors to delivery capacity development. While the skills in deep reflection and developing the mentoring relationship were helpful, the soft skills in the combined framework were more focused on listening to and understanding users or stakeholders, with less emphasis on relationship building, feedback and trust building with external partners. A framework such as Research into Use would reflect capacity development aspects that include the changing needs projects are facing due to increasing complexity as they encourage research uptake.

Interdisciplinary, Integrated Approach

Intended results of the INASSA program included building capacity to “undertake rigorous and interdisciplinary research on digital issues”⁴⁰ and as noted in section 3.1, “Interdisciplinarity refers to the crossing of boundaries among traditional academic disciplines, integrating different approaches.” In looking at specific types of support provided through the projects for Interdisciplinary work and for taking an integrated approach to research on a complex field such as ‘an inclusive networked society,’ the evaluation found that projects had the intention to work across disciplines, but limited interdisciplinary research was found by the evaluation, as mentioned in section 2.1.

In projects primarily engaged in a network modality, there was evidence of capacity building activities that supported an integrated approach, encouraged adaptive management techniques, and experimented with other methods that were found to be helpful in a complex context. For example, the LIRNEasia convenes a colloquium on each project, invites all staff, fellows and sometimes outside experts whom they feel will be able to challenge their research from a range of perspectives to strengthen and solidify their work. They are very tough on each other and use this format often to make sure they are taking into consideration lots of angles and don’t have gaps in their work. Learnings from these integrated approaches to research in a complex context could be scaled or applied across projects.

Open AIR organizes research trainings on “adventurous methodologies” such as scenarios, participatory action research, and “knowledge-development experiments.” Additionally, Open AIR’s case study method builds on previous iterations and uses grounded theory to develop new theories. This is additional evidence of methods being used appropriate for a complex context. Further, their intention is to create capacity of their stakeholders to create feedback loops as a way for the ecosystem they are working with to develop its capacity to adapt to complex change. While building capacity of indirect partners of INASSA was not part of INASSA’s Theory of Change, Open AIR found this capacity building helpful, given the complexity and whole-systems approach.

Incidents of building capacity of external stakeholders, such as parliamentarians, researchers and government staff was, as to be expected, limited because this was not part of the INASSA Theory of Change. LIRNEasia was a strong example of how capacity building workshops for external stakeholders could be incorporated into an overall process for influencing change. However, overall, end-user informants expressed an interest and need in capacity building in ICT policy, research methods (especially inclusion and gender), and scaling or complex systems

⁴⁰ IDRC–INASSA Draft Programme Document, June 14, 2013

change, despite limited budgets, limited time and small opportunity windows to participate given election and policy cycles. For example, an end-user (female) explained what would be most useful, *“I am really interested in systemic change. I understand if you don’t have systemic change the projects that you do especially on a small scale, can easily be killed... You need to be systemic to reach scale.”* One partner (female) summed it up well, *“The model of having a network... gives us the flexibility of the researchers moving between the various hubs to together increasing returns to go to scale and working at the networking level. The question of capacity building links to supporting networks increasing to scale when the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.”*

Collaborative Capacity

The evaluation found that INASSA made some progress toward its goal to build collaborative capacity for research and to avoid the issue of researchers working in silos. It did this by emphasizing the importance of collaboration. Efforts resulted in some projects being more attuned to collaboration than others, noting that most of the collaborative capacity building was happening within projects than across projects.

The structure of projects tended to influence *how* collaborative capacity was developed. Networked projects tended to have more informal collaboration initiated by any point in the network and developed as a norm in the project, a way of working to meet a need for a different perspective. For example, ROER4D developed an exchange between subprojects that included intensive workshops and offline discussions in order to better understand the different contexts and how subprojects could help each other. Because collaboration is more of a norm in these projects, there are more opportunities in networked projects to develop capacity to collaborate. The collaboration was found to have emerged naturally from the networked relationships. INASSA’s support of these networks as well as exchanges between participants at conferences and events was key in developing this norm for collaboration.

On the other hand, ‘think tank’ projects, such as RIA and LIRNEasia, tended to have more formal collaborations and development of collaboration capacity tended to be more on-the-job learning in a project or partnership context. Collaboration in this context was found to be more transactional, though successful collaborations did lead to relationships that resulted in future work together. Development of collaboration capacity tended to be the responsibility of the manager and there was no evidence that INASSA specifically supported collaborative capacity development in think tank projects, rather INASSA emphasized the importance of collaboration. *“[The] INASSA approach has reinforced (collaboration). This is already in the culture of African people to work together. Knowledge belongs to the commoner. Song is folk song that is an ethic here. There is no superstar who has come up with this tradition.”* (researcher, male)

Gender in Research Capacity Development

The evaluation has found that INASSA has made some efforts towards its goals of building research capacity in gender-related research, however the results on the ground with individual projects are inconsistent from project to project, given the context and history of each project.

In terms of perceptions of effectiveness of capacity-building efforts in incorporating gender factors in research, the partner survey showed that 63.3% found INASSA's efforts highly effective or effective, 17.7% found them ineffective or very ineffective, and 12% didn't know. The evaluation finds that there is room to improve the capacity of the program and its partners to develop and scale up gender-responsive programming and research, with approaches geared to address challenges in the national and industry contexts.

It is interesting to note that in more challenging contexts, projects took creative approaches to circumvent resistance and institutional sexism. For example, RIA was on a task force on gender studies at the International Telecommunications Union and on gender in development of ICT indicators at the OECD. RIA also worked to support government researchers on the ground to help ensure that gender barriers, access issues and survey questions that can help define a gender divide in ICT are included in national household surveys despite resistance from policy makers.

3.3. Policy Influence and other impacts

The evaluation's framework included two questions that have guided this section, **(i) *To what extent and in what ways were the INASSA supported projects successful in achieving relevant and significant research to policy influence?*** and **(ii) *Where policy influence was below expectation, were there ways in which INASSA could have been more effective in supporting research to policy uptake?***⁴¹

INASSA has provided decision makers with increased knowledge of evidence-based policy and program options that have been taken up and informed new or reformed policies and programs that aim to achieving economic growth, improving quality and reach of educational opportunities, and strengthening democratic governance

- The INASSA program has been effective at broadening policy horizons and affecting policy regimes and practices in target countries
- Governance and education are the two thematic sectors where evidence of outcomes is the most prevalent but significant achievements were also found for science and entrepreneurship
- Not every INASSA project has the intent to influence policies, which makes INASSA Theory of Change not fully applicable for those and a source of unclear expectations sometimes
- The pathway to policy influence is complex, confronted with a range of endogenous and exogenous factors that either limit or facilitate outcomes, which requires the program to develop very contextual responses and provide matching capacities at national level

⁴¹ Confer also section on Recommendations.

Assessing the extent to which research influences policy and practice is notoriously a difficult task and long-term game (7-10 years or more) that goes beyond the timeframe of most, if not all, INASSA grants. To disentangle slightly the complexity of this assessment and articulate our findings, the evaluation used two dimensions of research to policy influence⁴² as referred in the program logframe, the contribution of INASSA to (i) *Broadening policy horizons*, and to (ii) *Affecting policy regimes*. The INASSA partners survey returned a positive assessment of the perceived contribution of the program to these two dimensions (Figure 10) that are further discussed infra.

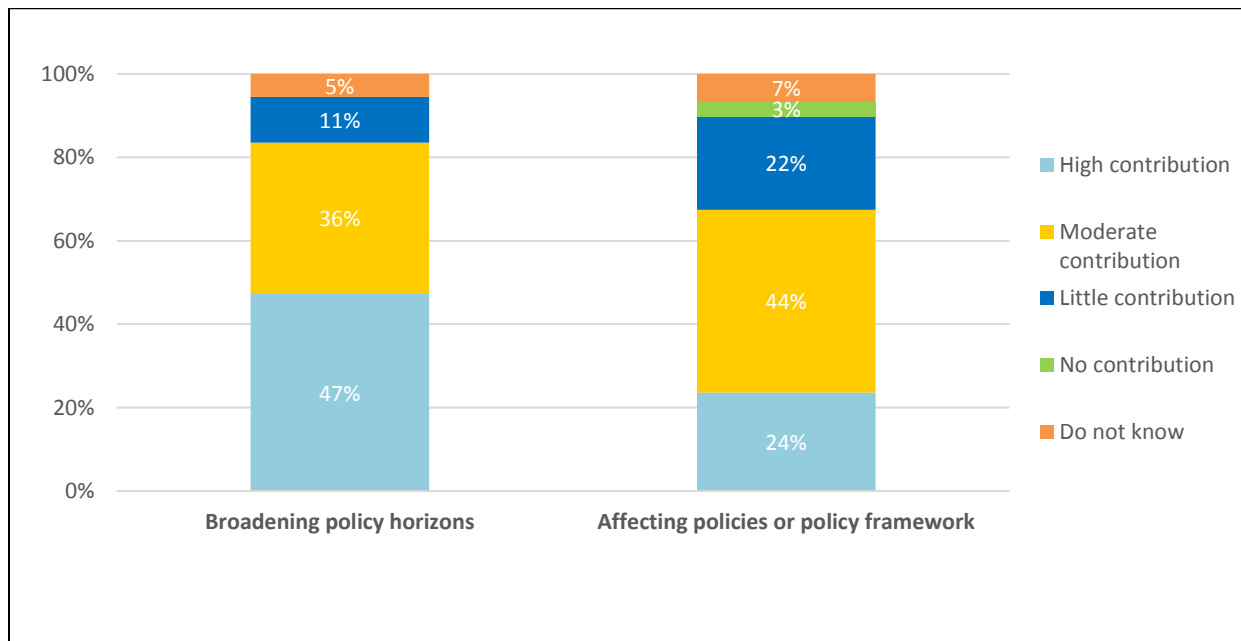


Figure 10: Perceived contribution of INASSA projects to the following dimensions of policy influence⁴³

Broadening horizons of policy makers and practitioners

The evaluation found **ample evidence of a significant contribution of INASSA to broadening policy horizons** (e.g. by incorporation of new topics and innovations into policy fields, or strengthening relationships between researchers and policy makers, etc.). About 83% of the partners and grantees who responded to the partners survey indicated a high or moderate contribution of the INASSA program to broadening policy horizons (Figure 10). Although statistically less significant due to the low number of respondents, a similar pattern (78%) was observed from the participants to the end-users' survey.

To assess the contribution of the program to broadening policy horizons, the INASSA logframe installed an indicator on the *number of instances where policy makers had mentioned INASSA*

⁴² These 2 dimensions stemmed from a study that reviewed policy influence across a selection of past IDRC projects (in Carden, F. 2009. *Knowledge to Policy: Making the most of Development Research*. New Delhi: Sage & Ottawa: IDRC.)

⁴³ Source: INASSA evaluation partners survey, 2017.

research. As of September 2017, 22 cases were reported by the program compared to an objective of 20 references. Out of the 22 cases identified, 36% were provided by LIRNEasia, 32% by OD4D, and 18% by RIA. The overall positive achievement of the program referred by this indicator is certainly higher but difficult to determine precisely. References to INASSA research are not necessarily explicit or specified in written documentation issued by policy makers and practitioners. Furthermore, it would not be possible to exhaust all possible sources of information while monitoring this indicator. This makes the indicator moderately relevant and partially trackable.

A review of the evidence collected by the evaluation on the contribution of the program to broadening policy horizons in the four thematic areas of INASSA could be tentatively synthesized as follows:

- **Governance:** Several studies produced by INASSA projects have informed policy makers and practitioners and been used as benchmarks and/or to provide additional policy options on a range of governance areas. In **Namibia**, the Prime Minister recently cited RIA's rating of prepaid mobile broadband data during a keynote speech to benchmark and commend the achievements of the country in SADC region⁴⁴. In **Myanmar**, officials from the Ministry of Transport and Communications and the Deputy Director General of the Post and Telecommunications quoted research findings from LIRNEasia survey on ICT use and information needs conducted in 2016⁴⁵. OD4D was referred as a notable success for "its contribution to put the idea of OD in the public agenda and for "launching the OD Charter, an international instrument to guide the generation and applicability of OD around the world"⁴⁶.
- **Education:** The research completed on Open Education Resources has informed policy makers at national and provincial levels as well as decision makers in universities (e.g. ROER4D Sub-Project 5 action research study on collaborative OER adoption approach in Karnataka, India, was acknowledged as a best practice by the Government of India and training methodology subsequently rolled out in other provinces; ROER4D Sub-Project 10.6 on the impact of integrating OER in teacher education in Sri Lanka⁴⁷ won a best paper award and OER was subsequently presented to educational directors in all nine provinces of the country).
- **Education:** ROER4D and DL4D conveyed a pool of cases where sub-projects informed policies and practices. The collaborative resource adoption model⁴⁸ developed in the ROER4D study in **India** for instance was acknowledged as a national best practice by a review mission of the Government of India. Other states that learned from the federal Government about this achievement requested the grantee's support (IT4Change) to implement their training methodology - confer also below. In **Sri Lanka** the ROER4D

⁴⁴ <https://southernafrican.news/2017/10/10/namibias-prime-ministers-applauds-her-countrys-ict-sector/>

⁴⁵ <http://lirneasia.net/2017/02/lirneasia-research-quoted-by-officials-at-myanmars-ministry-of-transport-and-communications/>

⁴⁶ Acevedo-Ruiz M. & Peña-López I. 2017. Evaluation of the Open Data for Development Program. IDRC. Ottawa.

⁴⁷ <http://roer4d.org/sp10-6>

⁴⁸ <http://roer4d.org/collaborative-creation-of-oer>

Sub-Project 10.6 on the impact of integrating OER in teacher education⁴⁹ won a best paper award for their paper entitled *From OER to OEP: Shifting practitioner perspectives and practices with innovative learning experience design*. Subsequently, the Principal Investigator visited all nine provinces in Sri Lanka to do advocacy work and hold small workshops with provincial educational directors. In **Chile**, the Lead Researcher of Sub-Project 9 caught the interest of the Open Policy Network and one of its initiatives, the Institute of Open Leadership. This institute called proposals related to developing and implementing open policies, and accepted a proposal related to open public-funded educational resources. Later, the Library of Congress of Chile gave the Lead Researcher the mission to elaborate a discussion paper to build a Civic and Citizenship education program. As a follow-up, the researcher was offered to lead the new program where he is now able to promote more open policies and initiatives. In **Syria**, DL4D studies on digital learning (e.g. EduApp4Syria App⁵⁰) have informed a range of practitioners and been taken up by developers to improve the App.

- **Science:** The studies developed the understanding of policy makers and scientists on open science. In **Argentina**, OCSDNet⁵¹ led to start a policy group on Open Science at the Ministry of Science & Technology. In **Kyrgyzstan**, the OCSDNet project⁵² engaged with policy makers and scientists within the fields of education and water quality to expand interest in the use of open science as a mechanism for teaching and learning locally-appropriate science within rural schools. In **South Africa**, OCSDNet⁵³ researchers made a formal legal submission on the Indigenous Knowledge Bill).
- **Entrepreneurship:** LIRNEasia's survey and outreach activities on internet usage by freelancers in remote areas of **Sri Lanka** made its way up to policy makers including the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and member of the Parliament, with the Government subsequently rolled back a tax on broadband internet use⁵⁴. In **South Africa**, Open AIR's has contributed to raise the profile of ICT hubs⁵⁵ and to position their services in sight of the digital government.

Multiple instruments and channels were used by INASSA projects to ensure that knowledge is provided to decision-makers in a form they can use. **Projects websites** have been developed to disseminate research outputs and complementary materials, with varying degrees of timeliness and exhaustiveness⁵⁶. In absence of a specific template or common guidelines, projects have

⁴⁹ <http://roer4d.org/sp10-6>

⁵⁰ <http://dl4d.org/portfolio-items/an-impact-evaluation-of-the-eduapp4syria-prize-competition-digital-game-apps/>

⁵¹ <https://ocsdnet.org/projects/steps-america-latina-and-centro-de-investigaciones-para-la-transformacion-cenit/>

⁵² <https://ocsdnet.org/projects/kmeecs/>

⁵³ <https://ocsdnet.org/projects/natural-justice-empowering-indigenous-peoples-and-knowledge-systems-related-to-climate/>

⁵⁴ <http://lirneasia.net/2017/10/harsha-de-silva-lirneasia/>

⁵⁵ <http://www.openair.org.za/case-studies/entanglement-as-a-strategy-to-scale-digital-tech-hubs/>

⁵⁶ ROER4D provides both a link to the research outputs on each sub-project webpage as well as a consolidated list of resources -including research outputs, presentations, videos, etc.- with detailed references and hyperlinks. Not all projects are as systematic as ROER4D when it comes to harnessing and disseminating content.

been creative in designing the navigation metaphor of the websites and taxonomy as well as in offering content⁵⁷. Some projects websites for instance provide a bio and contact details of the researchers, which can contribute to increase their visibility and to facilitate direct contacts. To analyze the level of use of its website, LIRNEasia has installed a tool that displays statistics on the number of visitors, most accessed pages, etc. This is useful to identify what type of content attracts more attention and increase end user's engagement. Going one step further, ROER4D has recently installed a capability to locate users of ROER4D Open Data sets and to ask them about their intended use. This information can help ROER4D not just to find out if research outputs are accessed but also to understand exactly by whom as well as why and how re-users of ROER4D data are using them.

Research outputs were translated into a strong number of compelling **Policy Briefs** by RIA. Although produced less frequently, Open AIR's Briefing Notes are exemplary when it comes to follow IDRC's guidance for policy briefs⁵⁸. ROER4D recently produced a policy brief for the 2nd World OER Congress held in Slovenia, a very appropriate venue to start disseminating such tool. Several projects have conveyed research insights and outputs through **blog posts**, with an extensive number of contributions from LIRNEasia and from ROER4D. Several projects (ROER4D, OCSDNet) have also used **videos** to disseminate research findings to larger audiences. Due to capacity constraints and despite some exceptions, e.g. OCSDNet Open Science Manifesto, LIRNEasia dissemination in Singhal or Tamil, these outputs are primarily in English. A few informants indicated that this leads to reach smaller panels of policy makers and practitioners, for instance among technocrats in Latin America or French speaking countries.

Most projects had established a presence on **social media**, primarily through a Twitter account (e.g. OCSDNet, ROER4D, RIA, etc.) and/or through the account of project staff (e.g. Principal Investigators, Communications Officers, etc.). Twitter presence included also the account of the INASSA program, strong of 3500+ followers. A study done by ROER4D on its Twitter account network and a review by the evaluation of the followers of @INASSA showed a higher proportion of followers from the Global North. Conversely, followers of ROER4D's Facebook page were primarily from the Global South. This may suggest that additional analysis could be conducted across the program to identify the social media channels most appropriate to reach intended target audiences.

Face-to-face contacts with policy makers and practitioners were also identified as an effective means to convey research findings and new ideas to decision makers -and to influence them. Examples of participation in meetings with government officials and technocrats include RIA's speaking to parliamentary sessions on pricing of data in South Africa, MIDO's capacity building activities -confer supra- and meetings with Government officials in Myanmar, or consultations between Open AIR and the South African parliament around intellectual property. The evaluation assessed positively the Rapid Response activity within RIA and LIRNEasia that provided a limited, flexible budget to support and respond to requests for technical assistance. This has allowed senior members to travel to meet policy makers or senior technocrats and invest some time in adapting or developing a solution to a specific problem as an effective modality of research-to-influence. Other examples of face-to-face events would include

⁵⁷ RIA and OCSDNet for instance have modern website templates and clear layout that include documentation and entry points into their sub-projects and outputs.

⁵⁸ <https://www.idrc.ca/sites/default/files/idrcpolicybrieftoolkit.pdf>

dialogues between researchers and policy makers facilitated by joint seminars or conferences, such as the 2nd World Open Educational Resources (OER) Congress in Slovenia, where ROER4D established a contact with the South African Minister of Basic Education; or the IP Statistics for Decision Makers Conference in Sydney, where Open AIR insights/findings were discussed with CEOs and Directors General of all the major IP offices, including WIPO, EU, OECD, US, Canada, Singapore, Australia, plus the African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO), i.e. the Africa's leading IP organization.

Several INASSA funded projects (OD4D, ROER4D, RIA, DL4D, OCSDNet) were supported by **DECI-2** through different modalities that helped creating a stronger focus on and building capacities for reaching out to policy makers and practitioners. While the evaluation found DECI-2 to be a work in progress leaving room for improvement both on the communications and results monitoring sides, the example provided by the communication strategy developed by ROER4D was assessed as a good example of a formalized intent to convey research findings to decision-makers and other stakeholders. Interestingly, DECI-2's objectives have cascaded across ROER4D sub-projects with a section on 'communication strategy' added to the template of the second batch of ROER4D research proposals (impact studies in 2015).

Affecting policy regimes and practices

The evaluation found **strong evidence of a significant contribution of INASSA to affecting policy regimes** (e.g. in terms of the improvement of policies and legislative frameworks, or the adoption or implementation of practices emerging from research, etc.). About 68% of the informants who responded to the partners survey indicated a high or moderate contribution of INASSA to *"affecting policies or policy framework, e.g. in terms of the improvement of policies or legislative frameworks; the adoption or implementation of practices emerging from research, etc."* (Figure 10). The overall trend is slightly less positive (59%) for the respondents to the end-users' survey, with the provision of the low number of participants -particularly policy makers - and poor statistical robustness of this input. The program logframe has used an indicator to monitor achievements on this outcome component with the *number of new or reformed policies or programs that are informed by INASSA high quality research evidence in target countries*. In September 2017, 26 cases of new or reformed policies or programs were reported compared to an initial target of 20. Close to 35% of the cases were channeled by LIRNEasia, followed by ROER4D (23%), RIA (19%) and OD4D (12%). As observed for the previous outcome indicator, it is unlikely that the program can be exhaustive when it comes to monitoring such indicator. Furthermore, it should be noted that this quantitative indicator hides a wide range of cases with varying development outcomes, some very locals and quite narrow and others reaching out to national or regional levels.

The evidence reviewed and collected by the evaluation shows a prevalence of policy and practice changes in the thematic areas of governance and education, but with some successful achievements still found in science and entrepreneurship. A synthesis of INASSA outcomes across the four target sectors of the program could highlight:

- **Governance:** INASSA projects activities and outputs have affected policies in various ways. The results of LIRNEasia's broadband Quality of Service Experience study, which were used to respond to public consultations on broadband in the **Philippines** conducted by the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), were used to inform

the broadband policy and regulation in the country⁵⁹. In **Sri Lanka**, LIRNEasia Big Data Research has been on the Government's Expert Group advising on the Western Region Megapolis Planning Project (WRMPP), a long-term plan intended to develop the Western Province⁶⁰. Transportation related insights from LIRNEasia's ongoing research are being utilized as inputs to inform the development of the plan. In September 2017, The Development Bureau of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU – BDT) used research from RIA's household surveys to inform the development of more inclusive ICT price basket (IPB) benchmarking indicators⁶¹ and methodology that inform how countries are benchmarked. **All member states** will adopt the methodology in 2018. The **African Union** was about to create a pro IP regulation agency that would limit intellectual materials. Open AIR wrote an article in the UK journal of Intellectual Property and carried advocacy work that led the network to convey its perspectives/insights at an AU meeting. The policy was put on hold as the AU decided to get more information, and then changed to become more open and better reflective of the African culture⁶².

- **Education:** In **India**, ROER4D partners from IT for Change (IT4C) developed and implemented an innovative OER-based teacher professional development methodology for collaborative creation of open educational resources. IT4C has worked with over 15,000 teachers from 6,000 schools in 34 districts across the state of Karnataka. This model has resulted in the publishing of more than 5,000 educational resources. The model has been replicated in Telangana with 2,000 teachers from 1,000 schools and work has been carried out to develop a five-year plan to cover all teachers (~37,000). A series of workshops was also delivered, and advice provided to Assam state on establishing OER portals and scaling the model on behest of the state government. Furthermore, the Indian National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT) requested IT4C to support the implementation of a National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER), making IT4C a partner on the NROER project. In addition, during their ROER4D sub-project work, the Sub-Project 5 team held many workshops on OERs with a wide variety of universities. From this, they began getting requests from other universities, and have since helped ten universities to develop their own OER institutional policy, and four have adopted the OER policies so far. As this began to generate interest, India's federal government requested IT4C to develop a higher education OER policy for all of India. In March 2017, IT4C held a national consultation, and subsequently drafted a policy which is currently under consideration. This policy, if enacted, would impact more than 700 universities in India⁶³. In **Sri Lanka**, the Principal Investigator of ROER4D Sub-Project 10.6 drafted an OER policy for the country. An implementation plan is being finalized alongside the Sri Lankan Ministry of Education. The federal government has given their support (and blessing) for the

⁵⁹ <http://lirneasia.net/2017/04/quality-of-internet-debate-philippines/>

⁶⁰ <http://lirneasia.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Lokanathan-DhakaU-170203.pdf>

⁶¹ https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/events/ethiopia2015/10-RIA_household_business_model_surveys.pdf

⁶² <http://www.openair.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/WP-5-IPRs-and-Innovation-Assessing-ARIA-VIII.pdf>

⁶³ <https://www.itforchange.net/input-to-karnataka-state-education-policy-karnataka-knowledge-commission>

process to continue⁶⁴. At local level, the Open University of Sri Lanka started actively engaging with OER practices with its engagement with this project. In **Fiji**, an OER policy was recently adopted⁶⁵ at the University of the South Pacific (USP), and its development has involved members of the ROER4D network. The Pro Vice-Chancellor of Flexible Learning and Director of the Centre for Flexible Learning at USP and Co-Lead Researcher of Sub-project 10.6 led the drafting of the policy in consultation with a range of stakeholders at USP and abroad. The Lead Researcher of ROER4D Sub-project -an Education Specialist from the Commonwealth of Learning- facilitated the OER policy development workshop at USP. The Open Educational Resources (OER) Policy provides direction for the adoption and use of OER increase access to, and support high quality teaching and learning at USP.

- **Science:** INASSA has contributed to affect open science policies and inclusive practices. In **South Africa**, the OCSDNet team was able to engage with the research ethics boards from two academic institutions, to develop more locally appropriate models of ethical clearance that was more relevant and acceptable to vulnerable indigenous communities, based on engagement with those communities⁶⁶. With the *Conseil Africain et Malgache de l'Enseignement Supérieur* (CAMES) in **Burkina Faso**, OCSDNet signed a partnership agreement to create a **pan African** scientific open archive⁶⁷.
- **Entrepreneurship:** Among other outcomes, INASSA projects have affected policies and institutional frameworks supportive of entrepreneurship. In **Sri Lanka**, LIRNEasia was able to influence the Government that had imposed a tax on data services that was negatively impacting MSMEs in particular and the tax was rolled back⁶⁸. In **South Africa**, Open AIR contributes to strengthening makers and maker spaces⁶⁹, i.e. spaces for entrepreneurs to set up new products. Support has included the organization of trainings and creation of a network in the country to the consolidate the whole system. This has raised the profile of tech hubs as key institutions that government should procure services from in building digital government.

Fostering an enabling environment

While not necessarily spelled out in the Theory of Change, several intermediate outcomes have contributed to foster an enabling environment⁷⁰ conducive to policy influence. Work on some of these areas could be continued to facilitate further research uptake.

The modalities of intervention of the program - confer also sections on Research Quality and on Capacity Building - have contributed to increase the **visibility and credibility** of the researchers and therefore their capability/opportunities to inform and influence policies and practices. The impact pathways of several projects (e.g. ROER4D in Sri Lanka, India, Chile, and South Africa;

⁶⁴ <http://oasis.col.org/handle/11599/2360>

⁶⁵ https://wiki.creativecommons.org/images/1/13/Fiji_OER_National_Policy_Final.pdf

⁶⁶ <http://natural-justice.blogspot.fr/2015/12/recognizing-rights-of-communities-and.html>

⁶⁷ <http://journals.openedition.org/rfsic/3292>

⁶⁸ <http://lirneasia.net/2016/12/msme-research-tabled-in-sri-lanka-parliament/>

⁶⁹ <https://www.openair.org.za/open-air-hosts-south-african-maker-movement-workshop/>

⁷⁰ During the preliminary findings workshop, INASSA staff conveyed components that would be descriptive of an enabling environment, such as partnerships, skills, funding, credibility, etc.

LIRNEasia in Sri Lanka; RIA in South Africa) show instances where researchers were identified as credible experts and were consulted by decision makers as an outcome of their participation in the program. Other factors have certainly contributed also to this achievement, which cannot be attributed solely to INASSA. But the evaluation identified in several cases a causality chain between the inputs provided by the program, their effect on the visibility of the researchers, and an involvement in policy changes. However, the extent to which this responded to an explicit, well-paved, and specifically capacitated intent in the program, projects, and research proposals was not entirely clear to the evaluation.

Building and nurturing **relationships** with decision makers is among the effective means implemented by INASSA projects to influence policies and practices. LIRNEasia for instance devotes lot of attention and efforts to informal relationship building, e.g. inviting key people to meetings or presentations, continual checking, etc., was always looking for how to connect and engage different policy influencers and policy makers. As another example, MIDO organized capacity development workshops for government officials. This helped to build trust and relationships with technocrats, which proved useful to deliver additional advisory support and influence policy making. RIA's leverage of its alumni network (e.g. at ITU, WIPO, etc.) or Open AIR's fellows (e.g. ARIPO) provide also interesting examples of a social approach to bridge research with policy making. Similarly, the leverage by some researchers of their connections with former colleagues, policy networks, or influential INGOs (e.g. ROER4D with COL, Open Policy Network) illustrates another path to access decision makers. The question of how to concretely foster or be more systematic at leveraging such mechanisms to build people-centered relationships between researchers and decision makers has not been always explicitly addressed in projects proposals. The evaluation could not assess precisely if that originated from the very nature and aim of a given research, its surrounding institutional framework, or limited consideration to the behavioral and social aspects of change processes -confer also the section on Capacity Building.

Some projects strongly committed to the objective of influencing policies developed and provide a **portfolio of services** that amplify -or complement- research activities. One example regards the above-mentioned capacity development activities delivered to policy makers by LIRNEasia/MIDO, or the workshops for makers and entrepreneurs organized by Open AIR. Another example regards the advisory support, quite like consulting sometimes, provided to decision makers to facilitate research uptake. This would include MIDO's support to the Government in Myanmar; RIA's drafting of national policies and legislations in South Africa; ROER4D's drafting of OER policies in India and Sri Lanka; Open AIR's participation in the drafting team on intellectual property reforms with the Department of Trade and Industry in South Africa. RIA and LIRNEasia referred also to the leverage of a budget for Rapid Response activity⁷¹ to facilitate provision of technical assistance. According to various informants, these services help to blend scientific evidence with experiential knowledge and to facilitate translation of research findings into policies. Simultaneously, other researchers pointed out the need to remain independent from government bodies to keep research to the highest integrity and quality standards. Therefore, expectations and approaches about becoming a "go-to" expert or organization did not appear to be equally understood by grantees, who may benefit from sharing experiences and lessons learned across projects about the range of services provided to

⁷¹ Grantees referred to IDRC as the only funder providing the flexibility to seize policy windows through a Rapid Response Program.

support the adoption of research findings. On a same stance, IDRC may benefit from “codifying” the range of support modalities availed to partners and end-users in the form of “service lines” or “signature services” to better evidence its program level strategies and specific contributions to partners’ activities.

Several projects have set up **partnerships** or initiated institutional collaborations to influence policies and practices. LIRNEasia offers a case example of anchoring research development and dissemination into a web of partners, including the media, private sector actors, government agencies, etc. Recognizing the leverage effect of institutional partnerships, Open AIR has concluded a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ARIPO to provide research outputs to that organization and support the development of their policy instruments. In South Africa, Open AIR is also establishing an agreement with the Academy of Science and Technology, which works with State organizations across the country. This agreement is expected to escalate Open AIR’s research nationally, to give the network a stronger role in data collection and implementation, and to place it in a better position to inform science and impact technology policy. Other examples could refer to OD4D’s collaboration with OGP or with the UN World Data Forum; or the participation of UNESCO at the inception workshop of DL4D and forthcoming results dissemination event. Cases can be conveyed also of an indirect influence on resource mobilization, for instance with SAIDE, a NGO involved in a ROER4D sub-project, that received funding from the Hewlett Foundation to build OER capacity and support the development of academic skills in 5 universities in South Saharan Africa; or with the grant provided by the Head Foundation to a DL4D sub-project in Indonesia (Micro-climate studies in a STEM-based curriculum using open-source hardware and software) to scale-up the approach to new locations. While effective, these partnerships were frequently reported to be opportunistic rather than mapped and embedded in the initial design of some research projects. Informants pointed out that formal collaborations with ministries (e.g. Ministry of Science, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Telecommunications, etc.) or contacts early on with relevant UN agencies or NGOs and funding partners -e.g. foundations- could help create stronger institutional gravitas to some projects, facilitate transfer of research findings to partners or NGOs, foster interdisciplinarity and systemic approaches⁷², etc. Not every project / sub-project may be a good candidate for a partnership strategy (e.g. different strategic intent, capacity requirements, etc.). but projects aiming to change policies and practices may find it beneficial.

3.4. Network and Think Tank Modalities

The INASSA program has used two main project implementation modalities. One which uses networks as the structures and mechanisms for delivering intended results. The other is through individual organizations referred to as ‘think-tanks’, with a more centralized structure. This dual implementation approach is consistent with the two larger programs, ‘Information and Networks’ (2010-2015) and ‘Networked Economies’ (2016-2020) in which INASSA is embedded,

⁷² When considering the “bigger picture”, growth in ODA over the last five years has been accompanied with a move from targeted technical assistance primarily addressing locally contained problems to more ambitious, multi-sectoral programs that seek to address **systemic** constraints, often of a regional or even global nature. Many of the development donors have reduced the number of countries and programs they provide funding for, leading to larger, more complex programs which require broader partnerships. Confer OECD. 2015. *Multilateral Aid 2015: Better Partnerships for a Post-2015 World*. OECD Publishing. Paris.

but possibly has been more explicit, even a design choice, for the INASSA portfolio. One of the ‘learning’ aspects of this evaluation refers to critically examining both modalities, as this will inform future programming. The evaluation attempted to answer: **(i) How did the modality of projects (network- vs. institution- led) contribute (or not) to achieving project outcomes?; (ii) What worked and what did not?; and (iii) How could the modalities be improved?**

The type of modality (network or think-tank) is seldom determinant of their operational behavior, i.e. think-tanks may exhibit substantial networking, and network researchers may have limited interactions

- INASSA networks were generally more effective for field-building and think-tank modalities more adept for policy uptake. Both modalities show similar results on research quality and for research capacity development.
- Few characteristics found to be consistently attributable to specific modalities.
- No particular guidance or strategy provided to network-implemented projects.
- Service projects (e.g., ‘DECI-2’, ‘Systematic Reviews’) were a source of valuable support and enhanced capacities for part of the INASSA portfolio.
- There were low levels of interaction across projects, particularly sustained interaction (e.g. collaborative actions).

Modalities and their contributions to program outcomes

The program overview section listed the projects reviewed by this evaluation. Of these, five were implemented via the network modality⁷³, the remaining six via the two so-called ‘think-tanks’, LIRNEasia and RIA. The main program delivery mechanism were research networks, which accounted for approximately CAD 7.4M, compared to CAD 3.8M via the think-tanks.

The **network modality** referred to research networks based on variations of a ‘hub-spoke’ or radial configuration, i.e., with a coordinating hub that managed the work of a number of researchers at various locations. According to the INASSA program document (p. 15), this modality would be chosen for some projects because of their adequacy for (i) exposure to experiences in various countries on a given research subject, which facilitates comparability, (ii) strengthening research excellence via mentorship and other capacity development arrangements, and (iii) knowledge sharing among researchers and organizations.

The **think-tank** modality was not explicitly identified in the program document, but in INASSA’s context they were existing organizations that combine substantial research capacities with an effective extent of exposure to policy processes. The program involved them in projects where policy influence was considered a dominant outcome and/or the project dealt with more mature topics (e.g. broadband costs, coverage). Both LEARNasia and RIA are presently ‘go-to

⁷³ ROER4D, DL4D, SIRCA III, OCSNet and Open AIR. Additional network-implemented projects, not directly examined by the evaluation but taken into account for the program-wide look, were OD4D and SEED.

organizations' with strong regional recognition in Asia-Pacific and South-Saharan Africa, respectively.

Networks were mainly used by INASSA as vehicles of project-delivery over their potential roles as agents of change⁷⁴, although some actions were taken to enhance the latter role (e.g., support on communications, and synthesis/reviews). Network project managers did not receive specific guidance about network management; some of them were managing a project network for the first time. They expressed the complexities of their network environments and some remarked that they would have appreciated some assistance from the program on that front. One project manager indicated that a DECI-type project providing support on network management or services would have been welcome. Projects like ROER4D and OCSDNet actually carried out network mapping and analysis to examine their connections and possibilities for collaboration.

This resonates with the findings of a **previous evaluation** on I&N networks (Lipson, 2015), about the absence of an explicit network strategy at the program level and the limited guidance provided to the hubs contributing to limitations found on I&N network performance⁷⁵. Moreover, new networks created essentially for project implementation (most of the ones in INASSA) tend to face challenges related to their governance, resilience and sustainability, in addition to the complexities normally found in network management. One option would be to seek partnerships with existing networks in some cases, if they could be aligned with a project's purpose.

The graphs below present the **results of the partners survey** about their perceptions on the extent to which their projects contributed to the **program's 3 output areas**, grouped by modalities. The informants indicated that neither modality had a clear, consistent edge over the other on research quality⁷⁶ and for research capacity development, with the difference in most sub-categories being minor. In terms of policy influence, however, think-tanks showed consistently higher values across all categories, with significant though not large differences. So, as predicted by the IDRC program team, think-tanks did perform better on the policy influence dimension of INASSA's work.

⁷⁴ While it's was acknowledged that the sectors where INASSA sought to bring about change (education, governance, creative industries, science) all have networks at work within them, the investment of effort and resources to purposefully leverage program networks for change was seen as excessive and outside the possibilities of the program.

⁷⁵ A lengthy, substantive discussion about the needs and elements of network management was included in an IDRC book published in 2000 from its Global Public Policy project, "Critical Choices: The United Nations, Networks and the Future of Global Governance - Ch.3 The Care and Tending of Networks." The authors expressed that despite the situational and opportunistic nature of network, they need careful cultivation and nurturing. <https://www.idrc.ca/sites/default/files/openebooks/271-6/index.html>

⁷⁶ The RQ+ assessment carried out by the evaluation also did not indicate significant differences in research quality between think tanks and networks. The assessment was carried out at the research output level (sample of 31 outputs), while the questions posed to the informants were about their projects overall.

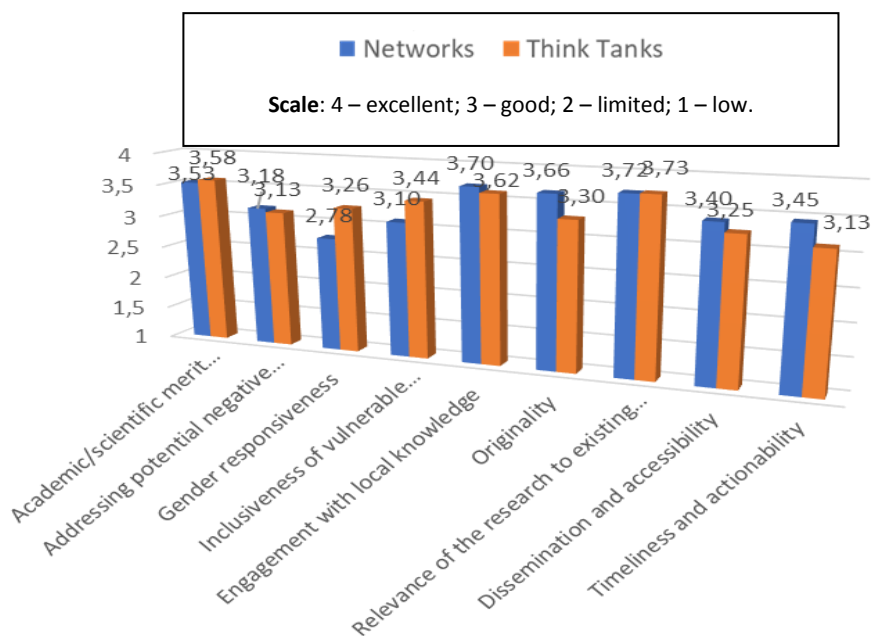
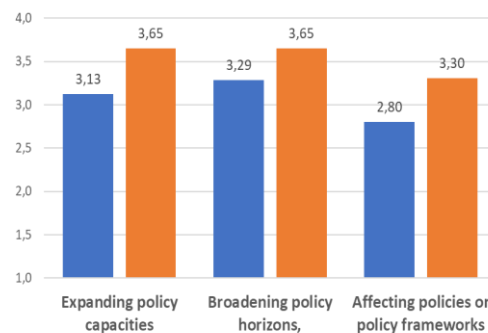
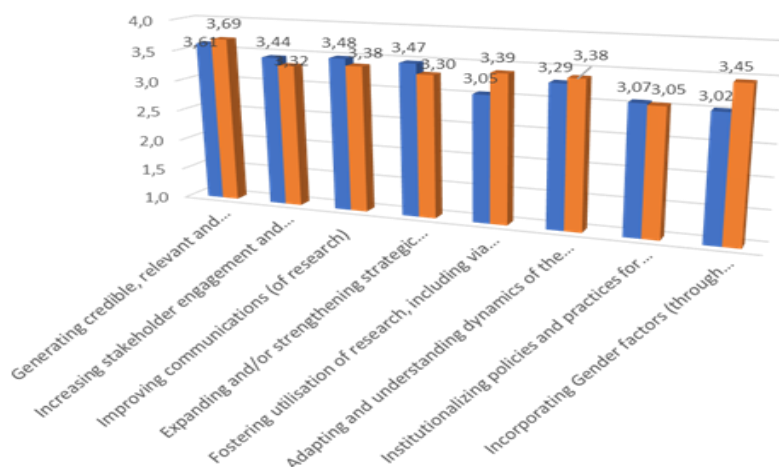


Fig 9. Contributions from the two main project modalities to INASSA's output areas. From the top down, contributions (a) to research capacity development; (b) to policy influence; (c) to research quality.⁷⁷

What to look for in project modalities?

Given the expressed interest of the NE program to revisit their modalities strategy for upcoming programming cycles, the evaluation examined in some depth how the modalities operated. The findings suggest that adequately assessing their individualized behavior may be more effective to program design and performance than to base expectations on the type or name of the modality.

⁷⁷ Source: Partners survey

A set of **potential characteristics** attributed to one or the other implementation modality were identified, drawing from interviews, project documentation, site visits and past evaluations. They are listed in the following table, and were placed either under networks or think-tanks based on which modality they were most often linked to. For example, networks are generally seen as natural environments for information and knowledge sharing, whereas think-tanks appear to host more advanced, ‘hard’ research.

IMPLEMENTATION MODALITY CHARACTERISTICS		
Role in project outcomes	Networks	Think-tanks
Contributions	Field-building Capacity development Knowledge sharing Collaboration Process as part of the outcomes Flexibility/modularity Openness (consistency with)	Policy uptake Research quality (‘hard’ research) Work over longer periods Branding recognition Identity (sense of belonging) Thematic diversity (response to demands)
Constraints	Management complexity Inefficiency Sustainability challenges Fragmentation (small actions) Cultural/language barriers	Set institutional agendas Turnover (in Global South) Structural inflexibility (structural)

Table 3: Implementation Modality Characteristics

However, **on closer scrutiny, it was harder to maintain or even justify such differentiations** when examining them in terms of actual findings from the INASSA program. Very few of those characteristics could be strongly linked to one modality or the other; examples of exceptions in actual institutional behaviors often emerged. Continuing with the examples above, knowledge sharing levels at LEARNasia could rival those of any of the INASSA networks. Likewise, the quality of research in many ROER4D outputs would compare well with those from the two think-tanks.

While similar arguments could be made for the majority of the above characteristics, the evaluation did find some characteristics which seemed to be consistently related to each modality (highlighted in bold in the table). **Networks** (i) were more effective for field-building, involving larger number of research in different countries; (ii) exhibit greater coherence with Open approaches, as they enable greater and more diverse participation; and (iii) are inherently hard to manage, particularly as instruments of project implementation. **Think-tanks**, on the other hand, (i) proved more adept at policy/practice research uptake, (ii) have existed for longer periods⁷⁸ and could be expected to continue operating for a good number of years; and (iii) tend to have firmly set institutional agendas that may not always adapt to specific program/project needs. Realizing these modality-driven attributes can help to better choose a given modality (or other ones besides these two) during program design and in establishing partnerships.

⁷⁸ RIA was founded in 2003, LIRNEasia in 2004. Both were supported by IDRC since their beginnings.

In going forward to future programs, however, the evaluation finds that it is likely more valuable to examine the specific **behavioral patterns** of implementation modalities/instruments in order to properly match/adapt them to a specific project, than to focus on choosing one modality over the other. For it's not what's in a name or how modalities are supposed to function, but what behavior they will exhibit when implementing a project. For example, if research capacity development is central to a project, then regardless of whether a network or a think-tank is carrying it out, program managers would be able to assess (a) what conditions are needed for successful capacity development, and (b) whether any specific support should be provided to that partner (so that it can fulfill that function satisfactorily). It might even be determined that a different modality option is altogether preferable, such as service project (more about their role later).

A RIA informant, while discussing features of think-tanks and networks, elaborated on her perception of a mixed identity of her organization: *"We are a hybrid in the sense as ... we started as a research network and a research policy centre at Witwatersrand University Graduate School of Public and Development Management. We grew from the household surveys and the combined projects (...) in these projects we operate more as a think tank. As a think-tank we'd be providing solutions, prodding evidence, and trying to drive the industry for development... As a network we are working with people working with other researchers, other think-thanks' people and other people who are established in the industry. Having both means that they are working together"*

A strategic dimension of operational behavior refers to **networking**, i.e., the extent, type and frequency of active connections between INASSA program actors, within and across projects, and also with outside organizations. The interactions or transactions within a program, whether collaborative, resource-oriented or communicational, can have a significant effect on its implementation.

Networking occurred with variable frequencies and intensities in all INASSA projects. It was certainly not limited nor more prevalent in the networks: in fact, both think-tanks refer to themselves as networks, too.⁷⁹ Information access, knowledge sharing, collaborative research, joint proposals, access to policy-makers, common training resources; all involve or can improve by thoughtful networking. An informant expressed some of the potential in their specific circumstances:

"If other INASSA projects have worked in similar countries than ROER4D and have access to policy makers / networks, connecting other projects with those networks or making introductions to those would be another suggestion [to improve research to policy influence]. So trying to leverage all the projects running, the ones that are successful at bidding and entering policy, what do they do? What do they have? Who do they know? And how do they communicate it, the change? That could be quite useful. Because the problem in ROER4D has been lack of access to those networks. When you try to contact people they just do not respond

⁷⁹ "RIA consists of a network of researchers in 20 African countries". <https://researchictafrica.net/vision-and-mission/>

LIRNEAsia: out of 40 people that work with the organization, 15 do so in their Colombo office, the rest are located around the globe; *"With a small administrative core, much of our work is facilitated through extended networks across the Asia Pacific"*. <http://lirneasia.net/about/>

because you are not part of their circle of informants who are helping to shape the policy environment.”

It would therefore help a future program for developing **enabling conditions** for success, that it assesses, understands and supports partners’ networking capacities in relation to project objectives, as well as it facilitates productive interactions among projects. This may be reflected in an explicit program networking strategy.

Exploring INASSA ecosystem connections

This section presents findings about **networked behavior at the program level** related to interactions and relationships between projects across INASSA. To complement information gathered via interviews, site visits and documental research, a simplified social network analysis (SNA) exercise was carried out⁸⁰.

Overall, the INASSA ecosystem did not appear to exhibit a high level of connectedness across the portfolio, with information/knowledge exchange occurring substantially more often and widely than inter-project collaboration. On the other hand, the program document had not outlined an explicit approach towards productive connections among projects, so there was probably no direct intent in delivering a highly networked program.⁸¹

In the analysis, the **nodes** were the projects, and there were two types of **connections**: resource exchange (information or knowledge resources either provided or received from another project), and collaboration (i.e., an instance of joint activity). The INASSA ecosystem included three **types of projects profiles**: networks, think-tanks, and ‘service-providers’ (such as ‘DECI-2’ and ‘Building Capacities for Systematic Reviews’). The two graphs below illustrate basic networking behavior (more extensive analysis is shown in annex B).

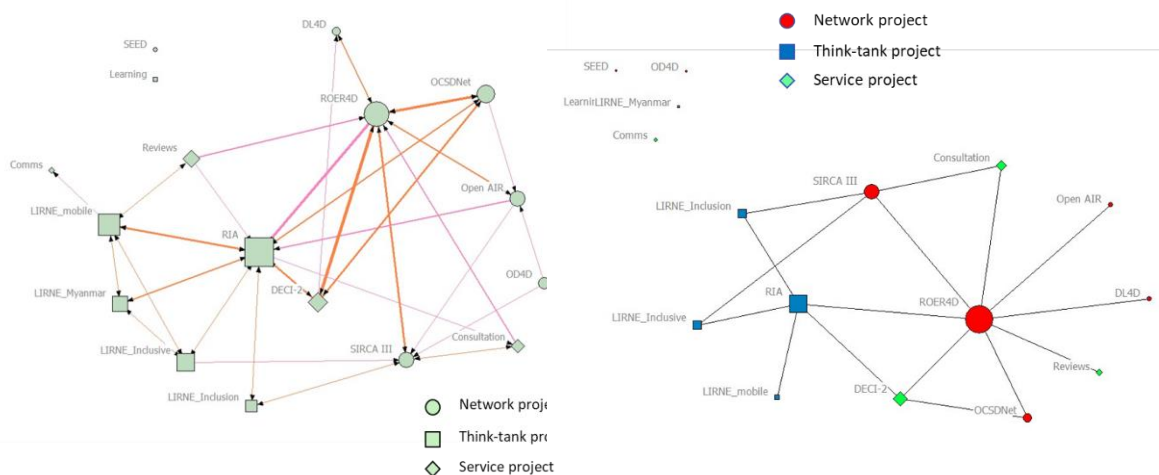


Fig 10 - Basic network representation graphs for Resource Exchange (left)

⁸⁰ Social network analysis is a methodology that serves to map and assess the relationships and flows between objects (e.g., people, organizations, computers, etc.) in a group. It is useful to help better understand the dynamics of an ecosystem such as INASSA’s. See Annex B.

⁸¹ It did however express value in program-level learning across research networks and knowledge sharing, as well as for breaking disciplinary silos and exploring relations between various outputs and thematic areas.

and Collaboration (right)

The graph on the left in Fig 10 provides a network representation of **resource exchange** between projects. One of the results is that RIA and ROER4D appear as the most central projects, i.e. with the highest number of connections, each well connected with projects of their own modality. Some extent of clustering around modalities is also visible, with a higher density of connections among projects with the same modality. Overall, this network representation of the INASSA ecosystem indicates that is not highly connected, with a total of 49 connections among 17 projects (of 272 possible). But it is a 'cohesive' network representation, since on average it only takes about two (2) connections to reach another project

The graph on the right corresponds to a mapping of **collaborations** across the program, with the links indicating one or more instances of collaboration. This network representation is significantly less connected than the one for resource exchange, to be expected, since it requires more effort to collaborate than to share some information or knowledge resource. RIA and ROER4D are even more central than before (and ROER4D shows more links than RIA), and five projects (almost 30%) did not show any connections. It is similarly cohesive with the resource exchange representation, also about two (2) links to reach another project.

Related findings about the INASSA ecosystem include:

- The DECI-2 and Systematic Reviews service projects, besides providing useful capacity building functions in their own right, were found to have interesting bridging positions between modalities.
- Other sources of information were also pointed at low levels of interaction among projects. Project partners highly valued the instances of inter-project networking that came up (such as partners meetings⁸²), and some of them indicated that they would have liked to have more opportunities to work together.
- There other types of valuable interactions beyond the more substantive, technical activities. For instance, (i) OCSDNet was inspired by ROER4D's experience with DECI-2, which led to involve DECI-2 and improving its communications and monitoring capacities, (ii) Open AIR helped the new ROER4D management on administrative issues, and (iii) RIA and LIRNEasia share board members.

3.5. Program Management

Clear, thoughtful program management was critical for the program to function smoothly and effectively with 16 complex and unique projects. The evaluation attempts to answer the following questions related to program implementation and management: *To what extent was the implementation of INASSA efficient and economical, relative to its purpose and intended outcomes? Were resources used efficiently to manage the projects and program? What have been the strengths and weaknesses of the program's management?) and/or the value proposition of funding?*

⁸² Such as the meeting in Cape Town in 2017 that brought several partners together to collaborate on the new IDRC book on 'Inclusive Openness' (to be published in 2018)

The INASSA program was efficient and economical in its implementation, with a strong, consistent focus on its overall purpose and intentions.

The INASSA team was highly in-tune and responsive to partners' needs and created a strong, trusting relationship in which there was space for risk taking and innovation; while less efficient with systematic monitoring and knowledge management.

- The INASSA team worked within the context of underlying tensions between partner and IDRC driven programming, as well as the inherent power dynamic between funders and recipients.
- Relationships were supportive and collaborative, with partners describing key elements of an enabling environment; though limited guidelines were developed to support partners in common management processes.
- Less priority was placed on 1) connecting partners across INASSA projects or with other stakeholders; and 2) standardized documentation.
- Additional monitoring system designed to meet DFID requirements created inefficiencies in program management.
- The team exhibited a strong commitment to on-going learning processes and improving programming.
- Limited gender-related results were evident, with more anticipated.
- Implementation was aligned with program and organizational objectives and leveraged resources well, demonstrating a strong Value Proposition.

The evaluation also focuses more specifically on the role of IDRC staff related to project outcomes, answering the questions: *To what extent was the role of the IDRC staff significant in contributing to project outcomes? (e.g., formative learning, meta-synthesis, network buildings, networking, building credibility/legitimacy of the field). How could these contributions be improved?*⁸³

Underlying inherent themes

Managing the program across networks and think tanks, there were a few underlying themes that were a constant tension for IDRC staff to consider in their decision-making processes.

One significant complication for the evaluation was how to assess a program that **functioned as an integral part of the core work** of the last two years of I&N and now currently with NE. INASSA did not function as a separate program and there was no intention of developing a value-add to participate specifically in the INASSA program rather than with NE. Therefore, as previously noted, the knowledge sharing and leveraging across projects was fairly limited.

⁸³ See recommendation 4.1 for areas of improvement.

Another theme is the tension between IDRC's commitment to **encourage locally driven, partner independence** with IDRC's commitment to **transparency and openness**. This tension emerges throughout the staff's decision making processes, challenged to find the appropriate balance. For program management, this translates into the balance between being flexible and responding to emerging, changing complex contexts with more systematic, structured guidelines and accountability.

Finally, there is an unavoidable **power dynamic** between those who are providing resources and influencing the direction of the work with those who are receiving the money and required to respond to the funder's requirements, if they are to receive the funds. IDRC does an excellent job of building a safe, open relationship with their partners so that this dynamic does not play a strong role.

These power dynamics also relate to the relationship between DFID and IDRC. During their long-standing relationship, they have built trust between them and DFID has allowed for the INASSA team to function fairly independently. However, there were three aspects where DFID strongly influenced the implementation of the program. The first was that DFID asked to focus the work only in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, in the beginning stages, the program budget was cut back by approximately 30% (2.7M GBP), which led to a delay in starting and the elimination of the rights-based work identified in the ToC.⁸⁴ NE continued to fund that area of work outside of INASSA, because it felt it was integral in their work and overarching strategy. Another influence was the creation of a log frame and reporting specifically on value for money, which were not required by IDRC otherwise.

Supportive, collaborative relationships

The INASSA team, to facilitate its ability to achieve its ToC, described their approach during the preliminary findings workshop as identifying people with high potential and then creating a space or an enabling environment within which they can thrive. They began to define what they envisioned as an **enabling environment** for INASSA partners – flexibility, responsiveness, leadership or acting as thought leaders, prioritizing issues and committing resources to build solutions.

This approach resonated throughout the INASSA program, moving the relationship with partners well beyond simply a funding source. Program Officers were seen as well versed in the substance and contexts of their projects as well as the overall intention and strategic objectives of IDRC and NE. They described having the flexibility to manage their projects as they see fit, demonstrating their supervisor's support and trust in their abilities. In fact, the partner survey results show 73% of partners and researchers felt moderately to highly satisfied with IDRC staff's role as thought leaders (Figure 11).

Partners described a strong **supportive and collaborative** relationship with IDRC. They expressed a strong sense of mutual respect and individualized attention that was directly responsive to their local needs. Survey results reflect that over 65% of partners feel a moderate or high level of satisfaction in their institution's ability to contribute to INASSA programming and

⁸⁴ INASSA Annual Report, 21/11/2013 – 15/10/2014

in IDRC's timely decisions during changing circumstances. In the interviews, partners described strong team support from IDRC, not just from one individual.

Partners work in complex and ever changing contexts and a significant part of their ability to influence policy relies on their ability to be prepared with high quality, substantive research, establish strong relationships with policy makers and influencers, and respond to emerging and often immediate opportunities. A few partners strongly expressed the high value they place on their institutions self-determination and the usefulness of how INASSA responds to their needs and direction. In fact, 75% of partner survey respondents were moderately or highly satisfied with the alignment of INASSA's activities with their own institution's strategies and activities.

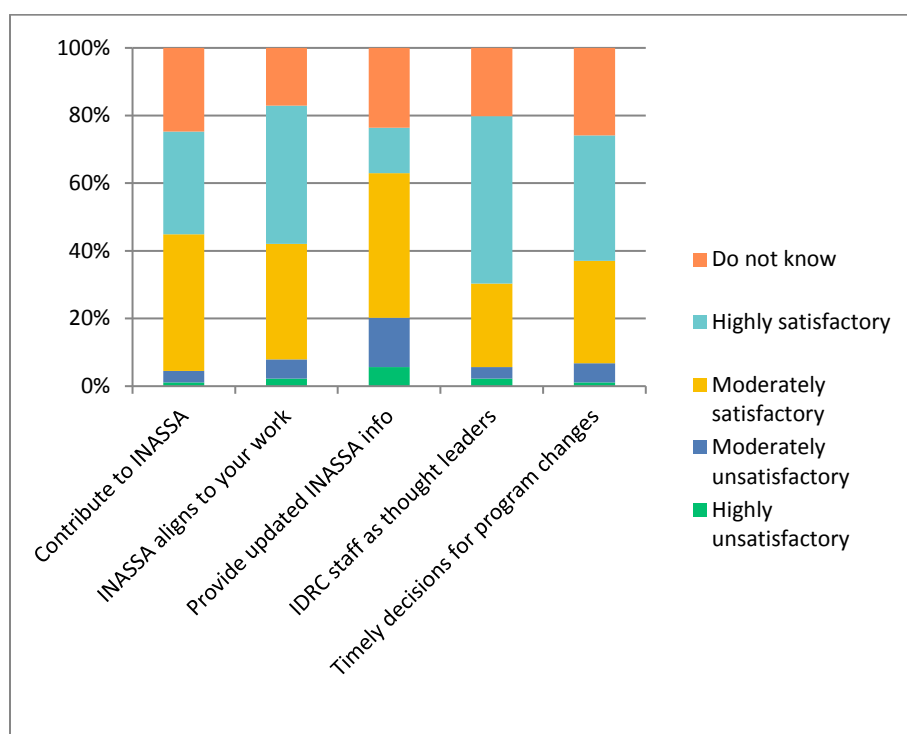


Figure 11: Partners' satisfaction with INASSA support and collaboration within their project

Program's support connecting with others

INASSA purposefully focused on the substantive work of their projects rather than developing a strong component to broadly build connections and relationships across projects and with stakeholders. Partners reported the strongest connections were at the meeting in Zanzibar, Tanzania with all projects represented and at CPRsouth conferences, where many participants came from a range of INASSA projects. INASSA also implemented two projects that were designed to specifically promote collaboration across projects through a particular purpose – learning the new methodology of systematic reviews and building partners' capacity in evaluation and communications. Partner survey results demonstrate a similar perspective, with only 40% moderately or highly satisfied with pooling resources across projects and less than

50% moderately or highly satisfied with the INASSA program helping to connect with IDRC, DFID or external resources.

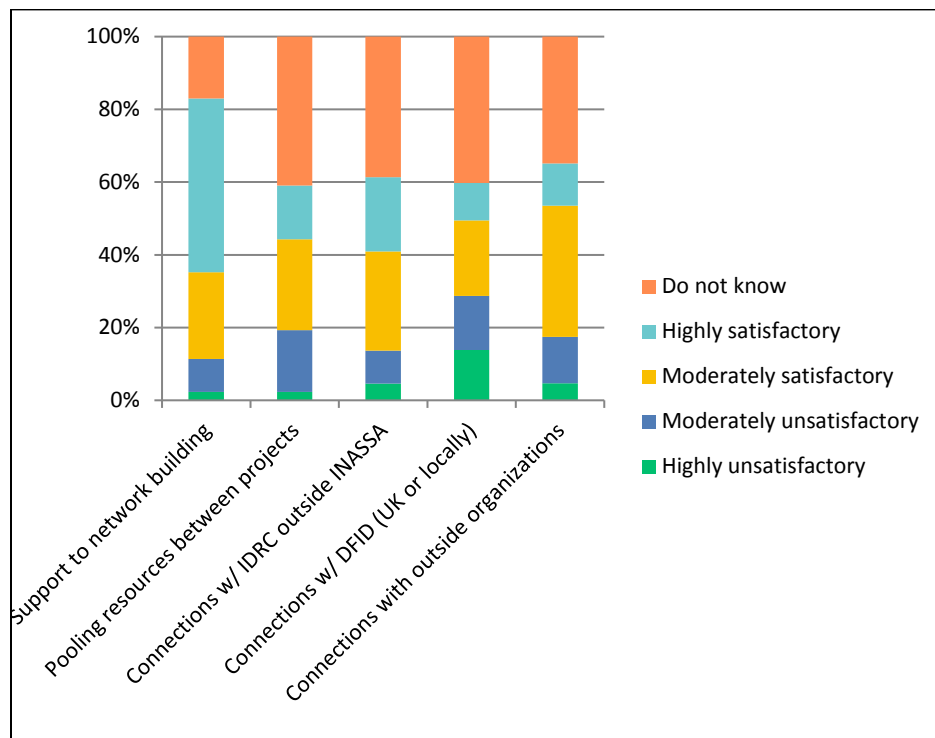


Figure 12: Partners' satisfaction with INASSA support in connecting outside of their projects

Standard guidelines for efficiency

Negotiating the appropriate balance of decision-making along the continuum of locally driven and IDRC driven is complex. Longer-standing IDRC partners were more comfortable with the freedom their relationship affords and were confident in meeting IDRC expectations. Newer partners or project managers reported frustration and less efficient project management due to a lack of clarity of IDRC expectations and limited sharing of lessons learned across projects.

Partners deeply appreciated the respectful and collaborative nature of their relationships, while some would have liked more structure and onboarding. This lack of systematic guidelines and training on the implementation processes, in some cases, caused up to a year or more for project managers to understand and gain proficiency in aspects like financial reporting and website design. In other cases, the lack of communications across projects limited their ability to solve common challenges more quickly, such as contract management, fluctuating exchange rates, researchers without bank accounts, etc.

Commitment to learning and improving

The INASSA team exhibited a genuine interest in **continual learning and improving**, which translated into on-going curiosity about each particular project's context, dedication to projects

focused on capacity building, and policies to encourage improved programming based on their learnings.

Being effectively responsive to local contexts required continual awareness and sensitivity to changing circumstances and understanding of emergent issues. This on-going learning, reflecting on how that learning applies to their work, and then taking evidence-based, meaningful actions is integral to the way that the team functions and allows for flexibility and creativity in their work. However, the decision-making process was often not systematized or documented.

The INASSA team reported that they have been utilizing evaluation processes to facilitate their learning through comprehensive, independent assessments of different components of their work. This is inline with their nuanced, individualized approach to program management. These evaluations helped to synthesize and analyze the data that was created for those particular topics.

An example of this is the **Gender Strategy** for Networked Economies, which was created based on recommendations from various previous IDRC evaluations and a stronger national political interest⁸⁵. The strategy was launched in 2016, after INASSA projects were already designed and underway, however, some results were evident with individual projects, depending on their context and history. For example, projects focusing on developing inclusive economies have a long history of working in depth with gender issues and others working in ICT in Africa have done excellent work in gender analysis, with less success in advocacy and carrying out gender-specific research.

In terms of the responsiveness of the project to gender equity and women's empowerment, the partners survey found that:

- 52% of partners only went so far as to include women in the project, though not specifically targeted
- Another 14% included women as a target group
- A minimal 3% reported focusing their work on women, but did not carry out a detailed analysis of gender relations
- While 12% incorporate a gender analysis in the context of overall research questions, and
- 17% contributed to a deeper understanding of gender inequality and have helped improve women's' lives or inform long-term practical changes in structural power relations, roles and norms that define the differentiated experiences of men and women.

While these results show that some efforts were being made, implementation of this strategy is anticipated to significantly move this forward. To help accomplish this, INASSA engaged Gender At Work, a research network focusing on cutting edge Gender and ICT issues.

Since this strategy was developed after INASSA projects were already designed, its impact on program implementation has been limited. Even so, the mere fact of emphasizing gender issues and requiring reporting on them from the projects has had some impacts for those partners who

⁸⁵ [Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy](#)

had already included gender in their work. For example LIRNEasia reported that because of highlighting more on gender in their reporting, they have expanded their connections to organizations focusing on gender issues. Similarly, 74% of end-users reported that INASSA partners' outputs had no or minor effect on gender equality and women's empowerment, which is in line with what partners reported about their responsiveness to these issues.

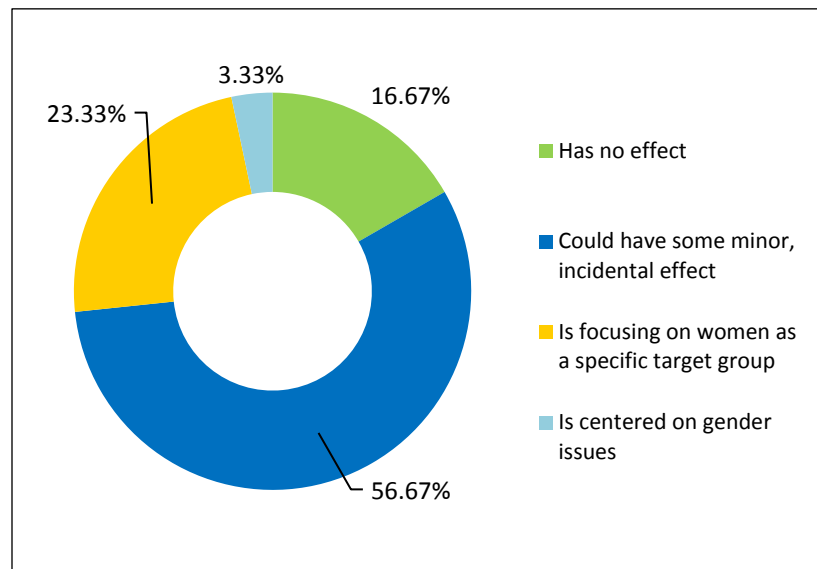


Figure 13: INASSA Outputs in Relation to gender equality and women's empowerment
(Source: Partners Survey)

Knowledge sharing and documentation of processes

The projects were active and produced a large number of outputs that benefited others, encouraged by the INASSA team's emphasis on the production of high quality, substantive work. As part of INASSA's locally-driven approach, sharing those outputs was appropriately the main responsibility of the partners. However, the INASSA team was responsible for organizing these outputs at a program level, and standardizing and documenting the monitoring of their impacts.

This explicit program level knowledge sharing and documentation was limited in success. For example, the digital library was incomplete, with many INASSA documents missing and the INASSA webpage at www.idrc.ca does not include all projects, which some said felt excluding. Sharing information or learning was at a deep, individualized level with each partner and ad hoc at the program level. There was a lack of codifying previous lessons learned or developing operational guidelines, such as these examples shared by partners: templates for developing project websites, managing contracts involving central or provincial government bodies, and transferring funds to grantees that do not have bank accounts, among others. In addition, there was no virtual platform that could serve to share information or discuss operational issues, post announcements, and facilitate substantive dialogue.

As previously mentioned, the INASSA team was dedicated to learning and improving. Documenting how these learnings were being applied and their success was also limited. One example was the DECI-2 project, which was dedicated to building communications and

utilization-focused evaluation capacity, and yet no monitoring process was developed to document the ways in which participants utilized their new skills. Even the evaluation processes that support program learning and reflection did not have in place a tracking system for recommendations after the management response is articulated.

The INASSA program is complex with a large number of unique projects. Although INASSA team and partners have strong, productive relationships, monitoring overall program management could be more efficient. The INASSA team created a separate monitoring and reporting system specifically designed to meet DFID's requirements. The log frame was useful in documenting the indicators, targets and milestones, informing analysis for annual reporting to DFID. The INASSA team tried to create a system that would be sufficient for DFID, while attempting to minimize any addition to partners' workloads. This resulted in a log frame that was mainly used for reporting purposes to DFID, along with limited monitoring of indicators and milestones informing their team reflections.

Given that IDRC does not use log frames, the INASSA team employed a nuanced and fluid monitoring and decision-making process aligned with IDRC requirements. This process provided in-depth understanding of the projects and their contexts. However, limited documentation of the process inhibited higher levels of transparency and institutional knowledge and learning. These two approaches reflect the underlying tensions the INASSA team balances between flexibility and standardization.

INASSA's value proposition

Overall, the INASSA program has a strong value proposition. The program was aligned with IDRC's strategic objectives, contributing to the organization's ability to achieve its goals. The program successfully leveraged resources within IDRC and each project, though only minimally leveraged expertise across projects. Every year, DFID assessed the program as a good value for money.

The INASSA program was directly **aligned with IDRC's strategic objectives**.⁸⁶ The projects centered around building environments and **leaders** capable of creating and seizing opportunities to influence and impact policy change and the development of new fields within ICT4D. The program invested efforts in developing trust and open dialogues so that partners felt comfortable taking risks to **experiment and innovate**, moving beyond what is already known. IDRC, through efforts that included INASSA, was seen as **the partner of choice** when it came to new, cutting edge issues in ICT4D that were not yet supported by others.

INASSA's **Theory of Change** (ToC) and general intention was developed based on I&N's program strategy, and then influenced the NE ToC that was designed two years later. INASSA, though administratively considered a separate program, operated as an integral part of I&N and then NE. Given that the program construct was for administrative purposes only, the more common uses for a ToC were not fully employed. The development and use of the ToC was not participatory, although it was inclusive of each project's work. The INASSA team intentionally did not share the ToC with partners to keep their connection to NE less complicated. Similarly, some partners reported not being aware of the program's ToC, limiting their ability to

⁸⁶ IDRC, Investing in Solutions, Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

intentionally support achieving the ToC. The broader INASSA team and partners were not collectively reflecting on the overarching framework as a way to build common understanding and ground their work. However, overall results show that the program's implementation was well aligned with its ToC and that of NE.

The INASSA program **leveraged the entire NE team** and in some projects leveraged funding from other sources. As an integral part of the NE program, the INASSA team extended beyond the few staff whose salaries was covered with INASSA funds. This seamless support across NE for the INASSA projects resulted in partners expressing a strong sense of support by the NE team and not just one or two individuals. INASSA also **leveraged its long-standing relationships**. IDRC and, more specifically the I&N/NE team, have been working with some of these partners for many years. This deep knowledge of each other's expectations and capacities, as well as trust and security in continued support.

Partners leveraged their pre-existing resources within universities and think tanks, avoiding the need to create new tools or structures, saving time and resources. As previously mentioned, there was **minimal leveraging of INASSA partners' expertise across projects**. The Systematic Review project was a unique example of how projects could work together to learn collaboratively and enrich their experiences with this cross-fertilization.

Finally, DFID has assessed the INASSA program as a good value for money in each of their annual reviews.⁸⁷ According to DFID, the program and projects have been economical with its investments in project activities, efficient with their use of funds to produce high quality research outputs, effective in the level of research uptake by academic agents of change and policy influencers, and improving the capacity of researchers from the global south.

3.6. Conclusions

Since its inception in September 2013, the INASSA program has effectively strengthened the evidence base of its thematic areas with high quality research, developed the capacity of researchers to produce high quality evidence and enhanced research uptake by national and international policy-makers and practitioners. Furthermore, the value proposition of the program was solid and durable when considering the program's theory of change and the organization's overall strategic objectives.

The modalities of intervention of INASSA have been largely localized and adapted by the projects to respond to specific contexts and needs. This has equipped the program with a richness of approaches, tools, and instruments that partners and researchers are eager to share and replicate (i.e. when responding to similar objectives and/or gaps). The management of large programs must account for the increased complexity related to its size and scope. Operational responses to delegation vs. control or to innovation vs. systematization are rarely "one size fits all".

The table below provides a tentative disaggregation of the program outcomes per type of stakeholder.

⁸⁷ DFID, Annual Review of the INASSA Programme, 2014-2017.

Stakeholder group	Contributions of the INASSA program observed by the evaluation
IDRC	• Program objectives (networked economies) and corporate strategic goals • Enlargement of the knowledge base • Network development • Enhanced visibility
DFID	• Program objectives (networked economies) and corporate strategic goals • Enhanced visibility
Networks grantees (institutions/universities)	• Enhanced visibility • New institutional knowledge and capacities • Enlarged network of partners
Networks grantees and sub-grantees (NGOs)	• Capacity development • Improved quality of research outputs • Stronger credibility and visibility • Improved readiness and enlarged policy windows • Expanded partnerships, relationships, and networks • Stronger capabilities to inform / legitimate field projects
Networks hubs (PI, PM, project staff in universities)	• Capacity development, e.g. DECI-2 • Enhanced experience in applying for research grants • Stronger skills for managing research projects • Expanded partnerships
Grantees and sub-grantees (think tanks)	• Capacity development • Improved quality of research outputs • Stronger credibility, visibility, and institutionalization • Improved readiness and enlarged policy windows • Expanded partnerships, relationships, and networks • Stronger capabilities to inform / legitimate field projects
Sub-grantees (academics)	• Capacity development, e.g. impact studies, methodologies, knowledge base • Improved quality of research outputs • Stronger credibility and visibility • New or strengthened relationships and networks
Policy-makers and practitioners	• Capacity development, e.g. workshops, advice, knowledge outputs • Enlarged policy / practice horizons, i.e. research and other outputs such as baseline surveys, comparative experiences, benchmarks, policy briefs, etc. • Policy / practice developments, e.g. laws, curricula, apps, etc.-
UN agencies	• Enlarged policy / practice horizons, i.e. informed by research and other outputs such as baseline surveys, comparative experiences, benchmarks, policy briefs, etc. • Policy / practice developments, e.g. regulations, methodologies, etc.

Table 4. Outcome Contribution of INASSA per type of Partner or Stakeholder

4. Recommendations

INASSA has shown significant achievements in its five years of implementation. This is partially due to its forming part of a programmatic continuum, seeking similar goals and involving some common stakeholders, in some cases over a decade-long relationship. From that perspective, we hope that the following recommendations help inform the NE team at this midway point of their program cycle, as well as for future program development.

The recommendations address implementation in an increasingly complex context where collaborative partnerships, adaptive capacity, and a systems approach can be beneficial. They also address the tensions between systematization and responsiveness where the current model provides maximum flexibility to engage in emerging issues without needing to rigorously monitor or formalize processes and a more systematic approach could support the ability to scale and increase efficiencies and effectiveness. Given that the INASSA program is not expected to continue, we have taken the results from this evaluation and translated them into recommendations for future Networked Economies programming.

4.1. Improve strategic, effective and efficient implementation through further utilizing systematic program management tools

The INASSA team consistently collects qualitative information about their projects, providing each PO with a deep understanding of the complexities of their projects. This type of understanding supports the program's substantive, sensitive and flexible management style. **Further systematization of key aspects of program management** is recommended to improve consistency, accountability, evidence-based decision-making, and institutional knowledge. The INASSA program's successful management relies on the tremendous knowledge and skills of each individual staff member. This enables strong flexibility and responsiveness to the shifts and changes of project implementation.

Developing and utilizing a more **comprehensive Theory of Change** or articulated change logic model could support more strategic program implementation. The ToC should specifically articulate the *root causes that drive the need for this program*. Incorporating more precise *intermediary outcomes* – such as building individual capacities so researchers become the go-to expert for policy influence – would clarify for staff and partners what they might expect to see or strive toward to help achieve the longer-term outcomes. And mapping distinct outcome pathways for different key stakeholder groups would facilitate a clearer understanding of the logic and roles that different stakeholders may play (for example, showing that academic networks are expected to contribute to the expansion of a field but not to influence policy).

Employing a participatory and iterative process would improve effectiveness by encouraging the development of a more comprehensive and evolving model grounded in local contexts, and a stronger common understanding and investment in the program's goals and how they will be achieved. Reflecting at key moments on the data collected through an improved monitoring system within the context of reviewing the ToC would enhance evidence-based decision-making and improve staff's sense of agency to act according to their understanding of the ToC. Utilizing

a system to measure results will facilitate use of evidence. These types of exercises also help to document how decisions are made, so that as staff changes occur, the knowledge is readily available about why key decisions and strategies are in place.

Project efficiency could be enhanced by creating a few key guidance notes outlining IDRC's expectations for common administrative tasks. The significant time that IDRC staff commits to personal support when starting their projects is well received by partners. These guidance notes would be employed as easy references for partners as a complement to the intensive relationship and capacity building. In addition, peer-to-peer support through sharing of lessons learned would facilitate faster problem solving for issues that are common across projects.

In summary, building on the solid qualitative monitoring methods and thoughtful dialogues among staff and program management could be more transparent and grounded through actively employing the Theory of Change and related management tools throughout program implementation.

4.2. Develop and implement a Knowledge Management plan

It is suggested to consider **formalizing a Knowledge Management approach** for the program and projects with a view to *become more systematic* at collecting and sharing good practices and lessons learned as well as practical information about upcoming events, data availability from research, etc. To become more systematic at capitalizing and leveraging knowledge, it could be envisaged to build on the success of service projects such as DECI-2 – with UFE and communications – and expand the scope of support by opening a Knowledge Management stream.

A KM approach could support both programmatic efficiency and effectiveness. The former could involve collecting and codifying knowledge to avoid reinventing the wheel and save time (e.g. on project management and administration). The latter could be directed at amplifying the knowledge residing in (sub-)projects (e.g. spillover and network effects with partners).

The development and implementation of Knowledge Management plan could strive to address areas such as to:

- Identify knowledge strengths of partners and sub-grantees (e.g. who knows whom)
- Elicit knowledge needs (e.g. assess individual learning needs such as a project level baseline for capacity development, identify organizational needs such as “How-to” guides, etc.)
- Collect examples of knowledge outputs and develop non-prescriptive archetypes at program level (e.g. models and templates, taxonomy, etc.)
- Design KM practices that leverage actions already taken by project actors and/or those at the corporate level by IDRC and donor partner (e.g. DFID), and put in place new practices where no other tool/mechanism exists
- Become more systematic at monitoring project activities and outcomes (e.g. assessing the learning outcomes of workshops and seminars, compiling metrics on the number of times research outputs are accessed, collecting micro-stories of uptake, installing periodic surveys/polls to assess the opinion of and connect with end-users, etc.)

- Install systems to facilitate collection and sharing of content and data, including for monitoring purposes, and to foster online discussions and collaboration
- Utilize monitoring data for evidence-based dialogue and decision making throughout the project cycle and use knowledge management to bridge project monitoring with communications and advocacy
- Install mechanisms, and incentives, to share tacit knowledge between projects and facilitate mutual support
- Mainstream KM in project scoping documents, in the TOR of project staff and sub-grantees, as well as in budgets and M&E plans

In summary, harnessing and sharing projects' rich knowledge and lessons learned in thematic, programmatic, and operational areas could accelerate the onboarding process of partners and (sub-)grantees, support day-to-day project management, facilitate technical cross-fertilization, etc. and free up program management time for more strategic activities (e.g. outreach, partnership building, resource mobilization, etc.)

4.3. Develop and test an explicit, programmatic networking approach

Research networks have become a fundamental implementation modality throughout the programmatic continuum alluded to above, and IDRC program officers have dedicated significant attention to the creation of each of the INASSA networks. Yet there is deemed to be potential for delivering more value from existing networks, as well as from weaving smart, stable connections among program actors. It is therefore suggested to **explore how the performance of a future program could be enhanced through a more systematic, explicit networking approach**. This approach would be applied in two basic dimensions. One, applied to the *internal processes and connective behavior* of the implementation modalities of all types. Two, at the program level to facilitate the *generation of collective added value*. Purposeful networking is expected to have influence across all areas of activity, i.e. research generation, capacity development and uptake.

The **main goals** of such a networking approach would be complementary: to contribute to achieving program outcomes/results, and to benefit the partners involved (in terms of their own objectives). Some of the likely **results** (or outcomes) include (i) proactively sought synergies between projects, which would be stimulated/rewarded (not imposed); (ii) improved knowledge flows thru communities of practice (on communications, gender, policy-uptake, etc.); (iii) behavioral exploration leading to sustained, productive interactions (from awareness of others' work all the way to joint research/ proposals); and (iv) improved conditions for interdisciplinarity.

A practical **starting point** would be the formulation of a networking strategy that refers both to the projects (their internal operations) and the program (interactions among projects, common services). Taking advantage of the time still left in the Networked Economies program (a little over two years), the strategy could be developed jointly with key partners, and gradually be rolled out, experimented with and adjusted in time for a new program to emerge.

In order for this networking strategy to be practical and implementable (whether for the remainder of the NE program or a new one), it would need to articulate:

- **Why?** Program actors define their **collective value proposition**, which describes their commitment to joint value creation. For example, proposed collective value might only reach as far as increasing the visibility of other actors' work, or can explore more ambitious targets like creating/managing a common pool of resources. It would also help build common understanding and commitment to achieve the ToC.
- **What?** The tangible results expected from networking (always linked to set objectives). There could be of two types. One refers to **networked effects**, i.e. the benefits resulting from direct and indirect interactions among program actors. For example, more opportunities to access funding by developing joint proposals or enhanced gender analysis capacities from interactions with more experienced actors. The other is about **networked services**, those provided by the program to the projects, such as that the support given by DECI-2 (on communications and evaluation), or online training courses (e.g. on policy-briefs or synthesis preparation).
- **How?** A set of specific processes that would **facilitate or enable productive networking**. These can include (i) network management (in the case of research networks as implementing modalities), (ii) knowledge management, (iii) communications, (iv) building collaborative capacities, (v) issue-based sub-networks (gender, communications, monitoring, etc.). Networking strategies will function best if they are coherent at program and project level.
- **Who?** The individuals and actors involved. The figure of a program **network manager** could be considered, assuming a networking stewardship role. Description of the possible roles of partners, project managers, sub-grantees (researchers), even selected external actors.

A special role may be considered for **service projects** (like Strategic Reviews, DECI-2, etc.) as part of overall networking strategy. This third implementation modality could take on a strategic role within a program, serving two main purposes. The first, to continue to strengthen capacities in certain needed areas, e.g. gender; policy uptake, communications, etc. And the second, to act as key connectors (brokers) within the overall program ecosystem. Service projects could be set up in various forms, using what was learned from their experience in the I&N, INASSA and NE programs (possibly other similar initiatives at IDRC or DFID as well), and adapting them to new programs; e.g. some range of services could in fact be provided by groups of program actors with special expertise and interest on a given topic, e.g. about open data, policy influence, gender programming, etc.

In summary, a more systematic networking approach can help both think-tank and network modalities to benefit from productive interactions within their projects, while contributing to the program becoming greater than the sum of its projects.

4.4. Promote and operationalize an integrated view of development research quality

The integrated vision research quality embodied by RQ+ is valuable and developmentally relevant, even as a dynamic concept which will probably incorporate changes over time. This

novel concept results from years of exploration and testing by IDRC. While there is no ideal development research quality framework, RQ+ is certainly pushing the envelope in the right direction.

It is thus suggested that **the integrated concept of development research quality developed by IDRC be promoted in new initiatives**. To this aim, it would need to be purposefully shared among projects and partners. Also, and more importantly, steps would be taken to help operationalize it, including resources to adapt the RQ+ tools and its underlying methodology so that it becomes easy to use by research teams. The evaluation suggests this would help develop research capacity and to improve overall research quality levels. To date, the concept has not been promoted explicitly or systematically, and most projects/researchers are not aware of it.

Supporting greater awareness for this integrated concept and providing support and resources to operationalize it (for those projects willing to do so) would be an element of value-added provided by IDRC program teams, particularly given the aim to build enhanced research M&E capacities in projects. Moreover, partner and researcher inputs while putting the concept into action will improve it.

A more collective awareness of integrated research quality, together with some user-friendly tools for partners (based on the existing RQ+ assessment instruments), would contribute to research capacity development efforts through:

- Supporting research management in capacity development planning
- Helping to assess research capacity needs
- Incorporating quality criteria into project proposal templates
- Providing materials and training sessions, online as well as in person (e.g. at workshops that coincide with events like CPRsouth, etc.)
- Revising and improving existing RQ+ tools
- Enhancing transparency about how the quality of research is defined and assessed.

In summary, extending the awareness and incorporation of the integrated research quality concept reflected in RQ+ could help improve research capacities and quality for projects and partners.

4.5. Support efforts to carry out the gender strategy by engaging in a participatory approach to examine root causes and prototype solutions

While INASSA and Networked Economies have made significant efforts in developing a gender strategy and shown improvements in the last two years in their efforts toward their goal to improve the capacity of the program and its partners to develop and scale up gender responsive programming and research, results continue to be progressing slowly. By taking a different approach, different results are expected through the anticipated support through a contract with Gender at Work to support implementation of the gender strategy by building layered organizational capacity in gender sensitive programming. Gender at Work's approach "to disrupt conventional thinking and tackle what are sometimes called 'wicked' problems—those

that have innumerable causes, are tough to describe, and don't have one right answer"⁸⁸ is in alignment with the evaluation's findings and recommendation of what is needed to effect change in this *persistently difficult challenge*.

It is recommended that INASSA, as part of the gender-transformative network on digital innovation and IDRC-wide gender group, **leverage expertise and current good practices by partners and also engage in analysis of the root causes** blocking their progress in achieving these goals. This could be done with design thinking⁸⁹, root cause analysis, backwards mapping, etc. but should go deeper than previous attempts before linking causes to activities and linking the gender strategy to an implementation plan. By engaging IDRC management, staff and grantees in these efforts, it is hoped that a better understanding of the challenges and constraints will be ascertained and an increase buy-in to the gender strategy will result.

The root cause analysis, especially if done using design thinking, can be relatively little effort in a short period of time and garner surprising insights into what is blocking progress. The design thinking methodology uses these insights to create prototypes to test hypotheses and help design new low-cost, risk-minimizing interventions that can be used to create an implementation plan or as an innovative way to carry out the gender strategy. If design thinking is used fully, the implementation plan would consist of a series of prototypes, 'experiments' or actions that are conducted, learnings harvested, and subsequent prototypes designed to actively carry out the gender strategy in a step-by-step fashion, where each step is refined or designed in response to learnings, reactions, and emerging developments. This recommendation is meant to be a suggested enhancement of current efforts to carry out the gender strategy and it is fully supportive of Gender at Work, including its framework, approach and rich experience in similar contexts.

This recommendations strives to:

- Productively channel the high interest and energy around the subject of gender
- Share knowledge of those projects that are already doing good programming and analysis in the area of gender
- Draw out examples of gender-transformative research
- Address consistent subpar results in evaluations of gender programming and analysis as well as gender responsiveness
- Understand "behind the scenes" strategies projects to support champions, advocate for gender-responsive research and address institutional sexism and homophobia
- Understand ways projects successfully include gender in their research design despite institutional sexism in some government and ICT industry contexts
- Envision how projects that incorporate gender and LGBT responsive research into the broader context of inclusion can strengthen their efforts toward gender-transformative research.

In summary, a highly-engaged, low-cost, user-focused method of understanding root causes that are blocking progress toward gender goals can be conducted relatively quickly and can be used

⁸⁸ <http://www.genderatwork.org/>

⁸⁹ George Martin at The Boston Consulting Group (A) & (B), Harvard Business School Press, Leslie Perlow and Kerry Herman, (2010).

to create an implementation plan for the gender strategy that could be more effective and have more buy-in than a plan created without user input.

4.6. Continue developing capacities to build partnerships and mobilize resources

Building on the experience of the INASSA funded projects that have been particularly successful in building partnerships to influence policy, more attention could be dedicated to codifying and replicating this existing pool of good practices. While recognizing that **developing partnerships** can imply additional efforts and time commitments, including from partners and sub-grantees, this could serve as a modality to further enable research uptake and contribute to more sustainable development outcomes.

DFID and NE are already used to work with various types of partners across different geographic scales. Potentially, partnerships could tap more systematically the established networks for policy influence to bridge policy makers or influencers with researchers. Similarly, carefully chosen global CSOs or NGOs could relay research findings in their advocacy work. Continuums could be explored also between research and pilot projects to test proofs of concept with partners such as foundations or private sectors actors. UN organizations have strong relationships with Governments and Ministries and have a significant focus on institutionalizing development results. Partnerships at the international or national level for instance in relation to the achievement and monitoring of the SDG's could form a platform to national bridges with policy makers.

Accordingly, a range of strategic partners are strongly relevant for projects that seek to achieve policy influence, primarily Ministries or relevant public institutions, and also NGOs/INGOs, intergovernmental organizations, UN agencies, foundations and other resource partners, private sector actors. It could be envisaged to build on the commendable model of service projects such as DECI-2 – with UFE and communications – to expand the scope of support they offer and open a capacity window on partnership building and resource mobilization. Exercising this window would depend on the expected outcome of every project while the content, scale, and scope of any partnership building and resource mobilization strategy would depend on the very nature of the project.

A partnership and resource mobilization plan at project level could consider finding innovative cross-sectoral solutions to complex policy issues by tackling areas such as:

- Policy baseline and influence objectives at national or local levels
- Detailed stakeholders mapping and policy scenarios
- Enablers and inhibitors of policy change
- Partnership tailoring to specific objectives
- Partnership building approach and resource mobilization
- Modalities of participation of partners in projects
- Spin-off and institutionalization / uptake strategies

In summary, formulating within the project design a partnership building plan and intent to mobilize resources would create a deeper understanding of what is at stake to translate

forthcoming research findings into policy and could favorably set a context where partners are given an opportunity to sense greater shared ownership for the research outputs and are more willing to contribute to their uptake.

4.7. Establish a service project that builds adaptive capacity in order to enhance research uptake and increase project effectiveness

It is suggested that a service project be established to **build the adaptive capacity** of research projects and INASSA overall in order to enhance research uptake and increase the effectiveness of projects. While some informants suggested the use of adaptive management, which was established as a project management methodology that helps understand assumptions and uncertainties, it is somewhat outdated given the plethora of methods that have come into favor in the past ten years to increase effectiveness given increased volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity⁹⁰ such as adaptive leadership, design thinking, Theory U, learning organization, and systems thinking.

Further, INASSA could **build on new ways of working already at play with in INASSA projects** such as LIRNEasia's efforts to create a learning organization, ROER4D's use of action research in India, and Open AIR's iterating (prototyping) through knowledge-development experiments. It could also include research methods that work actively with emergence (such as grounded theory used by Open AIR). And, it could include soft skills development (relationship and trust-building, emotional intelligence, influence) to increase capacity for policy uptake. Building adaptive capacity is typically done on the personal, organizational and systemic level simultaneously.⁹¹

Current methods utilized to work in a complex field such as 'an inclusive networked society' and to achieve sustainable systems change go beyond collaboration, interdisciplinarity, and diversity. They include a variety of methods that help understand the complex ecosystem, sense what is emerging, and create prototypes or new models that are adapted over time and eventually supplant the old system. While INASSA already provides a flexible, rapid response to critical issues through an ad hoc request process for funds, there is room to systemize this responsive approach with the intent of increasing long-term impacts and enhancing research into policy influence over time.

INASSA could consider other models such as a rapid-response and innovation fund⁹² that could help identify emergent issues, provide initial funding of new opportunities on a small scale, and include a mechanism for rapid testing and improvement through feedback loops. Whichever approach is developed, it could take a long-term view of systemic impact that goes beyond the

⁹⁰ <http://www.oxfordleadership.com/leadership-challenges-v-u-c-world/>

⁹¹ The practice of adaptive leadership: tools and tactics for changing your organization and the world, Harvard Business School Press, Heifetz, Grashow and Linsky, (2009).

⁹² <http://www.asia-pacific.undp.org/content/rbap/en/home/ourwork/development-impact/innovation/about-innovation-fund.html>

four-year funding cycle and includes assessment points to turn successful proof of concept into cohesive efforts for systemic change.

A service project to build adaptive capacity would build on current activities in this area and provide learning across projects to:

- Expand the shared learning culture and collaborative capacity fostered by DECI-2
- Share the learning organizational methods of LIRNEasia and dynamic capacity development approaches with other projects
- Consider benefits and synergies of looking at INASSA as an ecosystem, building on the meta-analysis and other cross-project efforts
- Continue to support the emergent nature of open development and to help policy paradigms “catch up”⁹³
- Explore ways to scale project impact for systemic impact
- Explore “adventurous” research methodologies that foster emergence and adaptation
- Build individual capacities to influence policy change and research in complex systems

In summary, while some projects are already using aspects of adaptive capacity methods, an intentional project to share and develop adaptive capacity could accelerate learning and effectiveness of projects, increase research uptake and policy influence and enhance the quality of Openness that these projects intend to effect.

⁹³ Quality of Openness: Evaluating the Contributions of IDRC’s Information and Networks Program to Open Development, Quality of Openness: Evaluating the Contributions of IDRC’s Information and Networks Program to Open Development, Information and Networks (I&N) Program, International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Katherine M. A. Reilly, PhD and Rob McMahon, PhD, (January 2015).

Evaluation of the Information and Networks in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa (INASSA) Program

Final Report: Annexes

5 March 2018

Kallick Russell Consulting

Judith Kallick
Manuel Acevedo
Patrick Breard
Patrick Mc Namara



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ANNEX A: CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY 1:

RESEARCH ON OPEN EDUCATION RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPMENT (ROER4D)

I. Introduction

This case study highlights the key characteristics and achievements of ROER4D identified by the evaluation, with a focus on the contribution of the project to the objectives of the INASSA program. This case study was designed¹ to inform responses to evaluation questions, particularly question 5, describing impacts of networks and institution-led projects. This study does not provide an assessment of the achievements of ROER4D and does not cover criteria like relevance, efficiency, or effectiveness of the project.

II. Project context and objectives

As presented by ROER4D, Open Educational Resources (OER) are teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under a copyright license that permits their free use and re-purposing by others². When properly designed, OER are “easily reusable, revisable, re-mixable, and redistributable”³. This presents a range of benefits, such as widening access to education, improving affordability of education through reducing textbook and course development costs, increasing potential contextual relevance and appropriateness, enabling pedagogical innovation and student-centered learning, etc.⁴

According to INASSA, there is however “little empirical evidence, in developing regions, about whether, and how, free and open educational resources can play a greater role in improving access, quality and cost of educational opportunities, particularly for marginalized populations.

¹ The methodology for data collection and analysis drew on the overall approach and methodology designed for the INASSA evaluation. Data collection was performed during the period of October and November 2017. This study was informed by a review of secondary sources, interviews with ROER4D project members (network hub and sub-grantees), a review of specific findings from the survey of INASSA partners and grantees, a webometric analysis of the online web community of the ROER4D website, a social network analysis of ROER4D Twitter activities performed through NodeXL, and Google Scholar metrics on a sample of ROER4D research outputs. The aim of the study was exploratory research and inductive -i.e. no prior hypothesis to be formally confronted to the findings. By design this study cannot represent all the complexities of the surveyed environment and therefore claims for a constructivist perspective, i.e. it provides only a summary of all the accomplishments of ROER4D.

² Hodgkinson-Williams, C. 2013. Research into Open Educational Resources for Development in Post-secondary Education in the Global South (ROER4D) - Proposal to IDRC prepared by Associate Professor Cheryl Centre for Educational Technology, University of Cape Town, South Africa, on behalf of the ROER4D Planning Group convened by Emeritus Professor Gajaraj Dhanarajan, Wawasan Open University, Malaysia. 19 May 2013.

³ IDRC DFID Partnership. 2013. *Information and Networks in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa (INASSA): A research programme to inform policies and practices* - Programme Document. June 14, 2013. Internal document.

⁴ Hodgkinson-Williams, C. 2013. *op. cit.*

In the absence of this evidence, developing countries will continue to struggle to meet higher-education demands and the majority of people of lower socio-economic status will not benefit from these new quality learning opportunities.”⁵ ROER4D was aimed at addressing this shortcoming by producing empirical research on how and under what circumstances the adoption of OER provides equitable access to relevant, high quality, affordable and sustainable education in the Global South. The general objective of ROER4D was to improve educational policy, practice, and research in developing countries by better understanding the use and impact of OER. The specific objectives of the project were to (1) build an empirical knowledge base on the use and impact of OER focusing on post-secondary education; (2) develop the capacity of OER researchers; (3); build a network of OER scholars; and (4) communicate research to inform education policy and practice.

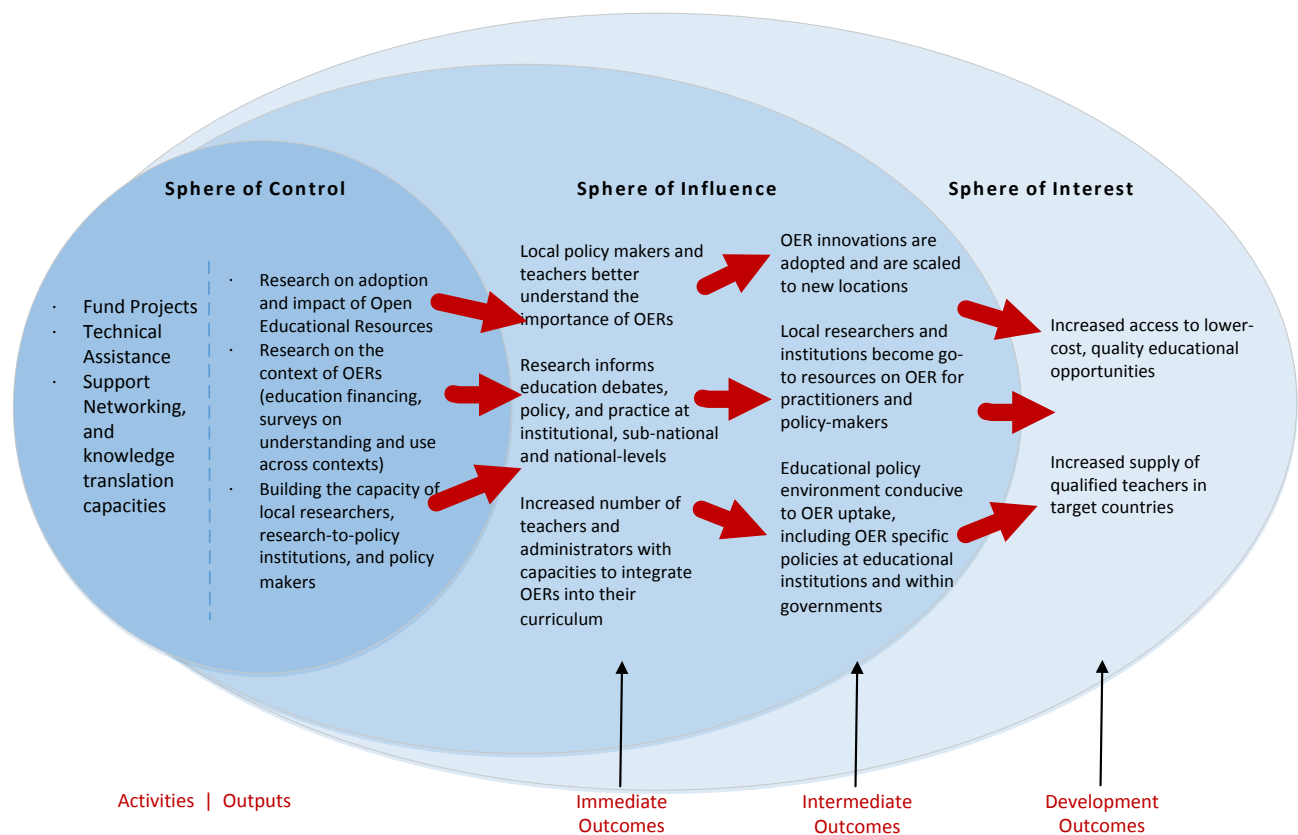


Figure 1: ROER4D Theory of Change

Source: IDRC, 2017.

The Theory of Change (ToC) of ROER4D presents an articulation between outputs (research outputs; capacity building), immediate outcomes (understanding OER; informing debates, policy and practices; and increasing capacities), intermediate outcomes (OER innovations adopted; use of OER expertise; and conducive policies), and development outcomes (increased access, lower cost, higher quality; and increased number of qualified teachers). The evaluation did not review

⁵ IDRC DFID Partnership. 2013. *op. cit.*

the underlying assumptions and drivers of the ToC⁶. However, overall the ToC appears to be adequately aligned with components of the ToC of the INASSA program to have the potential to contribute effectively to its realization.

III. Project functioning and implementation

ROER4D project started in August 2013 and was expected to conclude in Dec. 2017⁷. It had benefited from an initial funding of CAD1,427,400, with the University of Cape Town (UCT) and Wawasan Open University (WOU) being the primary grantees. The project had implemented 18 sub-projects -Annex 1- across 26 countries and three regions looking at OER adoption and impacts -figure 2. From the onset, 12 sub-projects had been identified to receive support from IDRC and DFID. However, additional DFID funding in 2015 led to add 6 impact studies to the project.

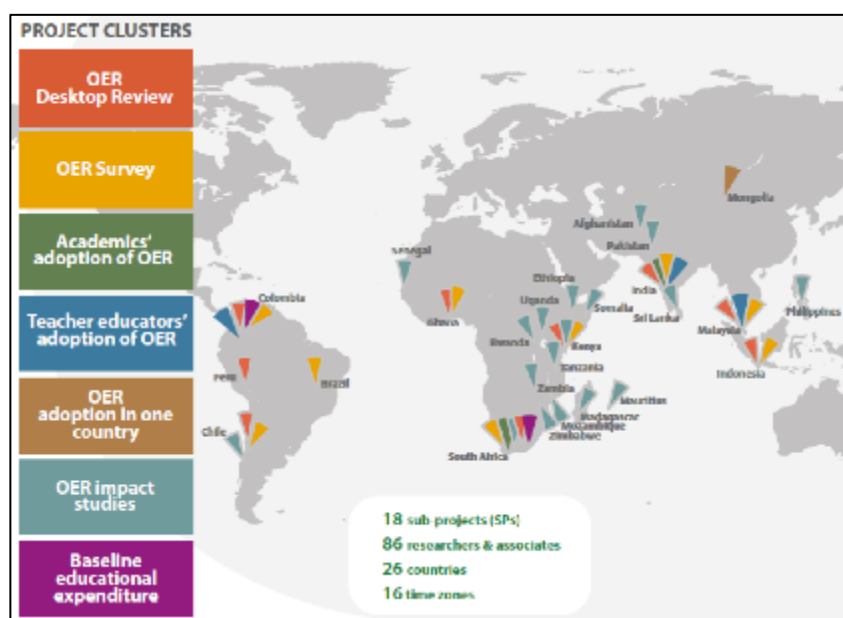


Figure 2: Overview of ROER4D activities

Source: ROER4D, 2017.

The project itself consisted of a network hub⁸ based at UCT and additional project management capacity⁹ at WOU. An Advisory Group formed by the ROER4D Principal Investigator (PI), Deputy

⁶ The evaluation did not perform an in-depth analysis of the ToC. However, a quick review can convey some comments: (i) One of the specific objectives of ROER4D is not explicitly mentioned in the ToC (i.e. *build a network of OER scholars*); (ii) Terms such as ‘capacities’ can take different meanings that may make outcomes to partially overlap (e.g. *teachers better understand the importance of OERs*, and *increased number of teachers with capacities to integrate OERs in their curriculum*); (iii) Including different target groups in the same outcome bears the risk to focus on one to the detriment of the other (e.g. *policy makers* and *teachers*).

⁷ The project has formulated and submitted to IDRC a six-month project extension until June 2018.

⁸ The Network Hub team was composed of a Project Manager, a Curation and Dissemination Manager, a Research Administrator, a Researcher / Capacity Development Officer, an Evaluation Advisor, and a Research Communications Advisor.

PI, IDRC Project Officer, and five Education and OER experts provided technical guidance and advice to the sub-projects. Therefore, the Advisory Group did not include policy makers or private sector representatives.

The project relied on complementary expertise, for instance through (i) the support of DECI-2, (ii) technical guidance provided by an expert in statistics, or (iii) an intervention of a gender specialist during a ROER4D workshop.

Management of the project by UCT appeared to be time consuming, with 55 contracts to develop, legally review, and institutionally endorse and sign with sub-grantee institutions and individuals¹⁰. Financial management proved also to be a complex endeavor due to fluctuations in foreign currency exchange rates or to the fact that some sub-grantees did not have a bank account.

During the project **capacity development** was provided through technical guidance, networking, and other modalities including:

- 17 webinars
- 2 workshops with ROER4D SP researchers
- One-on-one research capacity building through mentoring and technical support for lead researchers and their research teams in the 18 sub-projects of ROER4D
- Country visits from one SP to another SP and/or direct online collaborations between SP sharing commonalities
- Developmental editing support, co-writing, and re-writing
- Peer reviews (up to 13 back and forth revisions for some research outputs)
- Etc.

IV. Project outputs

The following research outputs, research dissemination activities, and capacity building initiatives were delivered by ROER4D¹¹:

- 12 journal articles
- 2 book chapters
- 2 monographs
- 16 advance book chapters to be published in Dec. 2017 as part of an edited volume (OER Adoption and Impact in the Global South)
- 5 keynote papers and presentations at conferences
- 10 conference papers
- 77 conference presentations
- 2 institutional/funder presentations

⁹ The WOU team consisted of a Project Leader and Coordinator and a Coordinator of Research Management, supported by two staff.

¹⁰ Initially, when ROER4D started there were only 2 grantees, the UCT and the University of San Paolo, the latter in charge of re-granting the large SP2 project. However, after 6 months of commensurable work e.g. translation of the contracts in Portuguese, etc.- the UoSP found out that they could not re-grant. So UCT took on all sub-projects.

¹¹ A detailed list of project outputs is accessible on the ROER4D website at:

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1_55Xxa-ARQnNmS6tFl6Z0JgpZvm_a_QfMbNcjAiy7Gk

- 62 blog posts
- 15 videos
- 6 datasets generated during the research
- A bibliography (2500+ references)

A significant part of these research outputs were produced by the ROER4D Network hub and by two sub-projects, SP5 (Collaborative co-creation of OER by teacher educators and teachers in India) and SP10 (impact studies), the latter grouping six research projects.

Complementary project outputs included communication and marketing materials (infographics, 2-pager, etc.). Furthermore, ROER4D started the development of “How-to guides” on components related to the functioning and management of the project (e.g. on communications, networking, or evaluation) with the view to inform forthcoming IDRC projects with practical knowledge and lessons learned.

The project implemented various research dissemination activities, including those online, through:

- A website containing 50+ pages¹²
- A newsletter (120+ recipients)
- Weekly updates and announcements
- Twitter account (1000+ followers)
- Facebook page (250+ followers)

In November 2017, the project added a capability to locate the initial users and to generate usage statistics on the Open Data sets. These metrics were to help to find out exactly why and how the re-users of ROER4D data sets were using them.

V. Project outcomes

Among the **immediate** outcomes of the project, several sub-projects reported bringing *local policy makers and teachers to better understand the importance of OERs* (confer narratives below on ROER4D intermediate outcomes in India, Sri Lanka, Fiji). ROER4D also *informed education debates, policy, and practice at institutional, sub-national and national levels*. ROER4D was invited for instance to participate in the 2nd World OER Congress in Sept 2017 in Slovenia, and to present in the regional conferences leading up to this Congress. Work at the intergovernmental level (e.g. with UNESCO) helped also to strengthen ROER4D relationships between research and policymaking about the potential of OER. The Network Hub has also provided a feedback and comments on behalf of the entire UCT to the South African Draft Policy Framework on Open Learning and Distance Education. The establishment of a network of OER researchers in the Global South were also among the key immediate outcomes of the project. When considering online activities and engagement, ROER4D Twitter account generated 3,626 tweets and was followed by 1,079 users, i.e. well beyond the core network of ROER4D sub-grantees (figure 3). The online community around ROER4D’s website (figure 4) provided evidence of being referred by a range of organizations (e.g. UNESCO, Commonwealth of

¹² Among other items ROER4D website features a presentation of each SP, a directory with contact details of 119 ROER4D researchers, links to research outputs, etc.

Learning, Hewlett Foundation) and initiatives (e.g. Open Education Europa by the European Commission).

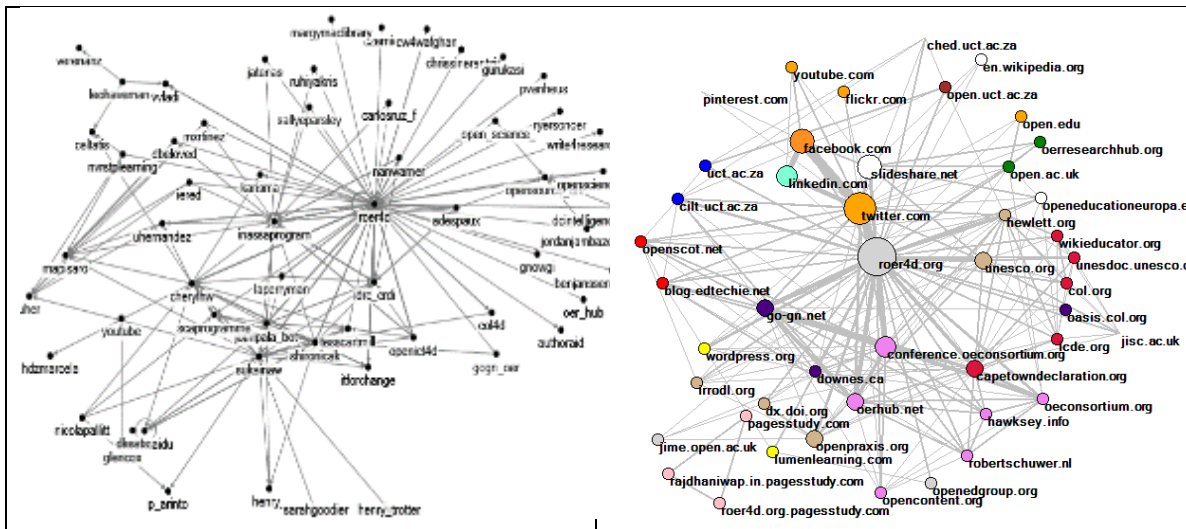


Figure 3: Twitter network of @ROER4D

Source: NodeXL¹³ & Evaluation, 2017.

Figure 4: Online community of ROER4D website

Source: Webometric Analyst¹⁴ & Evaluation, 2017.

A review at the number of references to ROER4D in Google Scholar returned 101 results. A review using Google Scholar of the number of citations for a sample list of research outputs developed with ROER4D's support showed the level of uptake (table 1).

Research outputs from ROER4D sub-projects	Number of citations
Karunanayaka, Shironica P. Naidu, Som, Rajendra, J. C. N., Ratnayake, H. U. W. (2015). From OER to OEP: Shifting Practitioner Perspectives and Practices with Innovative Learning Experience Design. <i>Open Praxis</i> , 7(4), 339-350.	9
Toledo, A, Botero, C. & Guzman, L. (2014) Public expenditure in education in Latin America. Recommendations to serve the purposes of the Paris Open Educational Resources Declaration. <i>Open Praxis</i> , 6(2), 103–113.	2
Walji, S., Deacon, A., Small, J. & Czerniewicz, L. (2016). Learning through engagement: MOOCs as an emergent form of provision in the Distance Education, 37(2), 208-223.	12
Mishra, S., Sharma, M., Sharma, R. C., Singh, A. & Thakur, A. (2016). Development of a scale to measure faculty attitude towards Open Educational Resources. <i>Open Praxis</i> , 8(1).	4
Mishra, S. (2017). Promoting Use and Contribution of Open Educational Resources. New Delhi,	1

¹³ <https://nodexl.codeplex.com/>

¹⁴ Mapping performed with Webometric Analyst 2.0 -<http://lexiurl.wlv.ac.uk/>-, Statistical Cybermetrics Research Group, University of Wolverhampton, UK. The websites were gathered from a list of websites referencing ROER4D website. Each node represents a website. The sizes of the nodes reflect the level of influence of the websites within each network, in terms of the number of hyperlinks to them. Organisations that are close together tend to be linked to by the same websites. When interpreting the network map, a line between two websites A and B indicates that at least one organisation citing ROER4D links to both A and B (so A and B have something in common, relative to ROER4D). Line width indicates the number of other websites that link to both websites. A wider line means that more websites link to both, while a narrower line indicates fewer links. A threshold of 50 websites was set to highlight the network of the ROER4D closest neighbors.

India: Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia.	
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Table 1: Number of citations retrieved by Google Scholar

Source: Google Scholar & Evaluation, 2017.

The project also increased the *number of teachers and administrators with capacities to integrate OERs in their curriculum*. For instance, the Indian NGO that implemented SP5 (IT for Change) reported a change in the digital habits of 20,000 government high school teachers with greater comfort and ownership of open digital technologies. Furthermore, researchers involved in the sub-projects reported to the evaluation that capacity development increased.

The following **intermediate** outcomes of the project were also reported:

1. OER innovations adopted and scaled to new locations

- In **India**, partners from IT for Change (IT4C) had developed and implemented an innovative OER-based teacher professional development methodology for collaborative creation of open educational resources. IT4C has worked with over 15,000 teachers from 6,000 schools in 34 districts across the state of Karnataka. This model resulted in the publishing of more than 5,000 educational resources. The model had been replicated in Telangana with 2,000 teachers from 1,000 schools and work had been carried out to develop a five-year plan to cover all teachers (~37,000). A series of workshops was also delivered, and advice provided to Assam state on establishing OER portals and scaling the model on behest of the state government. Furthermore, the Indian National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT) requested IT4C to support the implementation of a National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER), making IT4C a partner on the NROER project.
- In **Afghanistan** the NGO Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan (CW4WA) had created the first repository in the country of interactive, multilingual, open educational resources that covers 20 subjects. The repository has users from all 34 provinces of Afghanistan, as well as from twelve other countries.
- In **South Africa**, UCT had developed a package of Self-instructional Learning Material for a 5-Credit (200 hours study hours) Course in Research Methodology at Post-Graduate Level- to be released with CC-BY-SA License.

2. Local researchers and institutions become go-to resources on OER for practitioners and policy-makers

- In **India**, the collaborative resource adoption model developed in the ROER4D study had been acknowledged as a national best practice by a review mission of the Government of India. Other states having learned from the federal Government about this achievement, had requested IT4C's support to implement their training methodology.
- In **Sri Lanka**, ROER4D SP10.6 sub-grantees won a best paper award for their paper entitled *From OER to OEP: Shifting practitioner perspectives and practices with innovative learning experience design*. The principal investigator was approached by the Commonwealth of Learning to develop a draft OER policy for the country. The SP PI

visited all nine provinces in Sri Lanka to do advocacy work and hold small workshops with provincial educational directors. The book stemming from the ROER4D sub-project was reportedly an effective tool for socializing the concept of OER and for connecting with the teachers that they trained throughout the country.

- In **Chile**, the Lead Researcher of SP9 caught the interest of the Open Policy Network and one of its initiatives, the Institute of Open Leadership. This institute called for proposals related to developing and implementing open policies, and accepted a proposal related to open public-funded educational resources. Later, the Library of Congress of Chile gave the Lead Researcher the mission to elaborate a discussion paper to build a Civic and Citizenship education program. The main driver of the paper was ‘openness determines a fertile context to promote civic and citizen engagement and participation’. As a follow-up, the researcher was offered the post to lead the new program and was then in a perfect place to keep promoting more open policies and initiatives.
- In **Colombia**, the National Ministry of Education strategy to promote OER had expressed an interest in the results and process of the research project SP6. He had written an article about good practice and made specific reference to the project.
- In **South Africa**, the OER desktop review for Sub-Saharan Africa (SP1) performed by SAIDE helped the NGO to understand better the use and OER activities in the 3 researched countries. This work led to the development of knowledge base on OER in the region with the view of pedagogical improvements. It contributed to strengthening the relationships of SAIDE with other partners, such as with the Hewlett foundation with which SAIDE will implement an OER project that will build the capacity and support the development of academic skills in 5 universities in South Saharan Africa with focus on pedagogical transformation.

3. Educational policy environment conducive to OER uptake, including OER specific policies at educational institutions and within governments

- During their ROER4D sub-project work in **India**, the SP5 team held many workshops on OERs with a wide variety of universities in India - private, government run and ‘open’. From this, they began getting requests from other universities, and have since helped ten universities to develop their own OER institutional policy; four had adopted the OER policies. As an example, working with the state of Andhra Pradesh, IT4C was able to get the Andhra Pradesh Department of School Education to change the copyright on their e-content repository from ‘all rights reserved’ to CC-BY-SA-NC. As this began to generate interest, India’s federal government requested IT4C to develop a higher education OER policy for all of India. In March 2017, IT4C held a national consultation, and subsequently drafted a policy which was under consideration at the time of this evaluation. This policy, if enacted, would impact more than 700 universities in India.
- In **Sri Lanka**, the Principal Investigator of SP 10.6 drafted an OER policy for the country. An implementation plan was being finalized alongside the Sri Lankan Ministry of Education. The federal government had given their support (and blessing) for the

process to continue. At local level, the Open University of Sri Lanka started actively engaging with OER practices in its engagement with this project.

- In **Kenya**, the Ministry of education Science and Technology incorporated ICT and OER in teaching and learning, hence affecting policy frameworks through implementing practices and emerging from research (survey in Kenyan universities).
- In **Fiji**, an OER policy had been adopted at the University of the South Pacific (USP), and its development had involved members of the ROER4D network. The Pro Vice-Chancellor of Flexible Learning and Director of the Centre for Flexible Learning at USP and Co-Lead Researcher of Sub-project 10.6 led the drafting of the policy in consultation with a range of stakeholders at USP and abroad. The Lead Researcher of ROER4D Sub-project (an Education Specialist from the Commonwealth of Learning) facilitated the OER policy development workshop at USP. The Open Educational Resources (OER) Policy provided direction for the adoption and use of OER and increased access to, and support of high quality teaching and learning at USP.
- In **South Africa**, ROER4D research influenced the UCT Vice chancellor who adopted arguments for open education stemming from the project research findings about open educational practices. An online course policy was passed by the university and developed largely independently in a contested environment. ROER4D provided supporting evidence that the institution was capable of engaging with the many demands of developing online courses using OER and open resources.

Unexpected outcomes of the project were also referred to the evaluation. For instance, while in the process of publishing the open data sets, ROER4D uncovered an inconsistency in the copyright licensing policy of DataFirst, a UCT-affiliated Open Data publisher. ROER4D subsequently worked with the platform to improve and revise their policy. As another example, ROER4D was consulted in 2015 and 2016 by IDRC in conjunction with their proposed Open Data proposal and how the experiences of the ROER4D Open Data Initiative could feed into or shed light on Open Data from the practitioner's perspective. ROER4D comments were included into the policy document proposal and contributed to IDRC Open Data policy.

VI. Contribution analysis

When referring to the INASSA program document, ROER4D had a contribution to the expected central impact of INASSA when it comes to establishing **new or reformed policies and programmes that achieved improved quality and reach of educational opportunities**. ROER4D had increased policy-makers' and practitioners' knowledge of evidence-based policy and program options in learning that enhanced the quality of openness and protected rights to information and access to knowledge.

Different project modalities and channels led to reform policies and programmes, which made a synthesis delicate to formulate. On one hand it appeared that NGOs such as IT4C or SAIDE that had established over time close working relationships with local policy makers and were able to supplement research with resources mobilization and projects implementation had a strong capability to achieve change at scale. However, on the other hand, academics who benefit from high credibility or who had gained higher visibility through the project and other research

activities were also capable of engaging with policy makers or practitioners to adopt and scale OER innovations to new locations, especially when this coincided with the local policy agenda. Furthermore, in terms of policy making at state and national levels, intergovernmental organizations such as the Commonwealth of Learning proved to be effective institutional influencers.

Conversely, various factors impeded OER adoption at scale in policies and practices. Among the external factors conveyed to the evaluation, we would highlight:

- Academics and researchers prioritized quality and independence of research over policy influence
- Time to research was not necessarily aligned with policy processes including changes among policy makers
- Annual objectives, incentive structures, and performance appraisal of academic staff and researchers were linked to publishing in high impact journals but not to achieving policy influence
- There were lower incentives for publishing in open access journals than in closed access journals
- Policy makers were unlikely to have access to closed access journals and academic and research articles were unlikely to be in a format that is easily readable and digestible for policy makers
- Compared to NGOs, academics and researchers appeared to anchor less frequently their work in the policy agenda or in policy needs
- Unlike NGOs, research and academia were not necessarily equipped to turn research findings into practice through resource mobilization and projects implementation
- Private or semi-private institutions (e.g. Hewlett Foundations) that provided resources to scale up open data did not necessarily embarked in designing and implementing research activities

VII. Lessons learned

Based on the functioning and achievements of ROER4D, the following lessons learned were identified by the Evaluation and would be conveyed to the program and project:

- Thorough stakeholders' analysis in project and sub-project proposals, including a detailed review of target groups such as policy makers as well as partnership strategies and engagement (e.g. with intergovernmental organizations, UN, NGOs, and the private sector) proved beneficial to plan for and foster the adoption of research findings and scale-up project outcomes
- Program wide service projects like DECI-2 helped to ensure higher quality of research outputs despite leaving room for improvement, such as enabling projects to design robust results framework and establishing capacity to monitor project outcomes (immediate and intermediate) and impact across sub-projects
- Communications strategies were effective at broad banding research findings and better targeting dissemination, but in effect were more systematically used when referred to early on in project or sub-project proposals or their template

- The gender dimension of research projects was deeper when integrated at the very start of the project when designing research questions, methodologies, and expected findings rather than when considered retrospectively
- The learning curve of managing IDRC funded projects would be likely to be shortened with dedicated induction / training activities as well as with guidelines and lessons learned from previous IDRC project implementations, templates for websites, archetypes for IDRC taxonomy, etc.
- The management of financial flows was likely to benefit from exchange rate risk management approaches adopted by other international organizations, such as relying on banks to bid for dollar exchange rates to mitigate risks
- Theories of change that aggregated in the same outputs and/or outcomes different categories of stakeholders / beneficiaries often ended up minoring one or several of these groups during project implementation (e.g. most project actions may end up supporting researchers with less attention and resources provided to working with policy makers, the media, private sector actors, the youth, women, etc.)
- Detailed baselines and periodic monitoring could facilitate assessing the progress towards outcomes including on activities related to capacity development, for instance through preliminary capacity needs assessment and ex-post monitoring of learning outcomes
- By INASSA program intent and ROER4D project design, capacity development activities targeted individuals rather than the institutional and systemic levels

Annex 1: ROAER4D Sub-projects

SP 1: Desktop Review of OER projects, policies and research in the Global South	http://roer4d.org/desktop-review
SP 2: Cross regional survey on OER	http://roer4d.org/sp2-oer-diff
SP 3: Teachers' Attitudes, Motivations and Conceptions of Quality and Barriers to Open Educational Resources in India	http://roer4d.org/sp-3-teachers-attitude-towards-oer
SP 4: Research into the social and cultural acceptability of OER in South Africa	http://roer4d.org/sp-4-sociocultural-acceptability-of-oer
SP 5: Collaborative co-creation of OER by teacher educators and teachers in India: A participatory action research study	http://roer4d.org/collaborative-creation-of-oer
SP 6: Collaborative co-creation of OER by teacher educators and teachers in south western Colombia: A participatory Action Research Study	http://roer4d.org/sp-6-collaborative-cocreation-of-oer-colombia
SP 7: A study on the processes of OER integration for course development	http://roer4d.org/sp-7-oer-integration-for-course-development
SP 8: Exploring the cultural-historical factors that influence OER adoption and use in Mongolia's higher education sector	http://roer4d.org/sp-8-oer-adoption-and-use-in-mongolia
SP 9: The effectiveness of OER use in first year higher education student's logical-mathematical skills in Chile	http://roer4d.org/sp-9-oer-use-in-first-year-mathematics
SP10.1: Engaging with the 'world beyond': the impact of OER on practices in teacher education institutions in East Africa	http://roer4d.org/sp-10-1-impact-of-tesa-oer-in-east-africa
SP10.2: Impact of AVU OER in Kenya, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Somalia, Senegal, Zambia, Mozambique, Madagascar, Zimbabwe	http://roer4d.org/sp10-2-impact-of-avu-and-other-oer-in-africa
SP10.3: OER in and as MOOCs: an analysis of impact on educators' practices in African-developed higher education courses	http://roer4d.org/sp10-3-impact-of-oer-in-and-as-moocs-in-south-africa
SP10.4: Impact of the OER Darakht-e Danesh ("knowledge tree") Library on Educators in Afghanistan	http://roer4d.org/sp10-4-impact-of-oer-library-in-afghanistan
SP10.5: Investigating the Impact of OER on Secondary and Tertiary Education in Pakistan	http://roer4d.org/sp10-5-impact-of-oer-on-teaching-and-learning-in-pakistan
SP10.6: Impact of integrating OER in teacher education at the Open University of Sri Lanka	http://roer4d.org/sp10-6
SP10.7: Impact of OER on Cost Analysis and Quality of Course Materials in Postgraduate Distance Education Courses in the Philippines	http://roer4d.org/sp10-7
SP 11: Public funding for basic education in South Africa: are open educational resources being funded?	http://roer4d.org/oer-11-mapping-public-funding-for-oer-in-africa
SP 12: Mapping public funding for education in Latin America: The road for OER advocacy and policy development	http://roer4d.org/sp-12-mapping-public-funding-for-oer-in-america

CASE STUDY 2: RESEARCH ICT AFRICA (RIA)

I. Introduction

This case study demonstrates impact pathways of the Research ICT Africa (RIA) project to policy changes to improvements in people's lives within the complexities of their contexts, and how RIA adapted its impact pathways to respond to changes in the ecosystem. It focuses on the ways in which the INASSA team supported their projects and areas where additional INASSA support could be helpful; benefits of the think tank modality in RIA's case; and where collaboration with other INASSA projects might be beneficial.

II. Project context and objectives

As stated in the RIA vision statement, "the Research ICT Africa Network conducts research on ICT policy and regulation that facilitates evidence-based and informed policy making for improved access, use and application of ICT for social development and economic growth."

RIA's public-interest research responded to national, regional and continental needs and was tailored to the needs of each context. It provided African researchers, governments, regulators, operators, multilateral institutions, development agencies, community organizations and trade unions with the information, analysis, and frameworks required to develop innovative and appropriate policies, effective implementation and successful network operations that could contribute to sustainable development.

The specific project, Catalyzing broadband in Africa (#107383) focused on "three countries: Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa, located in East, West and Southern Africa. These were not only the three largest markets in their regions best able to exploit some of the benefits of broadband, but also faced some of the greatest challenges in rapid urbanisation, growing inequality and massive youth unemployment,"¹⁵ thus the project intended to maximize contribution to development outcomes. The project built on RIA's fifteen-year history and adapted the approach from simply providing empirical data and analysis toward taking a systems approach to analyzing data and influencing ICT policy.

RIA began in 2003, recognizing that there was limited current ICT data and analysis in Africa for policymakers, regulators and other decision-makers in order to craft evidence-based policy and regulation. Further, much of the data was as much as two-years old at time of publication. Over the following 15 years, RIA conducted high-quality research, compiled comparative reports, and analyzed data for policy papers and briefs to inform evidence-based policy and regulation. The number of countries covered grew to 20 by 2008 and subsequently, economic pressures, funding decline and the failure of local governments to support the research as originally intended led to RIA conducting the full household survey research in many fewer countries.

RIA continued to conduct research and analysis in at least 20 African countries and benefited from the network of country partners it had cultivated across Africa. These partners varied from

¹⁵ Broadband 4 Africa – ensuring economic and social inclusion, Prepared for the International Development Research Centre by Research ICT Africa, January 2014.

researchers and consultants who worked at universities, in government bureaux (such as a bureau of statistics), and international organizations as well as industry and other stakeholders who worked in government agencies, ITC companies and parliaments (figure 1). This loose network of associates, consultants, and stakeholders is engaged in or consulted on projects and considered “credible, well-qualified resources” (government user, female). With its network embedded across Africa and a think tank at the center in Cape Town, RIA was considered to be a hybrid between think tank and network.

RIA had been responsive to emerging technologies and market changes. As mobile penetration rates increased above the 40% threshold thought to bring network effects in social benefits and economic growth, the needs changed and RIA responded by altering its approach. It strengthened its work in supporting multilateral agencies in establishing indices, increased the robustness of its benchmarking across countries, and explored specific issues related to access, inclusion and affordability in depth, such as a 2017 study of the state of microwork in Africa.¹⁶ Further, RIA developed an ecosystem framework and value-chain model as it took more of a systems approach to its analysis and policy influence activities.

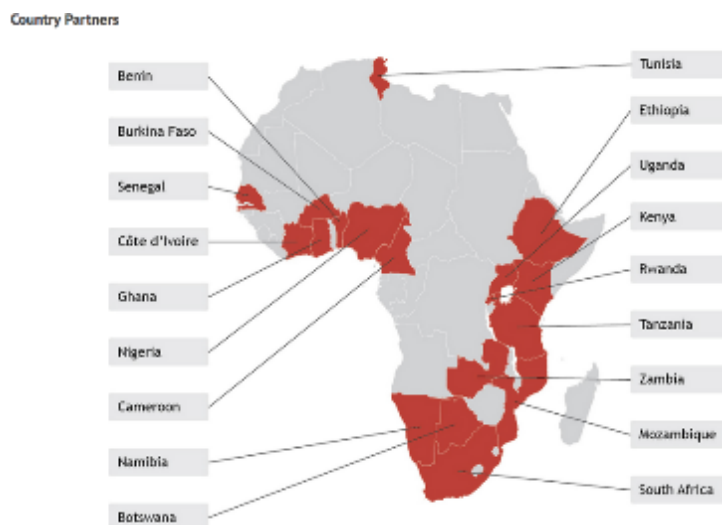


Figure 1: RIA Country Partners

¹⁶ What is the state of microwork in Africa? A view from seven countries, a working paper, Gillwald, Mothobi, and Schoentgen, #afteraccess Policy Paper Series, no.2. 2017.

III. Change Theory for the project

The stated Theory of Change of RIA was developed with DECI as part of the 2014 evaluation¹⁷. It contained four key strategies: research, capacity building, networking and credibility/relationship-building. Resulting internal outcomes included publication, demand-side data, and country reports combined with capacity building of researchers and responsiveness to policymakers' needs. Resulting external outcomes were broadened policy regimes, broadened policy horizons and broadened policy capacities at the government or policymaking level and development outcomes are described in terms of poverty alleviation.

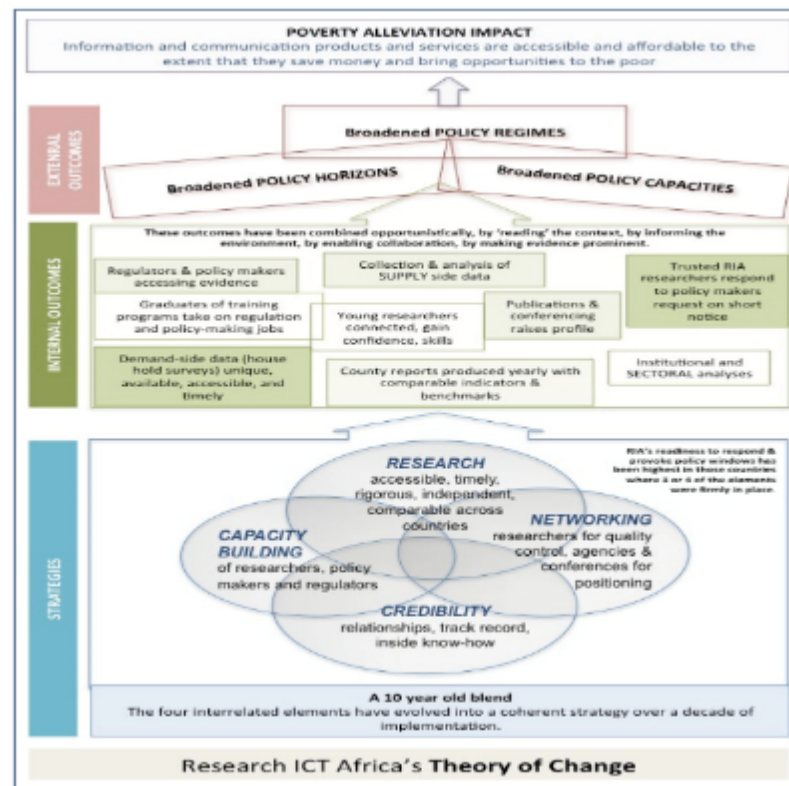


Figure 2: Theory of Change (2014)

¹⁷ Research ICT Africa – DECI-2 Collaboration: Evaluation Report, New Economy Development Group, April, 2014.

Since the 2014 evaluation, RIA had made significant gains in its capacity to communicate research and its value add to policy makers. This had been demonstrated by a broader range of core team members engaging in research design, international peer engagement, and some government interface (in the policy influence process). It had also made gains in adapting its implicit theory of change in response to changes in context as discussed below and presented in figure 3. While a new theory of change had not been specifically crafted, it evolved over the course of the project and the combination of the Broadband Value Chain/Policy Intervention model (figure 3) in the context of the ICT Ecosystem (figure 4) could serve as a proxy.

The model shows four research focus areas (points of policy intervention) with eight areas of activities and policy principles listed. This results in intermediate outcomes in governance and rights, capacity building, and innovation. And, development outcomes include democratisation, social and economic inclusion, and social innovation. The industry dynamics are further highlighted in the ICT Ecosystem, which shows how investment and human (e-skills) development lead to employment, economic growth, and innovation. (NB: economic growth is included in the description but not the diagram.)¹⁸

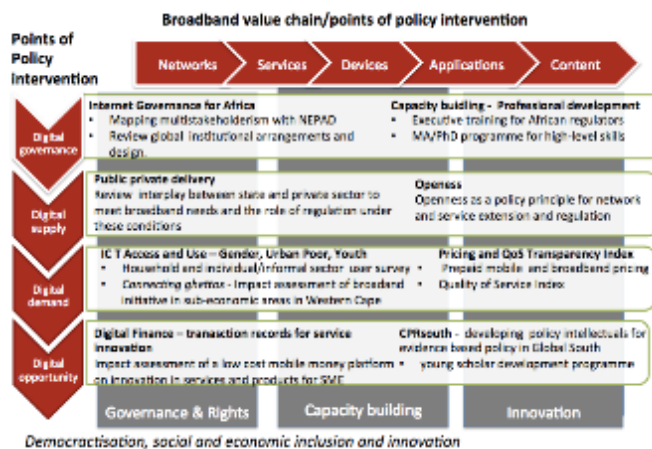


Figure 3: Broadband Value Chain/ Policy Intervention

¹⁸ Ibid. Broadband 4 Africa, January 2014.

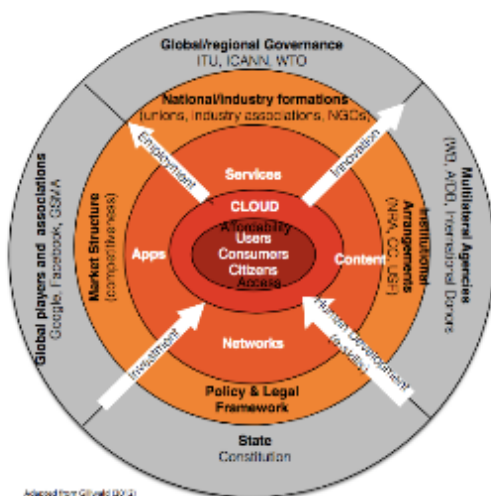


Figure 4: ICT Ecosystem

IV. Project outputs

Description of the range of outputs annually that the project generated (2016 data)¹⁹

- Consulting Projects (including benchmarking) (6)
- Studies (5)
- Policy papers (4)
- Journal articles (4)
- Policy briefs (3)
- Conferences and workshops (12)
- Internet governance fora seats (6)
- Indices (3)
- Household ICT pricing, access and use survey (7 countries, 2017)
- PhD supervision (2)
- Fellowships (3)
- On-the-job training
- Website (2,530 pages; 273,317 visits; 14,516 unique visitors)
- Blog posts (RIA RAP) (12)
- Media citations (18)
- Twitter account (1,329 followers, 432 tweets per year on average)
- Facebook page (3,396 followers)
- Communication and marketing materials (book, e-book, etc.)

¹⁹ Broadband 4 Africa – ensuring economic and social inclusion: Interim Technical and Financial Report, December 2016.

V. Project outcomes

- ***Policy influence to increase access to broadband and other ICT services***
 - RIA's research and benchmarking on pricing in Botswana compared with other countries showed who had access and who did not have access. It was taken up by ministry and regulatory authorities and it convinced regulators to reduce prices. The paper produced from the research reinforced pro-poor policies by showing that pricing policies allowed people to substitute voice and text for data and make contact for free, increasing access, and that the companies that embrace data substitution were doing well in partnership with platform companies, resulting in a positive overall economic effect.
 - In South Africa, RIA's ethnographic paper had an impact on a specific hearing on Over The Top (OTT) legislation to help level power dynamics of operators. RIA acted as a Friend of Parliament and the introductory publication exposed the corporate policies of operators who are so powerful in South Africa, paving the way for fair competition legislation.
 - "I think the approach they are taking is very good... well thought of and well thought through because the interactions they have... to work with the regulators and ICT regulating bodies works its way into policy making bodies." (Government user, female)
- ***Developed indices to help benchmark pricing and services across countries***
 - RIA's African Mobile Pricing (RAMP) index had been an effective tool to benchmark mobile and broadband pricing as well as to assess competition between suppliers. A RAMP index measure was developed for Cameroon as part of the price transparency project. Data was collected and made available in the public domain.
 - RIA contributed to the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) supply side indicators via participation in the ITU task force on gender studies.
- ***Unmasked real inequalities (gender, income)***
 - Through a focus on access in the annual household survey, RIA made refinements in this mature research product to bring forth pertinent issues in the evolving market. The accuracy and validity of that data allowed for modeling during this project period to uncover real inequalities in the area of gender, income, access and use.
- ***RIA contributed to policy implementation in ICT and economic development***
 - In South Africa, through a **policy brief** on competition and affordability of mobile telecom, RIA informed regulation discussions. The brief also contributed to the Rate Must Fall campaign in South Africa (#RMF), urging lower prices and fair competition between suppliers. RIA's research was acknowledged by companies as a more credible and independent analysis than what the companies were able to provide.
 - In Tanzania a pricing brief was well accepted, based on a survey RIA conducted showing that people cannot afford access to smartphone devices. This led regulators to look at how to reduce taxes on smartphone prices. Similar work

had been done in Nigeria to assess market pricing competition (supply and demand brief) and in Uganda (prices of telecom service)

- RIAs work on South Africa Connect, the broadband rollout plan, as well as the **strategic framework for broadband**, was very influential, informed by the chapter of the national implementation plan (that RIA helped develop), highlighting inconsistencies, constraints, and loopholes between policy and implementation and demonstrating ICT for economic development.
 - **“RIA informs us on what is and should and what isn’t happening.** It is not dinner table gossip it is actually thoroughly researched by people who understand legislative policy and you can do comparisons. There is also the international collaborative that they have, the research they do, and their basic knowledge worldwide. (Government user, female)

VI. Priorities for the future

Deeper analysis of interview data led to define two key areas that Research ICT Africa might consider as it sets its priorities for the future:

a) Digital readiness, economic growth, and cyber security

- To meet the need for digital readiness... research showed that **digital literacy** is a need now. More research is needed that spells out what the digital divide is and what is needed for basic mobile literacy as well as **infrastructure roll out** and costs of IT and literacy.
- Greater support in **systems thinking** and coming up with new business models in the way that government delivers IT-related services to the private sector that empower citizens and spur economic growth: This includes **scaling** and systems change so we can benefit from ICT at a broader scale to encourage startups, business development and economic growth.
- **Internet peering policy**, where different networks need to peer together to use local networking together rather than using international networks: Research is needed on how peering policy can ensure internet security and continued IT investment.
- **Benchmarking and research on** cyber security and issues of e-commerce.
- Research on **digital transformation**: a much broader issue than access or connectivity that would surround policy and facilitate digital solutions to transform whole economy (and to perform government operations digitally i.e. getting a passport).

b) Education of policy makers and government bureaux

- Government ministries don’t always have necessary skills to do **a market analysis, to develop telecom pricing, and to create a strategic framework for broadband** that encourages economic growth. More training in these areas would be beneficial
- **Legislators are not always well versed in technology**, at times they don’t understand the specifics of what it is they are legislating. If there were more assistance to provide clarity or more discussion on the technology and the **impact on people’s lives** and on the **environment**, policy development could be better informed.

VII. Contribution analysis

a) *The project contributed to the INASSA program's longer-term outcomes in the following ways:*

- RIA's taking a systems approach in research and policy influence, with attention to economic development and strategic frameworks for broadband, was **supporting ecosystems for positive economic development** that would create jobs and create impact, leading to social inclusion through employment generation. Their approach improved health of the ecosystem at the same time that RIA was working with government, commercial and other stakeholders to develop the ecosystem.
- RIA's attention to pricing and access issues of youth to the internet could lead to **solving issues of employment, education**, and could expose youth to markets they otherwise could not access.
- RIAs framework that put the consumers and citizens at the center led to a natural focus on economic and social inclusion in IT research and policy development. It led to **improved lives and promoted social development, economic growth, and enhanced political participation**.
- The research's shedding light on issues of competition led to the breaking up of monopolies and duopolies and led to policies that **created conditions for fair competition**.
- The project's increase in capacity on the systems levels in the past three-year period positioned it for a stronger role in addressing an increasingly complex market and a continued **leadership role in influencing ITC policy in Africa**. This was demonstrated by increased influential participation on committees in multilateral organizations, more complex analyses in policy briefs in South Africa, and a multi-faceted systems approach in the revised (implicit) theory of change.

b) IDRC contributed to the project's successful outcomes in the following ways:

- IDRC's **flexibility** allowed the grantee to adapt to changing or unanticipated conditions, as long as value was demonstrated.
- "IDRC understands the work." (manager, female)
- IDRC provided **enabling support** that helped the grantee deliver to what they've undertaken and **allowed for organic ownership** of projects and institutions... rather than parachuting in with a solution.

c) *Opportunities exist for IDRC to enhance its support of the project in the following ways:*

- It may be beneficial for IDRC to **work with other donor organisations** to fund the type of research and policy influence that RIA is engaged in in order to cover a broader geographic scope and to advance RIA's systemic approach in a way that could transform the ecosystem in Africa toward increased health and economic development.
 - "In our case, we had to interact with different donors. It's extremely complex and they have different objectives and different strategies and efforts must be refined and reviewed accord to different needs of donors. **It would be easier if IDRC were to do the coordination.**" (Researcher, male)

- It may be beneficial for IDRC to increase coordination between programme and financial management of projects. The grantee found that securing a grant from IDRC was quite a difficult process. “On the substantive side, you have competent people who engage with the proposal. On the financial side, out-of-context approval of financial proposals doesn’t always make sense in the African context. Additionally, reporting processes are taxing for a small organization.” (Manager, female)

VIII. Lessons learned

In analyzing interview data, financial and managerial documents, public reports and results, the evaluation team distilled the following “lessons learned” to present the most salient points from the case study analysis.

- a) *The modality (hybrid think tank and network-based) affected the project’s ability to achieve its outcomes in the following ways:*
 - The institutional independence, not hampered with university bureaucracy, allowed RIA to be more responsive and flexible in meeting government needs. RIA’s rapid response efforts are an example of this.
 - The embeddedness of RIA’s country partners in each country gave RIA on-the-ground knowledge and access to research capacity and influencers. This differed by country and included bureau of statistics, councils for scientific research, as well as those involved in the political and regulatory processes.
 - Engaging with young, emerging researchers from target countries, developing them and facilitating research through them gave better access to in-country data and context.
- b) *The following aspects of the project were most effective in helping RIA to achieve their goals effectively:*
 - RIA **maintained its focus on its specific goals** during the project. This clarity allowed them to forge stronger partnerships because partners were not threatened that they would go outside of their parameters. RIA’s focus on their own agenda facilitated stronger collaboration.
 - RIA’s **neutrality as a research organization** as well as their long track record of high-quality research gave them credibility and access to government bodies. Also, because they were not going to gain financial rewards, there was more openness to their position being accepted or legislated. Research of counterparts in the business sector came with a conflict of interest that did not apply to RIA.
- c) *The following aspects of the project were challenges to RIA achieving their goals and decreased their effectiveness:*
 - Ability to engage local governments to participate financially in research that benefits them was a challenge. RIAs evolving ecosystem framework and their incorporating economic development benefits of their work may help in the future.

- Limited resources to research and engage in policy influence across a continent as large as Africa limited RIAs scope, however they were creative in using resources strategically.
 - **“Without independent state resources... you can’t produce neutral data.** Especially in the ICT world, we’re seeing in the **absence of traditional state funding** in different parts of the work and the cutbacks of traditional academic and research funding donor cuts.” (Researcher, female)
- Election cycles and local politics can hamper timing of research activities as well as alignment of interests to do neutral, public-interest research.
 - “One of the challenges is **to get policy makers to listen to what you are saying.** It depends on who you’re talking to... there are issues of the market being captured... If the policy maker focus is making sure the operators have more profits than you are left saying nothing.” (researcher, male)
- Limited understanding or interest from regulators and policy makers to request, participate in, or co-fund in-depth research that uncovers access, inclusion, and gender issues.

d) The following areas may increase the effectiveness of RIA in achieving their goals in future IDRC projects

- While RIA had made gains since the 2014 evaluation in the extent to which a variety of staff members engage in high-level communications, the strategic management of the organization relied heavily on the Executive Director as one might expect for an organization of RIA’s size. The organization might consider broadening or grooming executive capacity in some way, in light of future succession, in order to maintain the organization’s contribution long into the future. Capacity development of the core team had already begun to show positive results in this area. Further grooming of executive capacity could be in the form of shared leadership, such as the multiple principle investigator model that Open AIR employs, or perhaps an executive committee. No matter the timeframe, succession planning might benefit RIA’s effectiveness achieving its goals in the long-term.
- **Collaboration with other IDRC projects** could be beneficial. For example, because RIA has been doing Africa-wide studies, they could collaborate more closely with LIRNEasia on projects and learnings across continents.
- Or, a collaboration between RIA and Open AIR could benefit both organizations: Open AIR brings its expertise in using grounded theory and experimentation to develop an emerging field (bottom-up), upscaling, and disruptive innovation and RIA brings their expertise in taking a systemic approach, adapting to change (top-down), and influencing policy.

ANNEX B: SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS

Introduction

Social network analysis (SNA) is a methodology that serves to map and assess the relationships and flows between people, organizations, computers, etc., within a given group. It is particularly useful for exploring the dynamics of an ecosystem such as INASSA's, since it provides both a visual and a mathematical analysis which helps to better understand how such a system operates in reality. The location and connections of actors in the network give insights into their various roles and groupings, such as who are the connectors, brokers, hubs, etc., as well as characteristics of the entire network related to how connected and cohesive it may be overall.

The evaluation has carried out a simplified SNA exercise of the INASSA program, based on some questions from a survey for INASSA project actors, i.e., individual directly involved in the implementation of projects, mainly from the project management teams, researchers and others such as project advisors or consultants, the 'Grantees survey' (annex X).

Two types of relations (or connections) were explored:

- The first referred to **information resource exchange** (of data, knowledge, publications, etc.) among actors, with separate questions for the provision and the reception of those resources.
- The second looked at the extent of active **collaboration** among actors. The response data, coming from individual persons, was then processed and organized to show project-to-project relations. This analysis is then conducted at a project level, i.e., the project will be the specific 'object' of the analysis.

Resource exchange was considered a medium-intensity connection, and collaboration a high-intensity connection²⁰. The location and connections of nodes in the networks give insights into their various roles and groupings, such as who are the connectors, brokers, sub-groups, etc., as well as characteristics of the entire network related to overall connectedness and cohesiveness.

The evaluation took a conservative approach in how it processed the survey results. This has the effect of decreasing the number of data points (which reduces the overall size of the network and thus the scope of the analysis), while strengthening their adequacy and thus relevance to the type of analysis conducted (which increases the credibility of the analysis results).

It is important to underline, however, that this analysis does not provide a statistically significant assessment of the INASSA ecosystem networked behavior. It was meant to be used as a complementary source of information to that provided by other sources like interviews, site visits, and documental research. There was no way for the evaluation, within its operational confines, to obtain a large enough, evenly distributed enough response rate to infer a more decisive meaning to the resulting data. The limitations of this analysis are that its results should be seen to have an 'indicative' rather than a 'conclusive' nature.

²⁰ An example of a low intensity connection could be a meeting where two nodes were present

The Grantees survey received 126 responses²¹, of which 94 (75%) were completed, meaning the informant went through to the end of the questionnaire. From these completed responses, there were some informants that said to be involved in more than one project. There were also some that when responding to the three questions related to the network analysis (about resource sharing and collaboration) only marked their own projects, which was not meaningful information and suggest the questions were not formulated clearly enough for them to establish that we were looking for information regarding other projects. All of those data points were excluded for the final analysis, leaving 33 responses for the analysis. These were all individuals that linked themselves to only one project, responded to those three questions, and did not only responded reflexively to their project (which could include a negative response to relations with any other project).

The response data, coming from individual persons, was then processed and organized to show project-to-project relations. This analysis is then conducted at a project level, i.e., the project will be the basic 'object' of the analysis.

The results will refer to a small set of basic network parameters. We will start examining basic network-wide characteristics, such as global dimensions and cohesiveness. Then will move into the longer section analyzing a set of network nodal (project) characteristics, related to the number of connections and positioning (betweenness, eigenvectors and closeness).

INASSA network-representation components

In the analysis, the **nodes** were the projects. There were **three types** of projects modalities: **networks, think-tanks, and 'service-providers'**. Service projects such as 'DECI-2' and 'Building Capacities for Systematic Reviews' were a source of valuable support for part of the INASSA portfolio. They helped to develop valuable capacities in some targeted, willing projects.

As mentioned above, there were two types of **connections**, which implies two INASSA networking perspectives examined: one related to resource exchange, and the other to collaboration.

The labels (shortened names) for the projects are shown in the following table. The projects in the colored rows are the ones for which evaluation undertook direct data collection and had a direct interaction, as per the terms of reference. The others had either been evaluated already (SEED, OD4D and DECI-2) or did not merit an explicit assessment. But they were all included in the network analysis because they were all under the INASSA umbrella and there could be connections among any of them.

Node label	Project name
DL4D	Digital Learning for Development

²¹ There were 245 invitations sent out, plus an undetermined (though likely smaller) additional number of individuals that may have accessed the questionnaire directly via a direct web link provided by their project managers. Of the 245 people whose responses the survey application (Survey Monkey) allowed to track, 70 of them sent completed responses, a 29% response rate, an acceptable rate for existing standards).

OCSDNet	Open and collaborative science for development network
ROER4D	Research on Open Educational Resources for Development
SIRCA III	Strengthening information society research capacity III
Open AIR	Scaling technology start-ups in Africa
SEED	Alliance to Scale Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship
DECI-2	Developing Evaluation and Communication Capacity in Information Society Research
OD4D	Harnessing open data to achieve development results in Asia and Africa
Reviews	Building Research Capacity for Systematic Reviews
Comms	Strategic Communications for the Information and Networks in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa (INASSA) and Information and Network (I&N) programmes
Consultation	Consultation on Inclusion in the Network Society
Learning	New learning opportunities in a networked world
RIA	Catalyzing broadband in Africa
LIRNE_mobile	Leveraging mobile network big data for development
LIRNE_Myanmar	Toward a Networked Economy in Myanmar
LIRNE_Inclusive	Inclusive information societies: Creating growth and employment opportunities in Asia
LIRNE_Inclusion	Inclusion in the information society in Asia

Overall networked behavior and whole-network metrics

The network graphs in this sub-section represent basic representations of the results, based on a type of network parameter – in this case, so called ‘degree’ or numbers of connections.

Fig B-1 below represents a network graph of **resource exchange** between projects, as reported by survey respondents. The connections were ‘directed’, meaning that the data takes into account whether a node provided or received resources (or both). The direction of the arrows shows how the resources flowed. For example, there were 2 instances of OD4D providing resources (to Open AIR and SIRCA III), but not receiving any. Orange links indicate bi-directional exchanges, and pink ones represent unidirectional ones. The thickness of the links indicates their frequency, i.e., thicker links represent a larger number of exchanges among two projects. The relative size of the nodes corresponds to how many times they were reported to provide resources to other projects²². The shape of the node, as per the legend, indicate the type of project modality.

²² This graph represents ‘out-degree’ connections, meaning how many times a project provided resources to other graphs. There are also ‘in-degree’ connections,

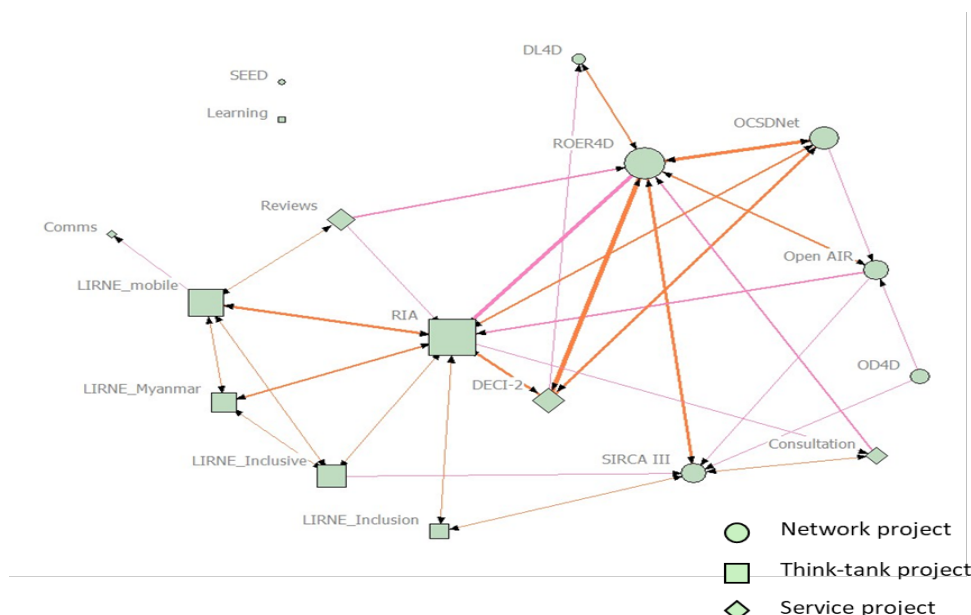


Figure B-1: Resource exchange among INASSA projects (directed, outdegree graph)

What may be inferred from this graph? Without assigning much accuracy/completeness to the data, given the limitations described above, some characteristics do emerge. One, that RIA and ROER4D are the most central projects²³. They exhibit the highest number of connections, and each is well connected with projects of their own modality, but not to the other; e.g., ROER4D is connected with almost all other network projects, and hardly to think-tanks (only RIA). Two, that there is some extent of clustering around modalities, i.e., a higher density of connections among projects with the same modality. This was expected about the think-tank projects, since most of them (4) were implemented by LIRNEasia, a single organization. Three, that bi-directional exchanges were more frequent than unidirectional ones.

On the basis of resource exchange, this network is not highly connected: among 17 projects, there a total of 49 connections (of 272 possible), giving a relatively low network density of 0.180. But it is a 'cohesive' network: on average it only takes 2.02 connections to reach another project

The second graph, in fig B-2 below, corresponds to reported **collaborations** from the survey informants across the program. In this case, the source data has been processed and simplified: the links indicate one or more instances of collaborations, and they are undirected (they don't reflect who informs about the collaboration). In other words, we just registered whether collaboration had taken place, as reported by the survey respondents. The size of the nodes are proportional to the number of collaborations.

²³ Learn-Mobile (the project about mobile big data), has the third highest count of connections (4, vs. ROERD's 5), but is not as centrally connected as ROER4D.

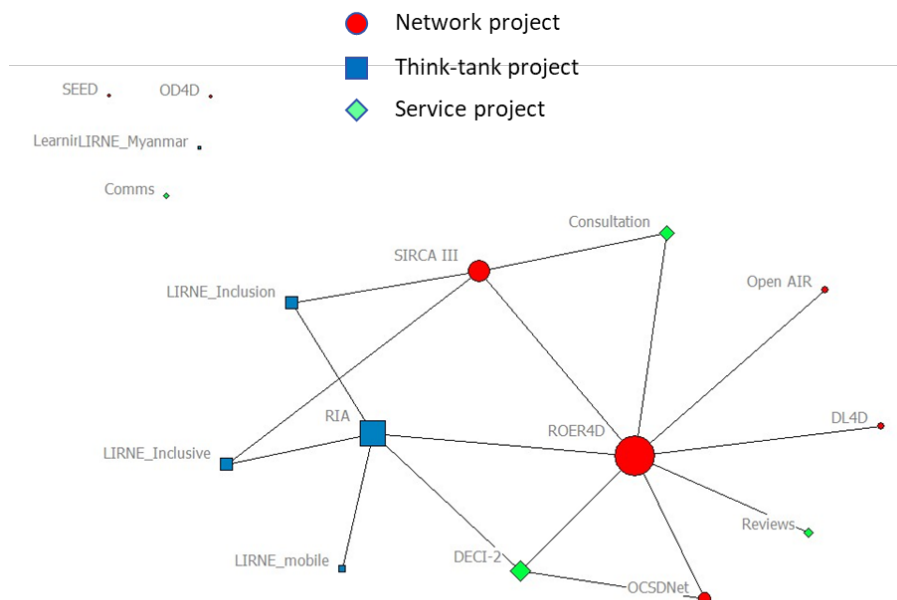


Figure B-2: Collaboration among INASSA projects (undirected, degree graph)

The interpretation of this network graph is simpler than for resource exchange. First, RIA and ROER4D are even more central than before, and ROER4D this time is significantly more connected than RIA. Second, the collaboration network is much less connected than the one for resource exchange (which could be expected, since it requires more effort to collaborate than to provide some information or knowledge resource). Five projects (almost 30%) did not show connections. Third, the level of clustering is similar, but more dependent on the RIA and ROER4D. Network density was 0.118 (vs. 0.180 before), but it's more cohesive: it now takes 1.97 jumps to reach another project (from the connected component), and the network diameter is down to 3.

Finally, table A includes key parameters that describe a network in terms of its overall dimensions and cohesiveness.

	Resource exchange	Collaboration
Diameter length of the longest geodesic.	4	3
Density number of edges divided by the maximum number possible	0.180	0.118
Avg distance average geodesic distance amongst reachable pairs	2.016	1.970
Avg degree The average degree in the underlying graph	2.882	1.882
Connectedness the proportion of pairs of nodes that are reachable	0.673	0.485

Table B-1: INASSA whole- network metrics

Resource Exchange network results

Figure B-3 provides an illustration of the type of information that can be displayed in a network graph. While examining the Resource Exchange representation, it should be reminded that it essentially depicts information flows (a close approximation to what resource exchange means). The colors and shapes help to differentiate among the types of projects: (i) red circles indicate networked-implemented projects, e.g. ROER4D or SIRCA III; (ii) blue squares are think-tank implemented project (by either RIA or LIRNEasia), and (iii) green diamonds are what we refer to as 'service' projects, meaning those whose main function was to support other projects/organizations, e.g. DECI-2 or Building Capacity for Systematic Reviews.

The connections convey several pieces of information. Firstly, their arrows indicate the direction of the information flows, which is not symmetrical, as informants specified the provision or reception of resources. The numbers next to the nodes show the number of times that instances of information flow were reported. For example, looking at relations between ROER4D and DL4D, the '2.0' means the responses show 2 instances of resources going from ROER4D-to-DL4D, while the '1.0' indicates that there was 1 instance reported of resource going from DL4D-to-ROER4D.

In addition, the color of the lines show whether there were bilateral exchanges reported (red) or unilateral only (blue). Line thickness is proportional to the number of exchanges reported, just as a visual hint of the connection frequencies.

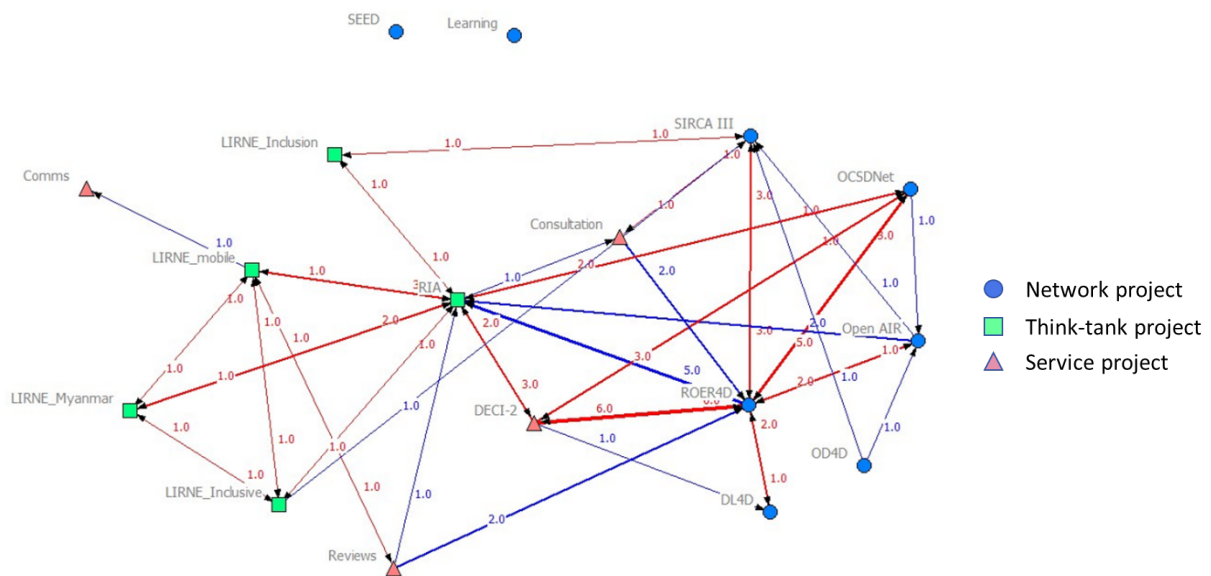


Fig B-3. INASSA Resource Exchange network graph

By controlling how the connection frequency is displayed we can see, for example, which projects were connected at least two times or more to other projects. The resulting graph (fig B-4) is quite different, which indicates a significant share of single connections between project pairs. A higher connection frequency means a stronger bond between two projects.

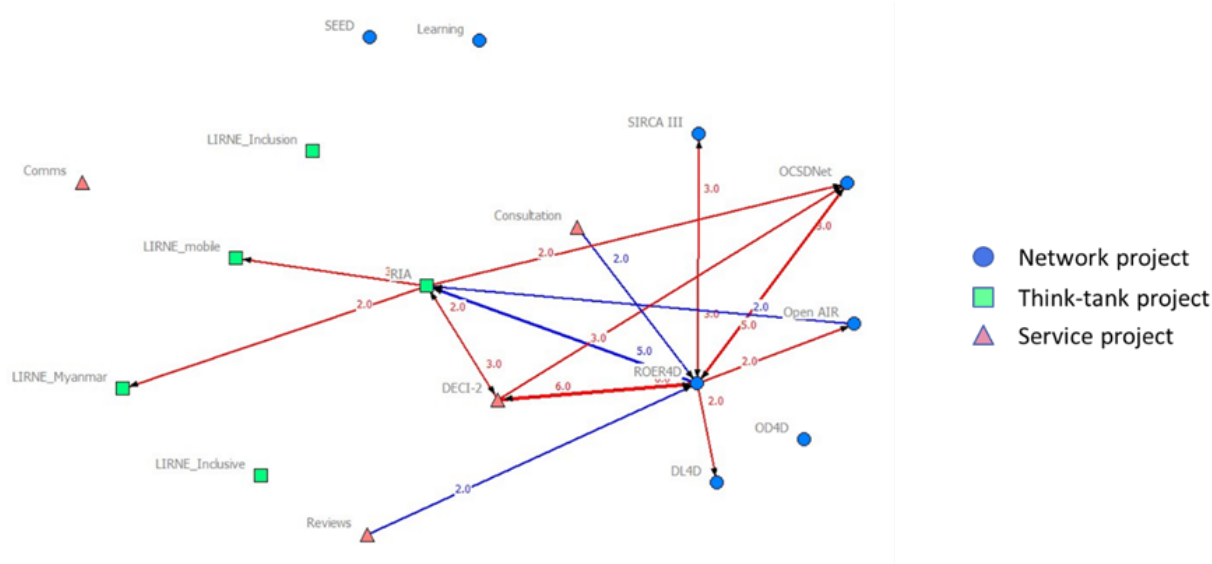


Fig B-4. INASSA Resource Exchange graph: relationships with 2 or more connections

Node centrality

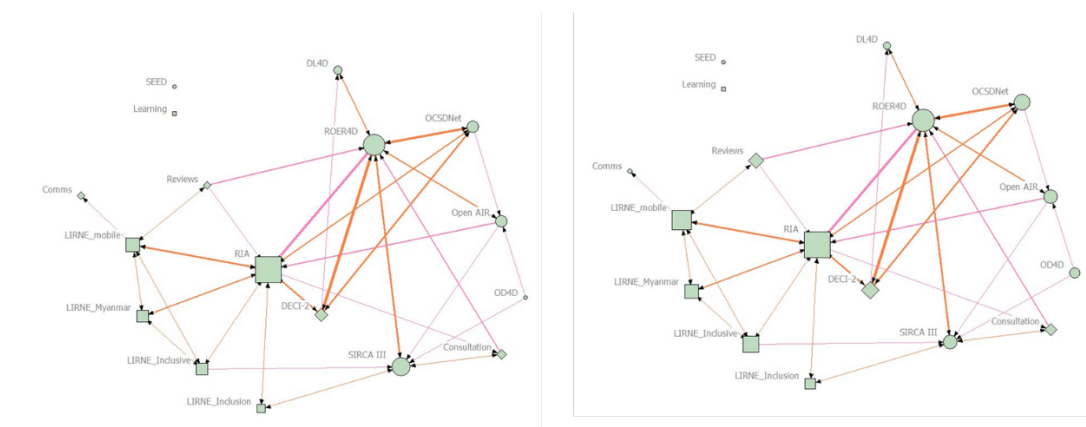
The location and connections of nodes in the networks give insights into their various roles and groupings, such as who are the main connectors, brokers, sub-groups, etc.²⁴ Similarity of node positions imply similar outcomes, risks or opportunities.

A highly centralized network is dominated by one or a few very central nodes. If these nodes (the hub or hubs) are removed or damaged, the network can fragment into unconnected sub-networks. A highly central node can become a single point of failure. A network centralized around a well-connected hub can fail abruptly if that hub is disabled or removed. A less centralized network has no single points of failure. It is resilient in the face of many intentional attacks or random failures -- many nodes or links can fail while allowing the remaining nodes to still reach each other over other network paths. Networks of low centralization fail gracefully. There are various types of centrality parameters, which we now examine for the Resource Exchange INASSA network configuration.

Degree centrality

It measures network activity for a node by using the concept of degrees, i.e., the number of direct connections a node has. The more connections a node has, the more of a 'hub' that node is, or the more active it is with other nodes. The in-degree centrality is a count of the number of ties directed to a node, and the out-degree centrality is the number of ties that the node directs to others. Degree centrality provides insights into the level of access to resources in a network.

²⁴ The data also serves to measure overall network connectedness and cohesiveness, which was presented above.



Legend. Project (node) types: squares, think tanks; circles, network; diamonds, service project

Fig B-5. INASSA Resource Exchange degree graphs: incoming (left) and outgoing (right) connections.

The graphs in fig B-5 indicate the relative number of connections by the size of the node. The RIA project and ROER4D have the highest degree centrality, i.e. they show the highest number of connections (in or out-going). Moreover, each is well connected with projects of their own modality, but not as much to the other; e.g., ROER4D is connected with almost all other network projects, but hardly to think-tank projects (only RIA's). Thus RIA's project and ROER4D emerged as two program hubs for this criterion.

Two clusters of projects emerge around modalities, which indicates a higher density of connections among projects with the same modality. This was expected particularly about the think-tank projects since four out of five of them were implemented by LIRNEasia, and the fifth one (RIA's) connects to each one of them. It is also observed that bi-directional connections were more frequent than unidirectional ones (in these image, orange links are bi-directional, and pink ones uni-directional).²⁵ Two projects did not indicate any resource flows with others, SEED and 'Learning'.

Betweenness Centrality

Betweenness is a measure of the centrality of a node in a network according to the shortest paths between node pairs that pass through the node of interest. It represents how much a node is capable of connecting other nodes, i.e. being *between* two of them. Betweenness centrality measures of the influence a node has over the flows in a network (in this case, the resource or informational flows). In other words, it indicates how much a node can act as a broker between nodes in the network. A node that is highly connected overall (degree centrality) but has high betweenness would be able to exert significant influence over what flows -- and does not -- in the network.

²⁵ There is also a larger number of outgoing connections reported (perhaps because a survey respondent may be more aware of what s/he actually provided to another project, than viceversa).

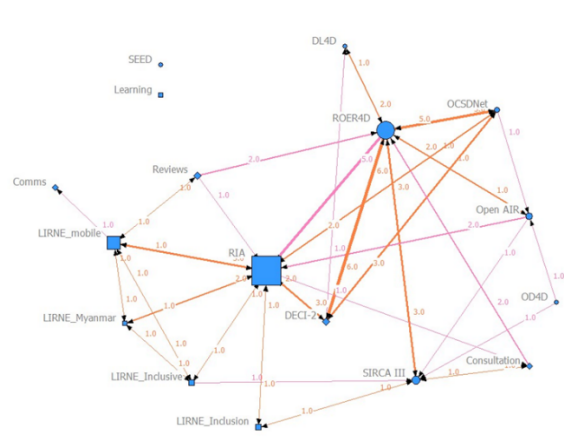


Fig B-6 INASSA Resource Exchange betweenness graph

The graph in fig B-6 indicates that RIA's project has the highest betweenness, given its connections also reaching some of the network projects. This makes it an even stronger hub (and thus potentially more of a broker), since hubs also need to have relatively high betweenness coefficients. ROER4D plays a broker role within the networks (5 direct bridges), while LIRNE-Mobile (the project about mobile big data) also has significant betweenness among the LIRNEasia projects (4 direct bridges), but is not as centrally connected as ROER4D. The service project, particularly DECI-2 and (Strategic) Reviews, presently have low betweenness coefficients, because there are other more direct connections²⁶. However, their positioning between think-tank and network projects could be further exploited as intermediaries and brokers, since they can work with any type of project. For example, if RIA's node would disappear, both DECI-2 and Reviews would almost be the sole connectors between the think-tank and network groups.

Closeness Centrality

Closeness centrality examines the shortest paths a node has to all other nodes²⁷. The shortest the path is, or the closer the node is to the others, it is related to the visibility the node has on what is happening in the network. Closeness centrality be thought of as an index of the expected time-until-arrival for things flowing through the network via optimal paths. The in-closeness centrality regards the shortest path through links leading to that node. The out-closeness centrality relates to the shortest path drawn to nodes that are connected through outbound links. High values of closeness indicate a faster capacity of a node to reach the rest of the nodes (it's good positioning inside the network), and implies a higher potential for diffusion or influence.

²⁶ For example, DECI-2 is a potential bridge between RIA and ROER4D, but those two already connect directly.

²⁷ This is also referred in network graphs as a 'geodesic'. A geodesic path is the shortest path for an actor to reach other actors.

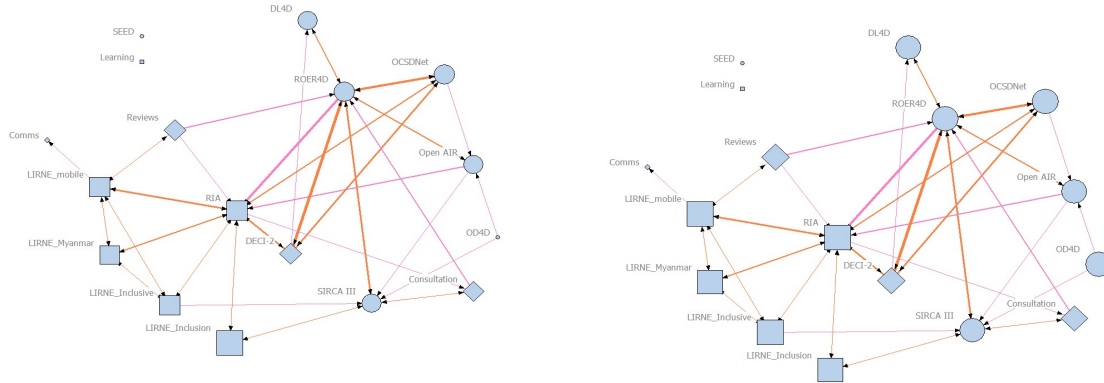
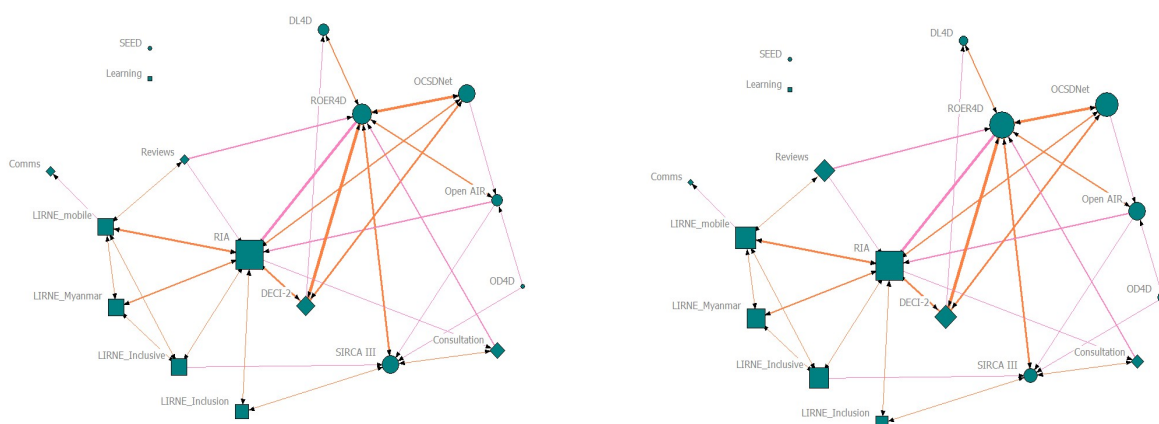


Fig B-7 INASSA Resource Exchange Closeness graphs: left, in-closeness; right, out-closeness)

For this parameter, in contrast to others seen, fig B-7 indicates that the values are spread more uniformly across the INASSA portfolio. The reason is that the network is small (diameter 4) and that the projects are connected in a way that they can reach other projects relatively quickly (in terms of jumps or connections). In other words, most nodes are relatively close to everyone else. As was the case for in-degree and out-degree graphs, out-closeness shows comparatively higher values (i.e., it's faster to reach other nodes based on outgoing connections).

Eigenvector centrality

The eigenvector centrality is a measure of the importance of a node in a network based on the principle that not all connections are equal: those to 'important' nodes are more valuable than others. The more connections to the most connected nodes, the higher the eigenvector centrality. It is sometimes seen as an approximate of power; the more connections to the most important nodes, the more powerful a node might be.



**Fig B-8 INASSA Resource Exchange Eigenvector- centrality graphs:
left, in-eigenvector; right, out-eigenvector)**

If the graphs in fig. B-8 are compared with the degree centrality ones, the importance-weighted centrality is higher in some nodes that are connected to RIA's project or ROER4D, as well as to other projects which are connected with these two. This is more noticeable with the out-eigenvector graph, for example with OCSDNet (connected to ROER4D and DECI-2²⁸) or the LIRNEAsia projects. Both DECI-2 and Reviews (service projects) increased their relative centrality significantly, which points at the strategic value of their position: they potentially connect to many projects, but also their connection to stronger projects increase their value as interlocutors and as place where information flows can be accelerated around the entire network.

Network Integration - cliques

Network metrics are often measured using number of connections and shortest paths. But it is also important to identify which sub-groups are established. A 'clique' is a sub-group in which every node is connected to every other one directly. Cliques point at closer interaction among small numbers of nodes, and can be a useful indicator of where more fruitful collaboration may occur. Ten cliques were found, with 3 and 4 projects. Unsurprisingly, either RIA's project or ROER4D appear in almost all of them. The service projects DECI-2, Reviews and this time Consultation, appear in 6 of the 10. The matrix below the list of cliques indicate clique-by-clique actor co-membership (i.e. how many nodes a clique shares with another one), and it provides useful information because it indicate the potential of two cliques to connect. The order of the cliques presented in based on this co-membership level. The first four cliques are more strongly connected with the rest, a consequence of including the two hubs, RIA and ROER4D.

²⁸ It is worth remembering that the thickness of the links, i.e. the number of connections among two nodes, is significant. The parameters are calculated not only on the existence of a connection between two nodes, but on the connection frequency between them.

- 1: OCSDNet ROER4D Open AIR RIA
- 2: OCSDNet ROER4D DECI-2 RIA
- 3: ROER4D Reviews RIA
- 4: ROER4D Consultation RIA
- 5: RIA LIRNE_mobile LIRNE_Myanmar LIRNE_Inclusive
- 6: Reviews RIA LIRNE_mobile
- 7: ROER4D SIRCA III Open AIR
- 8: ROER4D SIRCA III Consultation
- 9: SIRCA III Open AIR OD4D
- 10: DL4D ROER4D DECI-2

											1
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1		4	3	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	1
2		3	4	2	2	1	1	1	1	0	2
3		2	2	3	2	1	2	1	1	0	1
4		2	2	2	3	1	1	2	0	0	1
5		1	1	1	1	4	2	0	0	0	0
6		1	1	2	1	2	3	0	0	0	0
7		2	1	1	1	0	0	3	2	2	1
8		1	1	1	2	0	0	2	3	1	1
9		1	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	0
10		1	2	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	3

Collaboration network representation results

The graphs representing the extent of collaboration across the INASSA network were simpler to represent than those about resource exchange. For the analysis, it was decided to simplify the connective data, establishing a single connection among two projects whenever any informant from one project expressed an instance of collaboration with another project, regardless of the number of such instances (frequencies) reported. For example, the line between ROER4D and OCSDNet means that there was some extent of collaboration reported among the two. As compared to information flows, collaborative connections are interpreted as bilateral (or ‘undirected’, in SNA terms) since collaboration implies some joint action²⁹. Thus, there are no separate in/out graphs.

Since the description of the network parameters was made when discussing the results from Resource Exchange, we will now show the graphs together and present a joint discussion of the analysis.

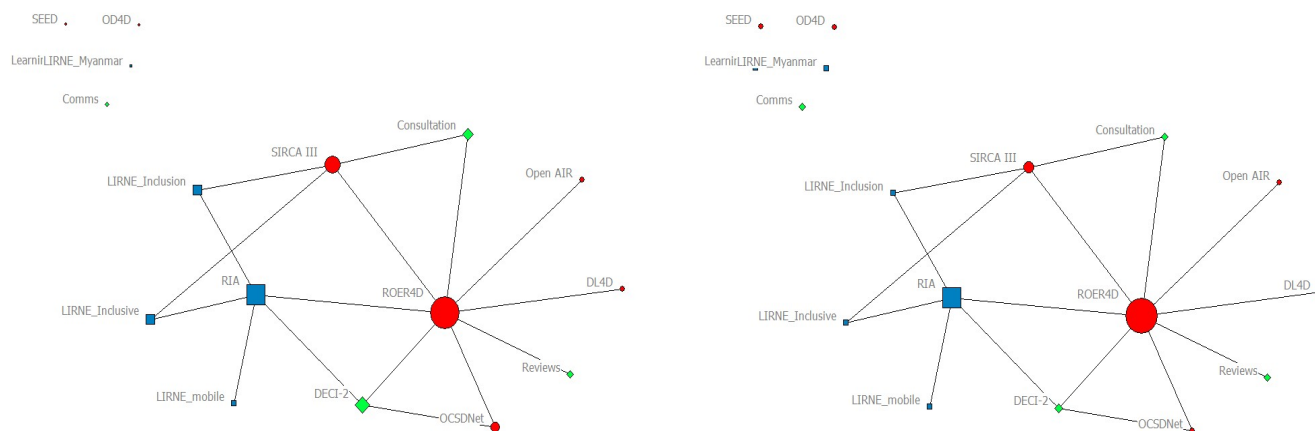


Fig B-9 INASSA collaboration relations: Degree centrality (left) and Betweenness centrality (right)

²⁹ The existence of collaboration between two projects is informative enough for mapping collaboration overall in the network, and it'd be difficult to extract additional meaning from variable frequencies: What would it mean if three informants reported collaboration among the same two projects? Would the informants refer to individual collaborative actions, or that all three were involved in the same collaborative effort among both projects?

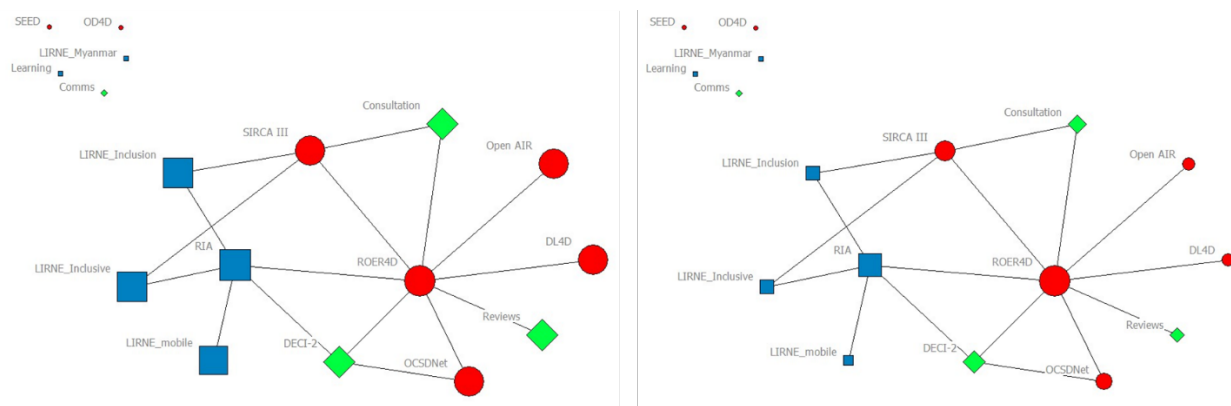


Figure B-10 INASSA Collaboration : Closeness (left), Eigenvalue ((right)

The extent of collaborative connections among the projects is significantly lower than that for resource exchange (or information flows). It corresponds to the higher connective intensity of project-to-project collaboration, which demands much more effort than that for exchanging information resources. This is easy to see in the graphs, for example when comparing the ones about degree centrality for both network types. Notwithstanding the connections frequencies, there are significantly fewer instances of a project-to-project connections in this case (16 vs. 33 for resource exchange). As mentioned above, network density was only 0.118, compared to 0.180 for the other network. Five projects showed zero connections: SEED, OD4D, LIRNE_Myanmar, Learning and Communications, almost 30% of all network nodes.

The two hubs remains ROER4D and RIA's project, as before, and they are even more central than before. But ROER4D is the dominant hub in this case, with a highest degree centrality (larger number of connections) together with the highest betweenness coefficient. Closeness levels are relatively uniform, because the network is smaller and the projects in the connected component are relatively near most of them - it takes about 2 jumps on average to reach another node. As per eigenvalue centrality, almost all projects increased their values mostly because of their links to ROER4D (the most 'powerful' node), including RIA's.

With relation to service projects, only DECI-2 this time was connected to various projects, retaining a potentially valuable role in bridging between the think-tank and network modalities. Surprisingly, the Reviews project did not appear to have connections to any other LIRNEasia projects, which may stem from the limitations in the data sources previously described, but nevertheless was unexpected.

ANNEX C: WEB METRICS ANALYSIS

INASSA Web Metrics were analyzed from the INASSA Twitter account, IDRC Online library, Google Scholar, and the Internet through a webometric analysis. Data from Google Analytics or the like were not available to review activities such as number of INASSA webpage visits, number of unique visitors, downloads of research.

The evaluation reviewed and analyzed the online activity of the INASSA program. Data were extracted outputs.

INASSA Twitter Activity

The evaluation reviewed the INASSA Program social media activity with a focus on @INASSAprogram Twitter account. Data extraction was performed on 14 November 2017 with BirdSong Analytics. Data cleansing, presentation, and analysis were performed by the evaluation.

As of 14 November 2017, **1766 tweets** had been posted on the INASSA Twitter account. The account was followed by **3522 users** and was following 3800 Twitter accounts. The account had collected 2742 Like.

1.1. Demographics of the INASSA Twitter Account followers

Out of the 3522 followers of @INASSAprogram, 837 users have not shared their country location. The remaining 2685 followers are spread across 125 countries but concentrated on a few. The top 10 countries account for 66% of the followers and 20% of the countries cumulate more than 80% of the followers.

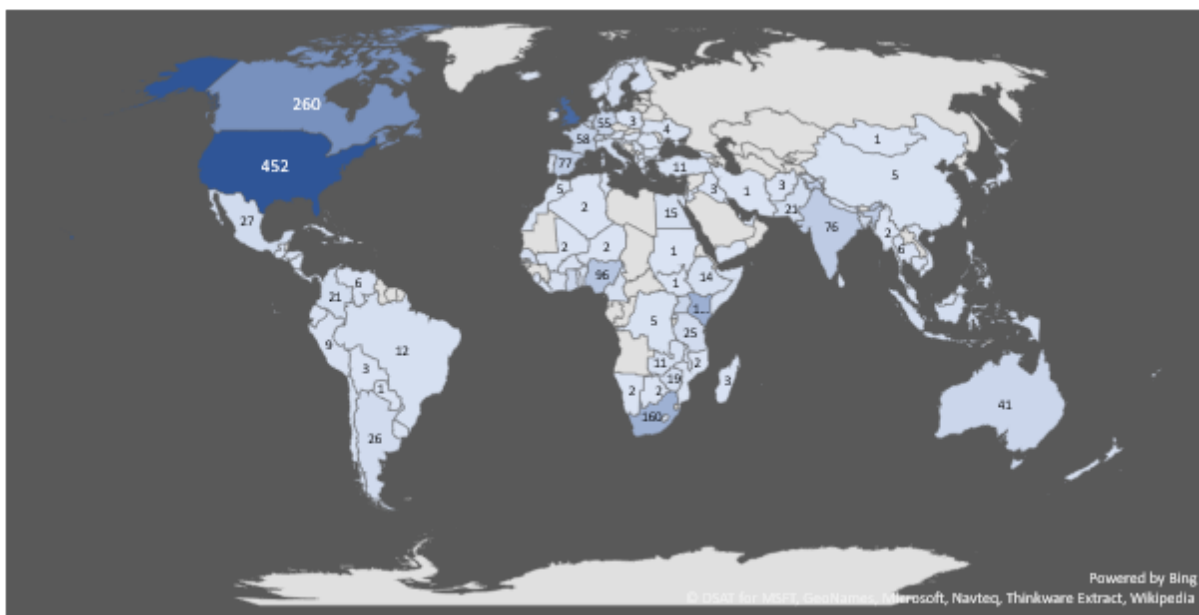


Figure 1: Number of followers of @INASSAprogram per country

Source: Evaluation, 2017.

Countries with the highest number of @INASSAprogram followers are USA, the UK, and Canada. Kenya, South Africa, and Nigeria are the countries from the Global South with the highest number of followers. Based on available data, @INASSAprogram has at least one follower in every country where INASSA funded projects have conducted research activities except for Chad and Kyrgyzstan.

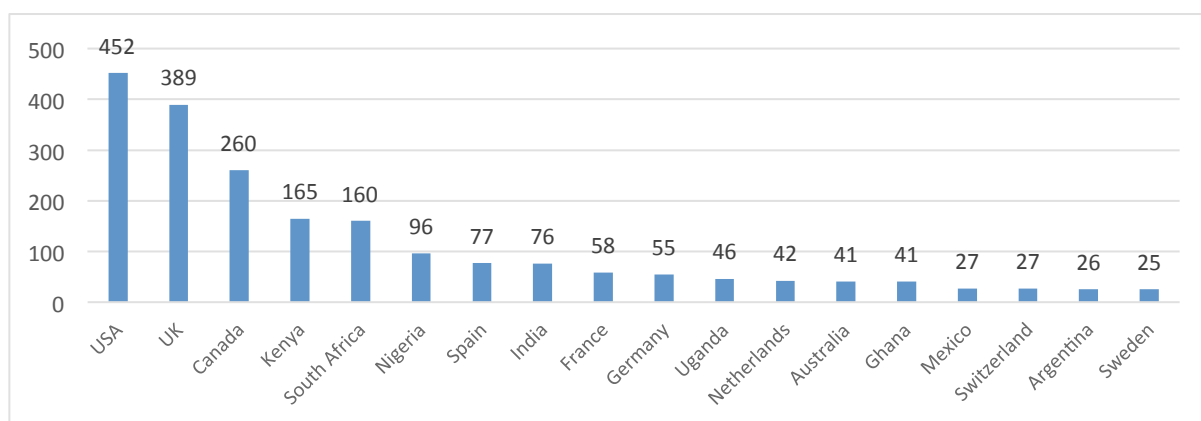


Figure 2: Number of @INASSAprogram followers - Top countries

Source: Evaluation, 2017.

Followers of the INASSA Twitter account are primarily from the Global North³⁰ (59%). The regions most represented are Europe (30.6%), North America (26.5%), and Africa (25.9%). Few followers³¹ are from South/Latin America (5.4%), Arab States (2.2%) and the CIS (0.2%). About

³⁰ https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_regional_classification

³¹ A study completed by ROER4D on ROER4D's Twitter account showed that apart from South Africa, most of the twitter followers of @ROER4D were also from the global North. However, almost three quarters of

85% of @INASSAprogram followers have indicated “English” as the language interface of their Twitter account.

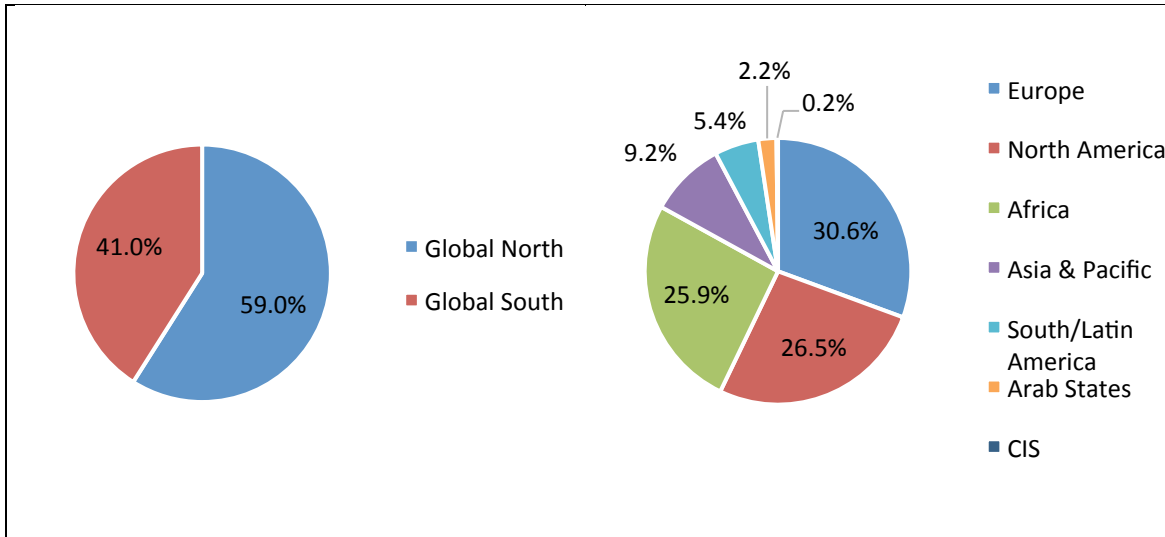


Figure 3: Percentage of @INASSAprogram followers per hemisphere
Source: Evaluation, 2017.

Figure 4: Percentage of @INASSAprogram followers per region
Source: Evaluation, 2017.

The gender characteristic “Male” or “Female” has been reported by 1655 followers of @INASSAprogram³². “Male” users account for 59% and “Female” users for 41% of the followers. A disaggregation of the gender characteristic per region shows that female users are comparatively more frequently based in the Global North than male followers (65.5% of female users are in the Global North compared to 60.5% of male users).

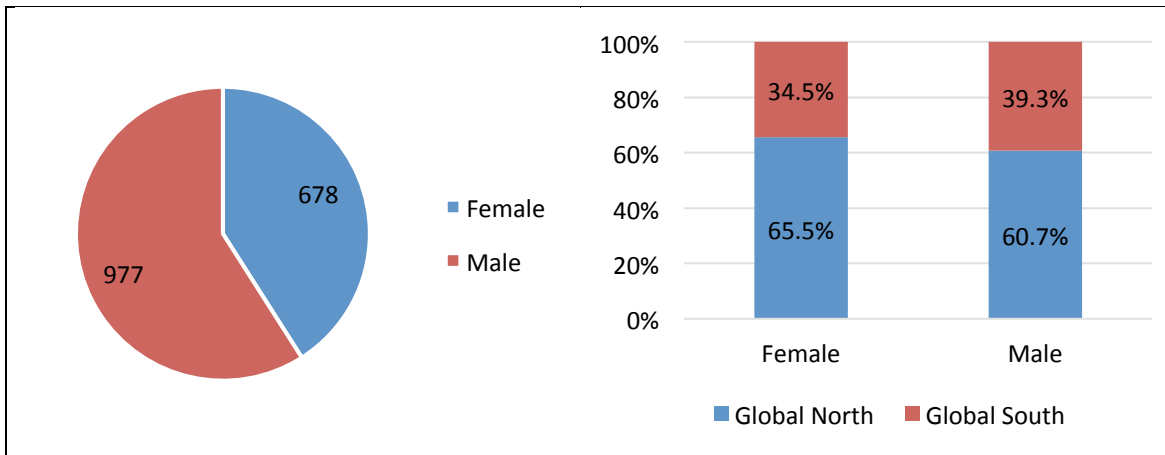


Figure 5: Number of @INASSAprogram followers per gender
Source: Evaluation, 2017.

Figure 6: Percentage of @INASSAprogram followers per gender across hemispheres
Source: Evaluation, 2017.

the Facebook audience of ROER4D were from Global South countries. (in Goodier S. and Hodgkinson-Williams C., *Exploring your network: Visualising and analysing to measure success*, DRAFT Network Hub Chapter, pending publication).

³² “Unisex” has been selected by 441 followers and was not included in the analysis.

The 3522 followers of the INASSA Twitter account follow altogether 36,859,044 Twitter accounts and are followed by 29,257,684 users³³. The community of @INASSAprogram followers has posted 26,571,854 tweets. As often with social media tools, the relevance of this community including of the most active followers to the objectives and activities of the account cannot be ascertained³⁴.

The most frequent terms³⁵ used by @INASSAprogram followers to present themselves in their Twitter bio are Development (347 occurrences), Data (257), Research (231), Social (222), and Africa (184). When considering the list of words with syntactic variations such as plural, prefixes, suffixes, aggregates, (e.g. policy, policies, policy-maker, etc.), the terms most commonly used by INASSA followers to describe themselves relate to Africa (658), Data (470), Research (404), Open (347). Other terms used significantly by this community regard Science (248), Education (228), Policy (199), Digital (189), Media (175), NGO (129), Entrepreneurship (125), Governance (72) and Government (59).

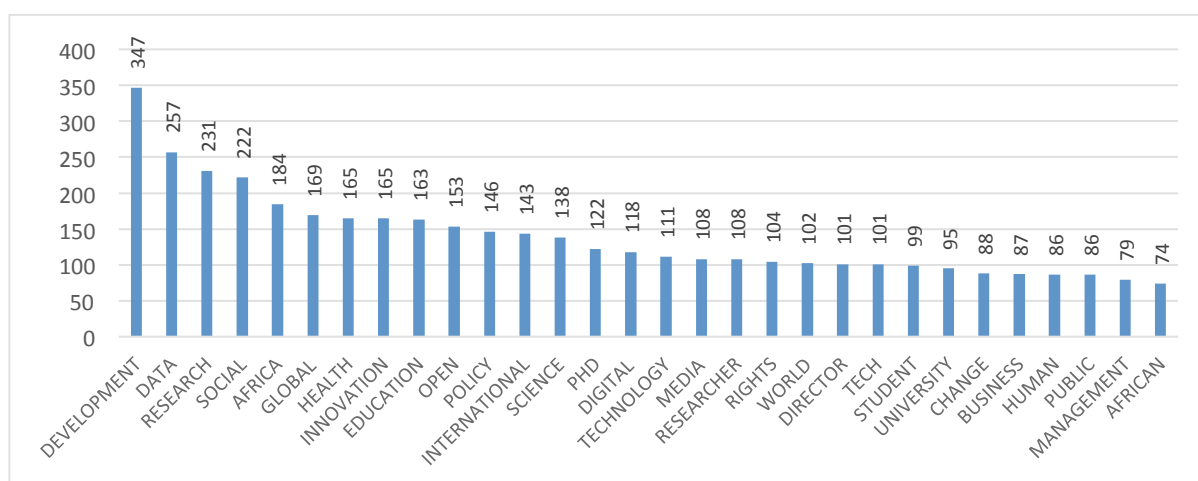


Figure 7: Number of occurrences of the terms most often used in the bio of @INASSAprogram followers
Source: Evaluation, 2017

1.2. Twitter Activity

The @INASSAprogram Twitter account was created in April 2011 but left mostly inactive until May 2015 (18 Tweets over that 4-year period). As of 14 November 2017, 1766 tweets had been posted on the INASSA Twitter account. From June 2015 on, the activity of the account shows an overall positive linear growth trend with annual cycles and peaks. Historically, the account has been less active during winter time and more active during the rest of the year. The highest number of tweets in a month were generated during the International Open Data Conference (IODC) in October 2016. From July 2015 to October 2017, an average of about 60 tweets per

³³ The number of unique accounts is likely to be lower as users may follow some of the same accounts, which then duplicate.

³⁴ The top 5 @INASSAprogram followers with the highest number of followers themselves (about 8 million altogether) are (1) a game developer, (2) an artist and singer, (3) an “entrepreneur, investor, business advisor and speaker” and “marketing guru”, (4) a promoter of the Iraqi culture and history, and (5) a “senior fashionista” and glamour personality.

³⁵ After removal of non-significant words such as ‘and’, ‘the’, ‘in’, ‘or’, ‘to’, ‘for’, etc.

month were posted on the account. Since July 2017, the @INASSAprogram account has become much less active with less than 20 messages on average per month. The accounts that have generated the highest number of tweets on @INASSAprogram are @OpenICT4D, which has posted 109 tweets, @Afrinnovation (101), @webfoundation (79), @od4_d (68), @opendatacon (46), @IDRC_CRDI (45), @ROER4D (37) and @RIAnetwork (35).

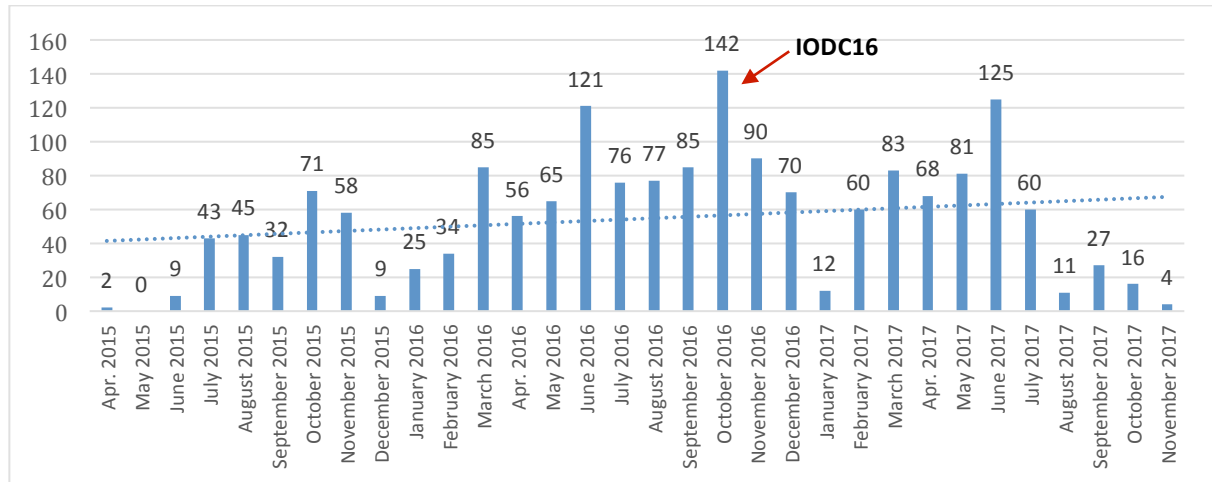


Figure 8: Number of @INASSAprogram tweets per month

Source: Evaluation, 2017

Since July 2015, the @INASSAprogram account has generated a total of 11,473 retweets for an average of close to 410 retweets per month. On average, tweets authored by @INASSAprogram have been retweeted 2.2 times while retweets from account followers have been retweeted 9.4 times. The most retweeted posts from @INASSAprogram regard calls for proposal or job postings. Followers of @INASSAprogram that generated the highest numbers of retweets through the account are @webfoundation (1022 retweets), @od4_d (751), @UN_Women (712), @opendatacon (581), @OpenICT4D (441), @IDRC_CRDI (418), @Afrinnovation (395), @ROER4D (195), @RIAnetwork (163).

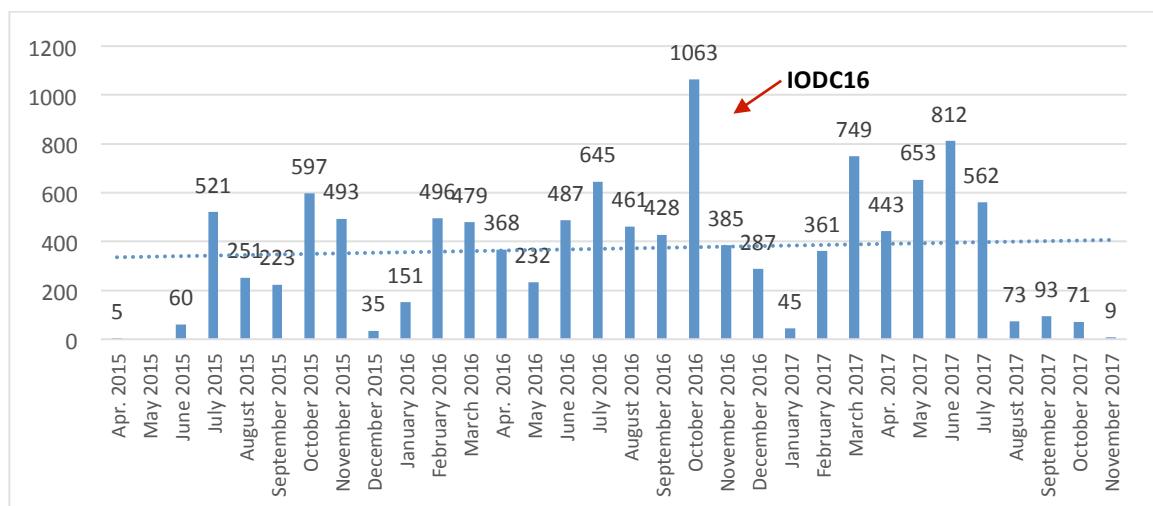


Figure 9: Number of retweets per month by followers of @INASSAprogram

Source: Evaluation, 2017

The terms most frequently found in tweets and retweets of the account are Opendata (282 occurrences), Open (238), and Research (192).

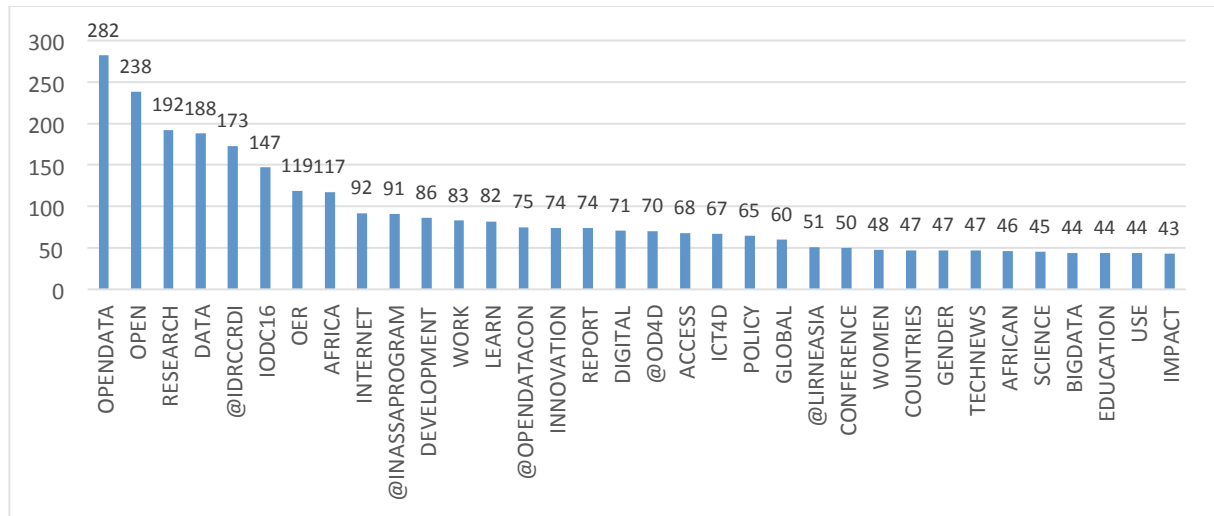


Figure 10: Number of occurrences of the terms most frequently tweeted on @INASSAprogram

Source: Evaluation, 2017

A Social Network Analysis (SNA) of the social network formed by INASSA tweets was performed on 23 November 2017. The SNA relied on NodeXL³⁶ and the resulting graph -Figure 11- shows the representation delivered by the Harel-Koren Fast Multiscale layout algorithm. The SNA highlights three main groups of users. One clique involves Twitter users with a direct connection to @INASSAprogram. Among this group, @ROER4D shows higher degree centrality. A second clique regards users connected indirectly to @INASSAprogram and showcasing high betweenness centrality from @lirneasia. A third clique regards a group of mutually interconnected users with higher degree centrality for some -e.g. @alison_gillwald, @johndgarrry, and @rianetwork- and transacting tweets with several indirect followers.

³⁶ <http://nodexl.codeplex.com/>



Figure 11: Number of occurrences of the terms most frequently tweeted on @INASSAprogram

Source: Evaluation, 2017

INASSA Projects Outputs

A review of IDRC Digital Library (IDL) shows that INASSA project outputs (e.g. annual reports, workshop reports, articles, etc.) are not consistently -or timely- channeled to the IDL. Research ICT Africa and LIRNEasia are the projects for which IDRC Digital Library holds the highest number of resources among the INASSA funded projects -Table 1-.

INASSA Program and Supported Projects	Resources on IDRC Digital Library
INASSA - Information and Networks in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa	5
DL4D - Digital learning for development	9
OCSNet - Open and collaborative science for development network	0 (2 with DECI-2)
ROER4D - Research on open educational resources for development	6
SIRCA III - Strengthening information society research capacity III	4 (15 with SIRCA I and II)
Open Air - Open African Innovation Research network	5
Research ICT Africa	239 (19 since 2013)
LIRNEasia	213 (35 since 2013)

Table 1: Number of resources retrieved in the IDL

Source: Evaluation, 2017.

IDL metrics on a sample of outputs indicate that viewers of the resources are primarily from the Global North -Table 2-.

Project: Research on Open Educational Resources for Development (ROER4D) (#107311)								
Output: Dimensions of open research: reflections on 'critical openness' in the ROER4D project								
Period	June 2017	July 2017	Aug. 2017	Sep. 2017	Oct. 2017	Nov. 2017	Dec. 2017	Total Views
Page views	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	14
File views (viewing the pdf)								3
Top country views	Canada (7), United States (4), Cameroon (1), China (1); France (1)							
Top cities views	Ottawa (7), Mountain View (2), Ann Arbor (1), Guangzhou (1), Paris (1), Seattle (1)							
Output: MOOC-making and open educational practices in the Journal of Computing in Higher Education								
Period	June 2017	July 2017	Aug. 2017	Sep. 2017	Oct. 2017	Nov. 2017	Dec. 2017	Total Views
Page views	0	0	0	0	0	0	37	37
File views (viewing the pdf)								8
Top country views	Canada (27), United States (7), France (2), Cameroon (1)							
Top cities views	Ottawa (26), Mountain View (3), Ann Arbor (2), Ashburn (2), Paris (1)							
Project: Building Research Capacity for Systematic Reviews (#107548)								
Output: Building research capacity for systematic reviews in the Asian and African communication policy research communities								
Period	June 2017	July 2017	Aug. 2017	Sep. 2017	Oct. 2017	Nov. 2017	Dec. 2017	Total Views
Page views	0	1	1	0	1	2	3	9
File views (viewing the pdf)								90
Top country views	United States (5), Canada (2), France (1), UK (1)							
Top cities views	Mountain View (3), Ann Arbor (2), Ottawa (2)							
Project: Strengthening information society research capacity III (SIRCA) (#107708)								
Output: Resources, learning and inclusion in open development								
Period	June 2017	July 2017	Aug. 2017	Sep. 2017	Oct. 2017	Nov. 2017	Dec. 2017	Total Views
Page views	7	4	3	5	6	4	2	31
File views (viewing the pdf)								57
Top country views	United States (10), United Kingdom (6), South Africa (5), Paraguay (3), Denmark (2), Argentina (1), Canada (1), France (1), Indonesia (1), Singapore (1)							
Top cities views	Mountain View (9), Fernando De La Mora (3), Sheffield (3), Cape Town (2), Copenhagen (2), Ann Arbor (1), Cordoba (1), Jember (1), Johannesburg (1), Onderstepoort (1)							

Table 2: Access data for a sample of INASSA projects outputs

Source: IDL & Evaluation, 2017.

A review with Google Scholar of the outputs (academic and grey literature) produced by INASSA funded projects shows varying levels of production and citations -Table 3-. Research ICT Africa and LIRNEasia are the projects with the highest number of entries retrieved on Google Scholar.

INASSA Supported Projects	Entries retrieved by Google Scholar
DL4D - Digital learning for development	16
OCSDNet - Open and collaborative science for development network	32
ROER4D - Research on open educational resources for development	94
SIRCA III - Strengthening information society research capacity III	32
Open Air - Open African Innovation Research network	7
Research ICT Africa	1020 (449 since 2013)
LIRNEasia	1610 (466 since 2013)

Table 3: Number of entries retrieved through Google Scholar

Source: Evaluation, 2017.

INASSA Web Presence

The evaluation reviewed IDRC's webpage(s) for the INASSA Program and found that the information presented on INASSA supported projects was largely incomplete. Most of the projects are not reported, which may create a missed opportunity to their expanded visibility and, to a lesser extent, strengthen their credibility.

Projects	Referred on INASSA Webpage or in the list of all INASSA projects ³⁷
Alliance to Scale Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship (Seed Alliance) (#108044)	Yes
Building Research Capacity for Systematic Reviews (#107548)	No
Catalyzing broadband in Africa (#107383)	No
Catalyzing Open and Collaborative Science to Address Global Development Challenges (#107650)	No
Developing Evaluation and Communication Capacity in Information Society Research (DECI-2) (#107064)	No
Digital Learning for Development (DL4D) (#108045)	Yes
Harnessing open data to achieve development results in Asia and Africa (#107574 component 5)	Yes
Inclusive information societies: Creating growth and employment opportunities in Asia (#108000)	No
Leveraging mobile network big data for development (#108008)	No
Research on Open Educational Resources for Development (ROER4D) (#107311)	No
Scaling technology start-ups in Africa (Open Air) (#107956)	No
Strategic Communications for the Information and Networks in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa (INASSA) and Information and Network (I&N) programmes (#107613)	No
Strengthening information society research capacity III (SIRCA) (#107708)	Yes
Toward a Networked Economy in Myanmar (#107970)	No
Consultation on Inclusion in the Network Society (#107734)	No
Inclusion in the information society in Asia (#107077)	No
New learning opportunities in a networked world (#107628)	No
Openness Evaluation (#107382)	No

Table 4: Projects referred on IDRC INASSA Webpage(s)

³⁷ <https://www.idrc.ca/en/initiative/information-and-networks-asia-and-sub-saharan-africa>

Source: Evaluation, 2017.

The evaluation attempted to perform a webometric analysis of the INASSA Program webpage but without any significant results and findings (i.e. without a network of websites referencing the INASSA Program webpage). As a sample, the evaluation conducted a Cybermetric analysis³⁸ of the web communities of ROER4D and RIA, two case study projects, to evidence their networks of close neighbors (figures 12 & 13). The mapping shows different linkages for each project. RIA particularly shows the presence of a significant cohort of UN and international organizations within its online network (OECD, World Bank, ILO, WHO, WIPO, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNPAN, ITU). ROER4D's online community is rather anchored in the OER world (OER Research Hub, Open AC UK, OEC Consortium, Open Content) and larger learning community (e.g. Commonwealth of Learning). Both ROER4D and RIA have UNESCO as an online connector.

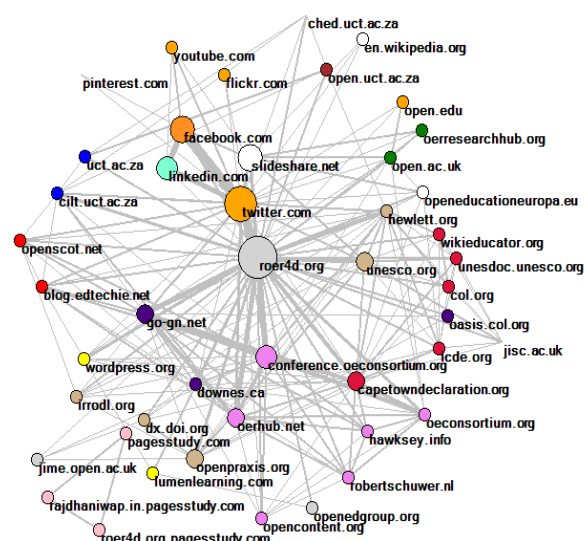


Figure 12: Web community of ROER4D website
Source: Webometric Analyst and Evaluation, 2017.

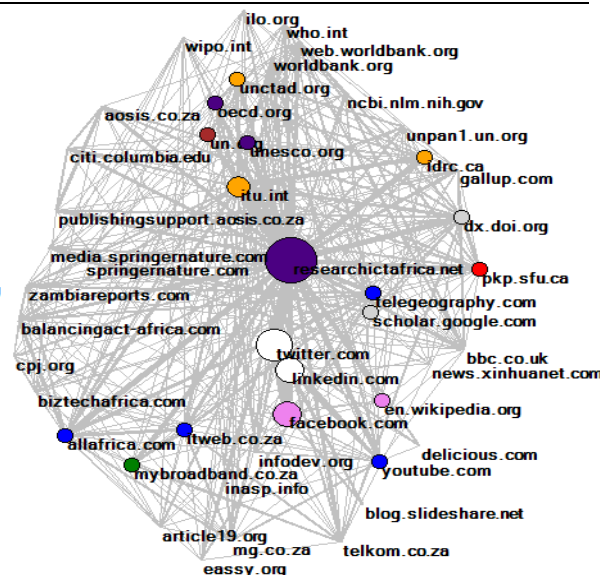


Figure 13: Web community of RIA website
Source: Webometric Analyst and Evaluation, 2017

³⁸ Mapping performed with Webometric Analyst 2.0, Statistical Cybermetrics Research Group, University of Wolverhampton, UK. The websites were gathered from a list of websites referencing ROER4D (and respectively RIA) website. Each node represents a website. The sizes of the nodes reflect the level of influence of the websites within each network, in terms of the number of hyperlinks to them. Organisations that are close together tend to be linked to by the same websites. When interpreting the network map, a line between two websites A and B indicates that at least one organisation citing ROER4D (respectively RIA) links to both A and B (so A and B have something in common, relative to ROER4D (respectively RIA)). Line width indicates the number of other websites that link to both websites. A wider line means that more websites link to both, while a narrower line indicates fewer links. A threshold of 50 websites was set to highlight the network of the ROER4D (and respectively RIA) closest neighbors.

Conclusions

The key findings that the evaluation would highlight after this brief review of INASSA online activities and metrics are the following:

1. INASSA Twitter activity was followed primarily by accounts from the Global North and, as such, remained a bridge between the Global South and the Global North. If INASSA's intent was to enlarge its social presence in the Global South, lessons learned from ROER4D could be considered as ROER4D found out that their Twitter account (@ROER4D) was also more followed by users from the northern hemisphere but that their Facebook audience, which INASSA does not have, was more anchored in the Global South.
2. INASSA Twitter activity was followed by more males than females and by few policy makers. If INASSA had the intent to increase its web presence and to make its brand more visible outside of social media channels, it could consider conducting outreach campaigns that target more specifically women and policy makers.
3. The online presence of INASSA funded projects had formed broad connections with stakeholders through social media but these online communities were not always closely connected to each other.
4. Google Analytics or similar instruments were not systematically available on the INASSA projects websites. This prevented the monitoring of the number of visits, number of downloads of research outputs, identification of the profile of the users, etc. which made projects unaware of the popularity of their website and resources.
5. The process through which outputs produced by the INASSA funded projects were tracked and collected to land into the IDRC Digital Library may need to be reviewed for consistency, comprehensiveness, or timeliness (e.g. less than 50% of ROER4D outputs were in IDRC Digital Library at the time of the evaluation).

ANNEX D: SYNTHESIS FROM PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS

The inception report contained key recommendations highlights from earlier reviews that seemed relevant for the INASSA evaluation, expressed as:

Making gender a priority in operational programming in the area of information, technology and networks. Continued limited achievements in gender-relevant programming over time led to the formulation and implementation of strategies to strengthen it. This would include analyzing incentives and obstacles, drawing on existing strengths across IDRC, establishing clear guidelines (including for gender analysis), undertaking training for staff and grantees, as well as targeting gender in outcomes and indicators.

Enhancing the role and efficacy of networks. There was a perceived need to improve understanding about the role of research networks³⁹ as effective agents of change and enabling environments for developmental results. This included developing strategies to better harness their potential for achieving network effects⁴⁰ (through regionalization, individual/collaborative capacity building, knowledge management, etc.), and the proper guidance/resources to the network and hub managers to help them implement such strategies.

Improving knowledge management. IDRC initiatives in these areas produced a wealth of information and knowledge, which were not always adequately appropriated and utilized. There was a need to improve synthesis, codification and communication of lessons learned through various mechanisms (web/internet, networks, events, training, outreach actions, etc.). Procedures and/or structures may be re-examined with a view to stimulate knowledge sharing and learning. Knowledge assets need to be accessible both in-house and with external grantees/partners.

Continued expected relevance of research on the wider topics of ‘openness’, ‘rights in the digital environment’ and ‘inclusion’. Even as the rate of change in these topics appear dizzyingly fast at times, requiring constant adaptation and innovation, their effects on international development (in particular for the 2030 SDG agenda) were being confirmed by subsequent assessments. Examples refer to the roles of open data, open government, broadband, big data and cybersecurity on many of the SDGs, including, importantly, the potential threats that some of their related uses/innovations may also present.

The evaluation deemed it would have added-value to include in this final report a compilation of the recommendations from relevant previous programme, project or thematic evaluations carried out in the programme area where INASSA is located⁴¹. Collectively, they provided a wealth of learning, and have been an important reference for this evaluation process. Where

³⁹ As well as other institutional networks (which may not be primarily research oriented) engaged in implementation of programs/projects.

⁴⁰ Network effects are essentially taken as the positive benefits of direct/indirect interactions among network nodes

⁴¹ The implementation cycle of INASSA cover two major programs, Information and Networks (2011-2015), and Networwed Economies (2016-2019)

management or program responses were available, they were also included in the second part of the annex. The evaluations examined were:

- Open Data for Development (OD4D) - **programme** (2017)
- Information & Networks (I&N) - **programme** (2015)
- Developing Evaluation and Communication Capacity in Information Society Research 2 (DECI-2) - **project** (2017)
- Alliance to Scale Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship (SEED Alliance) - **project** (2014)
- Open Data in Developing Countries (ODDC) - **project** (2014)
- Open Development (from I&N) - **thematic** (2015)
- Networking approach (from I&N) – **thematic/operational** (2015)
- Gender I&N evaluation (subsumed into larger I&N evaluation) **thematic/operational** (2015)

OD4D

- A. **Greater emphasis on the 4D of OD4D.** Most OD4D program results hinged on the ‘supply-side’ of OD, although there had been shifting weight to the ‘demand-side’ along its implementation period. It is now recommended to place priority on the demand or ‘for development’ (4D) side of the OD4D equation, in order to produce more evidence of the impact of OD on development as well as facilitating the conditions for the use and applicability of OD. This includes increasing the work from a sectorial approach.
- B. **To expand (and define) the network vision of OD4D.** The OD4D program had a networked orientation from the start, as shown for example in the regional hubs. But it lacked clear guidance and strategy about networking, thus functioning more as an ecosystem with largely sporadic, unsystematic collaborations. The next phase of the program could improve its performance and extend its reach by formulating and implementing an explicit network strategy. Its main purpose would be the generation of network effects (i.e., positive benefits of direct/indirect interactions among nodes), articulated by the program objectives (or outcomes). Such a strategy, developed in participatory fashion among the partners, would be applicable both for overall program management as well as for guiding/promoting collaborative capacities for the partners and at the regional hubs and other sub-networks (e.g. The Open Data Leaders Network). The position of a network manager could be introduced into the program team to help implement the network strategy.
- C. **Greater engagement with the D4D community.** The Data for Development (D4D) movement was picking up momentum and incorporating ever more organizations, as could be seen in the 1st UN World Data Forum celebrated in January of 2017 in Johannesburg. One way of increasing the development outcomes of OD would be by trying to ‘inoculate’ openness within the D4D movement. In essence, OD4D would seek to lead the ‘open branch’ of the larger D4D sphere. Three possible lines of actions could facilitate this: (i) establishing a close relationship with National Statistics Offices (NSOs), as indicated earlier; (ii) working to promote data capacities (not just on OD) to increase partnerships/legitimacy for OD4D actors while indirectly applying openness in the wider D4D community; and (iii)

engaging with other developmentally-relevant data intensive fields, like Big Data, Internet of Things and Smart Cities.

- D. **Investing in strategic partnerships.** As the program moves into a new phase, there are some specific partnerships that could prove particularly valuable for OD4D's outcomes, as well as coherent with an expanded networking approach. It is recommended to invest special efforts in the following three:
- a. (i) Open Data Charter. OD4D had a major contribution in creating it, and now it is acquiring an organizational framework of its own. It would be advisable to establish complementary and collaborative tasks, avoiding overlap and competition for scarce resources.
 - b. (ii) Open Government Partnership (OGP). OGP is institutionally close to governments, and OD4D has already supported its OD Working Group (ODWG). As the governance of ODWG is reviewed, it could open the doors for an even more productive relationship.
 - c. (iii) Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD). This is a relatively new initiative, emerging perhaps as the main global forum in the D4D field. A symbiotic relationship could open the door for OD4D to plan a leading role in advocating for openness within the D4D.
- E. **Focus on OD intermediaries.** The evaluation observed that end users (*micro level*) were quite difficult to reach for the program. Our research also showed the success of engaging and building the capacity of collectives that bridge the needs of the underserved with the actors that can address them (*macro level*). Setting as a priority the support for OD intermediaries (*meso level*) can bring much more capillarity to program outcomes (in effect widely extending the overall network), and would move the program further in the direction of the demand-side, as was raised earlier. These intermediaries include (data) journalists, openness activists, data advocates, hacktivists and grassroots networks.
- F. **Gender as an operational OD4D priority.** It was earlier noted that the OD4D had not been successful in gender-sensitive outcomes and programming, and that this appeared to be a common feature of many technology-related development initiatives. To address these shortcomings, it is recommended to carry out a specific project to build gender-analysis capacities among the OD4D actors and deliver concrete gender outcomes. Such a project could (i) use existing gender resources within the OD4D network, (ii) develop tools to routinely perform gender analysis in project design/implementation/monitoring, and (iii) be run by an organization (or a network) with proven expertise in gender and data/ICT. The results would likely have utility in the larger D4D environment (e.g. within the GPSDD), and not just for the OD4D community itself.
- G. **Knowledge management at the core of the OD4D network.** The key underlying process for most major institutional development networks is knowledge management (KM). Regardless of the specific KM methodologies chosen and constituent elements identified (knowledge generation, dissemination, absorption, etc.), KM is essentially about getting the right knowledge to the right person at the right time. The OD4D network produced considerable knowledge assets (alongside information, and, of course, data), but the evaluation found no systematic approach to collecting/curating/circulating knowledge assets. It would be beneficial for the next phase of the OD4D program to formulate a KM

strategy, including among other measures (i) how information/documentation is provided by program stakeholders, (ii) a communications platform which enable knowledge exchange among stakeholders (e.g. on new activities, soliciting collaboration, posting research pieces, etc.), (iii) a web site that serve as the information showcase for external communications, (iv) ‘toolkitting’, i.e. providing a set of tools, applications, guides and other useful resources for OD usage; (v) training and other educational materials, and (v) activities aimed at technical outreach (webinars, seminars, lectures, competitions, awards).

I&N (recommendations to the Board of Governors)

A. Synthesize, codify, and communicate lessons learned.

IDRC distinguished itself as a key generator of evidence-based development knowledge. The I&N Program is no exception, as is seen from its contributions to the field of Open Development. However, the panel concluded there is a need to more effectively harness, communicate, and implement – both in-house and with external grantees and partners – lessons learned from IDRC programs. This would require both a continued valorization of learning within the organization through such means as summative, formative, utilization-focused forms of evaluation, and the implementation of measures to systematize and harness the lessons drawn from program experiences. For example the I&N Program commissioned program-level evaluations for the Openness thematic area, the cross-cutting theme of gender, and of the network modality. Each of these exercises has created valuable learning resources with the potential to contribute to the more efficient and effective realization of future programming goals beyond simply the I&N Program. As a leading development research organization, and given the rapidity and dynamism of change in the global South, it is both appropriate and necessary for IDRC to continue allocating resources to investigating issues whose implications affect multiple programs such as ‘Research-to-Policy’, ‘Enabling Innovation’, ‘Research Capacity Building’, ‘Gender Responsiveness’, and ‘Knowledge Management’.

B. Integrate development networks as agents of change in program strategies.

Contemporary development programs operate in the context of networked societies that hastens the need for better understanding the role of networks as development actors in their own right. With its long tradition of creating/supporting networks,⁴⁰ IDRC is in a privileged position to harness the administrative, capacity-building, collaborative, and productive benefits that networks afford, provided it can effectively manage their inherent complexities. This calls for continued research into the conditions that enable, constrain, and define networks as agents of change (which in itself comprises an element of Open Development). Networks are as messy as they are creative. Hence, the ability of future IDRC programs to realize positive network benefits is likely to be contingent upon the presence of a clearly articulated networking strategy that, (i) guide network-based projects, (ii) actively stimulates collaboration within/among projects (i.e., network nodes), (iii) establishes knowledge management features; and (iv) facilitates connections to outside organizations.

C. Programming in Openness, Rights, and Inclusion will continue to be highly relevant.

In the light of the positive impact that openness can have on governance and socio-economic development, the panel believes that open data and open government will continue to be crucial aspects of development worthy of much needed research support for years to come. It is equally important to recognize that innovations in information and communication technologies, including the myriad forms of knowledge generated by big data analytics, afford as many opportunities for reaping cultural, economic, political, and social benefits as they do opportunities for infringing upon human and commercial rights. The importance of understanding how these rights are being affected will not diminish any time soon and constitutes a key component of Open Development. Much the same can be said with regard to the continued relevance of, and need for continued work in, ensuring that marginalized populations benefit from the affordances of Open Development. Indeed, the continued relevance and significance of continued support for research in each of these three areas is evidenced by the central role they are set to play in actualizing the United Nations' post-2015 development agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (See, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*).

4. Effectively integrating gender analysis skills

Gender responsiveness is a core value of the IDRC and is identified as such in the approval document template for every project; “There is no such thing as a gender-neutral project”. While the I&N Program supported a number of projects with successful gender development and research outcomes, the program’s efforts to systematically build gender analysis skills among all grantees and partners largely fell short. Although grantees and partners commonly allude to efforts in gender inclusion, a deeper consideration and/or understanding of meaningful gender analysis is frequently absent. Indeed, for the majority of projects in the panel’s sample, the project leaders tended to view gender issues as incidental to the research agenda. The ongoing challenges with realizing gender-related objectives – which pre-date the I&N Program – begs the question of whether grantees and partners are equipped to deal with meaningful gender analysis and whether they have sufficient incentives to pay significant attention to this type of work. Actualizing meaningful gender analysis in future programming is likely to be contingent upon two inter-related factors. The first entails integrating clearly defined gender-specific sub-outcomes into specific areas, and/or program outcomes focusing specifically on meaningful gender analysis, as well as providing the necessary financial and capacity building resources to support these activities. Part this process may entail seeking to work with partners and grantees – at times possibly in a peer-support mode – that are concerned *a priori* with how to integrate inclusion and gender analysis and/or mainstreaming⁴¹ into their research projects. The second is acknowledging that meaningful gender analysis takes time. The requisite changes in behaviours, relationships, and activities are not bound to program cycles.

DECI-2

June 2012 – April 2018

- The key takeaway is that the team needs more confidence in their approach and should be stronger in advocating for it. They have a good product – market it. This refers to the mentoring approach and the UFE and ResCom content.

- A common approach across DECI has helped the mentors to support each other and create a common identity that contributes to the momentum of the programme and provide value to the mentors (they spend more time than they are contracted for).
- The evaluators have called for greater clarity during the introduction to partners, to show the boundaries of which elements are now proven and which might be experimental. It is important the partner knows what they signing up for.
- DECI-3 would benefit from an explicit theory of change with a focus on behavioural outcomes and indicators of outcomes as part of its planning process.
- Mentoring is a viable alternative to ‘workshops’. However, the skill of the mentor in being a questioner and co-learner is vital. As DECI considers the future it would be tempting to think that mentors know what they are doing and for them to rely on a sequence of tools rather than trusting the process of questioning.
- Mentors also need to remain conscious of the power balance between them as ‘connected’ to the donor, and they as facilitators enabling reflection and empowerment.
- The readiness assessment should take into account personality of the mentors and mentees to determine if this kind of mentoring relationship will work. Readiness isn’t just about whether the partner is ready to engage in the process but (i) what kind of process is going to be beneficial? (ii) how will it be beneficial? Establishing a strong enough case to justify the investment is important.
- DECI-3 would benefit from relevant literature on social mobilisation; recruit and support mentors in their understanding of mobilisation processes. This would enable them to refer to a toolkit of lessons learned to enhance and strengthen their ability to ‘animate’ their mentees.

SEED

- The SEED Alliance needs to move closer to entrepreneurial clients and adopt an approach which continues support for the successful candidates who have the greatest likelihood of innovation adoption and diffusion.
- The program also needs to form closer linkages with more robust sources of development financing.
- The “soft services” of the program, including networking, skills development and mentoring are highly valued and should be continued and where possible expanded.
- A model for better communications about projects and more integrated web reporting for the entire SEED Alliance is recommended.
- A modestly enhanced program of new partner recruitment and resource expansion should be pursued.

ODDC

Define type of work ahead of time.

Many of the research partners have approached the case study work in different ways (pure research, action research, awareness raising etc.). For future stages of their work, and new research phases, it is important that each organization maintains the ability to define the focus and type of research/advocacy they will pursue, in order to capitalize on the different strengths in the network.

(regarding) Knowledge Management

- Document management in the Google drive is maintained largely by the WF and not the partners. If the intent of the shared drive is to have a shared common resource pool, partners need to take ownership of, and be made to upload their own content.
- To further engage (and empower) the research partners, and encourage more dialogue online it is recommended that each partner take one month where they are responsible for posting discussion questions, responding to discussions and moderating comments.
- Guidance on what to tweet
- Each research output should have a roll-out plan so it can be properly and fully disseminated through the network and partners can promote each others' work. Many research partners have large existing networks with whom they can share not only their own research, but the work of other ODDC network partners.
- Track (each partners) re-use and uptake of their publications. (to estimate impact)

Branding. The name and 'brand' of the ODDC network is not always the most visible element when partners are doing research. As a result many external stakeholders are unaware of the wider network, and only the specific research being done at partner level. In order to maintain and deepen the relationship between these stakeholders and the broader ODDC network, it is important for a stronger brand to be built and stakeholders to be aware of the wider network/movement.

Network outreach: Research partners have established or built large CSO and government networks during their case study research. The sustainability of the network is not necessarily dependent on expanding the network, but in maintaining these existing contacts. It is recommended that these stakeholders have opportunities to engage more deeply with other partners.

Make use of existing **network analysis** to determine priorities and develop action plans to follow-up on successful meetings and events that have already happened.

In synthesis, in order for the project build its cross-cutting impacts in the second phase, it will be important to:

- (a) build a strong network brand, and central message which all members gravitate towards;
- (b) engage the partners more deeply in online discussions, to facilitate feedback loops between the local projects and global debates; and
- (c) encourage more co-creation of research and analysis among smaller (sub) groupings of network members where relevant.

Open Development (from I&N)

Focus on crosscutting studies. The quality of openly networked social processes rely on not just quality openness, but also supportive environments that create linkages between open resources and the people who might leverage them to create improvements in their area of attention, whether that be governance, education or knowledge production. This finding suggests that I&N research should move beyond studying the qualities of openness within specific localized projects, and might focus its energies on crosscutting studies that identify the factors driving quality openness, and permit comparative analysis of these factors.

For example, if I&N's research does take up the challenge of identifying and studying the push and pull mechanisms linking openness to development, then it would be important to also identify the concrete ways in which this research might contribute to policy change. The objective here is not to instrumentalize the research process, but rather to better communicate I&N's objectives to research partners, so as to facilitate the process of negotiating research partnerships, and also improve the process of managing research projects.

Move I&N to a much better position to articulate its narrative around open development This is something that both POs and PIs noted required greater attention. Having a clear narrative will help partners to be able to identify stakeholders, articulate networks, and also to identify opportunity for programmatic or policy intervention. In addition, clarity will also facilitate collaboration within the team, and coordination across projects. In this sense, it is not necessary for every project to address every aspect of the openness agenda, however, it is important for each project to be clear on how they are contributing within an overarching program of activities. This can enable different projects to leverage each others findings, and also different program officers to strategize around how best to articulate project activities.

Pose an overarching 'theory of change', to articulates I&N's view of the shifting research agenda around Open Development, develops a narrative around the relationship between research and programmatic goals, and provides scope for different types of research contributions, paying attention to the ways in which different areas of research or types of research contributions can be leveraged by each other.

Networking approach (from I&N)

Overarching issue: I&N needs to decide in detail what it hopes to achieve through the network modality⁴², measure the results of our inquiry against those goals, and make adjustments accordingly. Depending of expectations, the modality might even need revamping in fundamental ways.

⁴² Initially the evaluators interpreted they were tasked with 'inquiring into network effects', with network effects being "what the network has inputted into policy influence by partners". However, after discussions with the IDRC programme team, the evaluation was refocused on more on an inquiry into the usefulness of employing a re-granter that has a substantive role with respect to its grantees as well as a grant-making role.

The questions below aim at this: *“Is the network- driven approach the best one for I&N, given the particular digital rights contexts, the performance of the 2 networks and its own internal preferences?”* I&N should decide on:

- whether the characterization of policy influence by the program is roughly correct and serviceable for this work going forward; and if not, what an appropriate one is
- the degree of research capacitation it is seeking, particularly for partners that are advocates first and (new) researchers second; also, on what mix of advocates/researchers are desired⁴³)
 - assuming more intensive capacitation is preferred, what method of delivery should be chosen (e.g. commissioning regional consultants, giving the hubs with a more extended capacitation function, a combination, etc.)
 - assuming it is not, whether the hubs should seek out *only* relatively experienced researchers whose research is policy-relevant (rather than *advocates* that lack highly developed research skills and won’t get them without such training)⁴⁴.
- the degree to which it is committed to creating robust *networks* (in particular with an aim of maximizing lateral effects), as the means by which Southern- based research on digital rights issues will achieve policy influence; assuming more lateral effects are sought,
 - whether homogenization efforts need to be undertaken through regional or issue-based approaches, or a combination of these
 - the implications and requirements in the way of (i) network and sub- network communications and (ii) network coordination (e.g., perhaps appointment of part-time sub-network coordinators)
 - whether to provide funding for meetings and even collaborative projects for identified sub-groups within the networks
- whether the regranting function should be separated from the substantive support function, and if so, whether it should be retained in house at I&N (not favored by the evaluators) or outsourced to regional regrantees or even substantive field actors that are willing and able to take on that function.

⁴³ Thatevaluation included a meaningful footnote about this issue, which we believe is worth including in this compilation: *Since IDRC is not in the business of promoting or supporting advocacy, perhaps it could contemplate strategic partnerships with other orgs (e.g. Hivos, OSF) where IDRC would support research and training, while the other partner would support advocacy and strategic research dissemination.*

⁴⁴ *If I&N decided on larger grants to larger partners, its aims could be clearly and directly set out to the grantees, without the need of transmission through intermediaries (i.e., capacitation is no longer a key issue). Compelling evidence would probably be placed before policymakers in the South. On the other hand, it would make it hard to to extend the culture of research in the South on these issues. And there would only be genuine networking between the grantees if I&N functioned as a network coordinator or it oversaw a consultant’s work in that area*

- whether the network creation/management function should be retained at the hubs, or whether it should be outsourced (e.g., to regional actors, or sub-issue experts, depending on whether regional or issue-based approaches are adopted).

To enhance prospects for generating lateral effects, the evaluators recommend the creation of a dedicated position – network coordinator – designed to support and encourage real network activity⁴⁵. Also, to reduce the challenges posed by the heterogeneity of the networks, by re-structuring the networks down into sub-groups with issues or regions or approaches in common.

Finally, the evaluators provided no suggestions about what the networks should look like, as in their opinion any suggestions would presuppose a resolution of the above issues. For example, applying performance indicators was not possible because the ‘object’ to be assessed was not sufficiently defined. In their opinion, a process of reflection is needed to arrive at a robust definition which would then allow for the development, and then application, of such indicators.

Gender evaluation (from I&N, internal evaluation)

This table summarizes the final key recommendations of the evaluation and identifies the necessary measures (as formulated by the I&N programme team) already in place, or in the process of being implemented.

Recommendation for I&N	Measures taken
Complement gender-related work through the “inclusion lens” and expand in other themes and areas.	Findings and suggestions from the expert consultation on inclusion and from the interdisciplinary champion will be used to advance gender at the program level.
For research networks, it is imperative that hubs take gender issues and analysis into account and select a proportion of sub-projects (suggestion is at least 25%) with a gender focus.	I&N staff will pay close attention to gender issues in the design and structure of research networks.
Wherever possible, gender issues/analysis need to be clearly articulated at the outset. It was found that when projects and programs indicated that gender had already been “mainstreamed,” goals were often vague and there was a higher probability of overlooking gender research altogether.	I&N staff will ensure gender issues and analysis are incorporated when projects are formulated.

⁴⁵ The current grants from I&N to the hubs provide for some of this. But those functions are bundled together with such purely administrative matters typical of a re-granter: contract development, money transfers, logistical work, tracking of performance, and auditing. Those are not deeply related to the proper functioning of a network, particularly if the aim is to have it ultimately self-sustaining.

The absence of a gender champion in the I&N team was apparent. Consider hiring staff who will be able to integrate gender analysis in projects/programs.	I&N has hired a gender expert as a Program Officer to help address these concerns.
Consider training activities on gender awareness/research/analysis for both teams and grantees.	I&N partners will consider options for building capacity around gender analysis, and develop ongoing mentoring.
Consider using the Gender Monitoring Tool more routinely and systematically to assess progress over time.	I&N staff will review gender integration on an annual basis.

Management Responses to evaluations

OD4D evaluation – management response

Response to the overall recommendations

We agree with the recommendation that the OD4D program should increase its focus on demand-side issues, such as putting more emphasis on users, particularly as they relate to their development needs. In fact, OD4D has invested an increasing amount of its budget on activities related to “scale effective use”, which at OD4D’s inception accounted for less than 20% of the total portfolio, but reached 37% of investments in 2017. Building on the success of establishing a locally-driven global agenda and in unlocking the supply of open data, the OD4D program will deepen its work in specific sectors where research shows that that we can achieve greater benefit for the most marginalized.

Management recognizes the need to improve the network vision of OD4D. As three new hubs become operational in 2017 (MENA, Francophone and Anglophone Africa), we will engage our hubs and global partners to further develop a network strategy. Also, OD4D will commit to continue to engage the broad community in reflecting on the state of the open data field, leading to the next International Open Data Conference.

Management recognizes the value of strategic partnerships. It will explore ways to better acknowledge contributions made by other donors, which are mobilizing resources to the field and develop closer collaborations with the Open Data Charter, the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD) and the Open Government Partnership (OGP).

Management agrees that the OD4D donor coordination mechanism was crucial to achieving the results obtained in this phase of the program and expanding this coordination will continue to be crucial to consolidate a network and maximize its impacts in the forthcoming years.

Annex 1 - Actions related to individual recommendations.

	Recommendation	Action
Program results	Extending the 'regionalization' of the OD4D ecosystem.	Accepted/Ongoing - an increasing proportion of activities are led by regional initiatives.
	Strengthening relations with National Statistical Offices.	Accepted/Ongoing - increase collaboration between NSO and regional hubs and design of a strategy for global engagement.
	Exploiting complementarity with the OGP OD Working Group	Accepted - in contact with WG chairs and waiting on restructuring of the OGP working group.
Program design	Strengthen both ends of the OD value chain.	Accepted - actions incorporated as part of the research agenda in recent and future grants.
	Tighten networks and communities.	Accepted - the new "state of open data" project (under development) aims to critically take stock of progress across regions and sectors.
	Strengthen the 4D component of the OD4D equation.	Accepted - follows ongoing trend in approved projects, which are more focused in underserved regions and communities.
Program management	Strengthen and expand the Communications function	Accepted -initial improvements made to the website, and existing communication tools. An expanded communications strategy will be developed as part of the network strategy (below).
	Further refine the Theory of Change.	Accepted - continuous discussion with the OD4D network and other partners leading to the next IODC.
	Examine divergences within the OD4D ecosystem.	Accepted - OD4D will consult with stakeholders and emerging partnerships and review its role in the current global ecosystem.
Policy incidence	Keep driving the instrumental components of OD policies.	Accepted - actions are part of existing action plan developed with nodes. Potential for future expansion.
	Support networks as instrument of policy incidence.	Accepted - actions are part of existing action plan developed with nodes. More donor partners would be needed to expand existing and emerging networks.
	Informal networks count too.	Accepted - OD4D remains committed to catalyse informal networks through action-oriented events such as CAFDO, Condatos, AODC and IODC and other means.
Gender	Leveraging existing IDRC resources	Accepted - newly developed gender strategy

	for Gender.	includes a number of actions such mentorship focused programming. Potential for expansion.
	Investing on gender analysis for project design and implementation for significant returns.	Accepted - immediate actions include a Gender working group led by OD4D Mena and capacity building activities during AODC. Potential for expansion.
	Involving organizations with expertise on Gender and Data.	Accepted - A number of actions in course to focus on the release and use of gendered data sets as well as building capacities in this area.
Overall recommendations	Greater emphasis on the 4D of OD4D.	Accepted -increasing number of actions aligned with overall investment trend, (approximately 37% of total budget in 2017).
	To expand (and define) the network vision of OD4D.	Accepted - OD4D will consult and engage the network, identifying ways to strengthen coordination and representation.
	Greater engagement with the D4D community.	Accepted - OD4D will explore links and new projects in the intersection with big data and official data for development (including emerging IDRC network on big data for sustainable development).
	Investing in strategic partnerships.	Accepted - OD4D will discuss and review its relationship with Charter, OGP and GPSDD.
	Focus on OD intermediaries.	Accepted- new action plan including growing engagement with media, NGOs and other sector specific network of intermediaries.
	Gender as an operational OD4D priority.	Accepted - a number of actions and agenda setting activities incorporated to the program, including mentorship and focused programming.
	Knowledge management at the core of the OD4D network.	Accepted - to formulate and implement a explicit knowledge management strategy in alignment with the OD4D network strategy.

I&N External Review - Management response to recommendations to Board of Governors

Management recognizes the need to improve synthesis and communication of lessons learned. This will be partly addressed by stronger program-level monitoring across the Centre.

Management will reflect on how to better capture lessons from mechanisms such as learning fora and project completion reports, and communicate learning more effectively on the IDRC website and other channels. Management recognizes the value of improved understanding about how research networks can be more effective agents to change. The program will develop strategies to better harness their potential including establishing regional hubs and ensuring adequate resources for capacity building and synthesis of results.

Management concurs that openness, rights, and inclusion continue to be relevant themes in the information and networks field. These are all present in the proposed Networked Economies program. Management acknowledges the concerns about weak gender responsiveness and commits to developing a strategy to strengthen it. This includes analyzing incentives and

obstacles, drawing on existing strengths across IDRC, and undertaking training for staff and grantees. It also means targeting gender in expected outcomes and indicators for the proposed program.

Finally, Management acknowledges the recommendation to review the Research Quality Framework—the tool that evaluators use to assess the quality of IDRC-supported research. This issue was raised in several external reviews and Management will revisit the framework.

Excerpts from a response to Lipson’s networking evaluation

Now that (the program) networks have evolved, they have to reach the next level of networking.

The evaluation is not so specific of networks overall in IN. There were clear deficiencies in those two networks – leading in the future to more direct mentorships.

Some lessons could be more generalizable:

- some network issues and concepts communicated verbally that could be written down.
- tensions between research quality and capacity building, and the decisions needed for it.
- limitations on networks created by the hubs. (i.e., ROAR4D was built by the program)

Being clearer about their intentionality of the networks could be interpreted in different ways. One is that some network could be more focused on policy, some on really good research, and some in capacity building. Part of their key concepts that they struggle with is influencing policy, quality and capacity. There are tensions and an assumption (questionable) that networks can achieve all those three outcomes and do these jobs but to varying degrees.

About program siloes: It is a problem when a program have many projects that do not talk to each other. Perception is that there is collaboration within a given outcome area (e.g. digital rights), but there was more siloing across outcome areas. Partners were brought together at I&N program meetings, seeking more interdisciplinarity, collaboration, etc. But experienced difficulties in bringing them virtually together.

Gender strategies

An implicit way of responding to previous gender-related observations by evaluations is via the gender strategy put forth by the Technology and Innovation Program, and specially by the Network Economies program.

Improving opportunities for women (cross-cutting theme)

In the upcoming phase, Networked Economies, will focus on ensuring that women have access to broadband networks and the skills to benefit from being connected to these networks in order to expand entrepreneurship. Likewise, a particular emphasis of Foundations for

Innovation will be to enable more women to enter, excel, and become leaders in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields in which women are historically underrepresented and which are crucial to innovation.

Another challenge is the underrepresentation of women in technological innovation and their lack of access to digital skill sets and tools. A critical part of addressing this challenge is to understand the causes of marginalization and the strategies needed to mitigate it. Networked Economies will take particular care to support gender-disaggregated research to identify gender-related challenges in digital skills-building and access. It is also incorporating specific targets for women and girls in its monitoring indicators. (see more below on Gender and NE)

NE Gender strategy

There have been enduring challenges with gender mainstreaming, integration and responsiveness. NE intends to counter this, and to deepen the understanding of gender equality and digital innovation, and improve gender-related outcomes in its work.

The strategy will be *mainstreaming* gender analysis and *sidestreaming* gender programming and capacity development - that is, developing focused gender programming while facilitating improved gender responsiveness across large projects⁴⁶ - along the following lines:

- ***Define and build a gender transformative research agenda on digital innovation (sidestreaming):*** The goal is first, to “define the agenda” for gender transformative work in digital development and innovation. This will flow out of the work we are currently undertaking, including a
 - synthesis of what we know already and the work IDRC and other donors have done in the past on gender and digital development.
 - we will develop informed programming (and possibly a network) that “builds the field” of gender equality and digital development and innovation (including fostering an understanding of both women/girls empowerment and gender relations in innovation and technology).
- ***Develop capacity of NE program staff and partners for gender awareness (mainstreaming):*** The goal is to build capacity for gender responsiveness for both NE staff and partners. This will happen mainly through mentorship - modelled on the DECI-2 project (Developing Evaluation and Communication Capacity in Information Society Research #107064). The intention is to increase awareness of how gender-related questions can be included in research, but it is also to help program staff to be more capable (or agile) with negotiating and holding partners accountable to gender related outcomes.

⁴⁶ *Sidestreaming* gender targets the project, thematic and programme levels with research, field building and meta-synthesis respectively. For a discussion on mainstreaming and *sidestreaming*, see Heeks 2010, [Mainstreaming ICTs in Development: The Case Against](#). Ict4d blog (30 October).

- ***Expand resources to extend and improve gender responsive research (mainstreaming):*** The primary goal here is to improve gender responsiveness within existing and new NE projects by making financial and human resources available to existing and new networks/projects.

The intended outcomes of NE's strategy will be enhanced (i) gender responsive programming, (ii) synthesis and field building for gender and technology, and (iii) enhanced knowledge of gender equality in innovation.

At the partners' mtg, people were asking: How well are we integrating gender across our programming? Response: Gender is a key component of programming, and will be a key component of our learning agenda over the next 4 years.

ANNEX E: EVALUATION MATRIX

INASSA Evaluation: Final Report Annexes DRAFT

Evaluation Questions with Guiding Sub-Questions	Focus	Indicators	Instruments/ Methods
Q1. Evaluation quality - Overall, was the quality of the evaluation produced by INASSA evaluation networks and think tanks acceptable (given the context, intended purpose, etc.)? - To what extent and in what ways was INASSA capacity strengthening of southern evaluators effective, relevant and significant? <i>Q1.A How has the concept of evaluation quality been understood and managed at the project and network levels?</i> <i>Q1.B What is the assessment of influencing factors (i.e., policy openness, level of democracy, environment for outputs adoption) for the evaluation produced by INASSA?</i> <i>Q1.C To what extent do evaluation outputs reflect quality as defined by the RQ+ Framework tool (including elements of (i) integrity, (ii) legitimacy, (iii) importance/significance and (iv) positioning/uptake)?</i>	- Extent of shared understanding (programme management, project/network leaders and members) about the nature of developmental evaluation intended under INASSA umbrella - Examining external influences and the extent of their incidence on evaluation outcomes - Multi-dimensional approach to research quality, beyond academic excellence (including elements of (i) integrity, (ii) legitimacy, (iii) importance/significance and (iv) positioning/uptake) - Quality assurance system in place at different programme levels - Connection to research capacity development work (from Q2), policy influence (Q3) and gender aspects of Q6	- To what extent research has become more visible and accessed - To what extent research has become more recognised and utilised by - Academics - Policy makers - Policy influencers - Private sector - Media	RQ+ assessment framework - Document review (including research output sample) - Web metrics, citation analysis - Interviews - Site visits - User survey - Expert judgement

Q2. Research capacity development · To what extent and in what ways was INASSA capacity strengthening of southern researchers effective, relevant, and significant? <i>Q2.A What aspects of research quality (as per IDRC's multidimensional concept of developmental research) were included in the INASSA interventions to expand research capacities?</i> <i>Q2.B How and to what extent did INASSA support systemic and interdisciplinary research for an integrated and interconnected domain defined as 'research on an inclusive networked society'?</i> <i>Q2.C What efforts were made by the programme to build collaborative capacity for research in order to avoid limitations posed by researchers working in disciplinary/institutional silos?</i> <i>Q2.D To what extent was management of research into use made adaptive to incorporate lessons learned, capture personal transformation and collective learning, and strengthen capacity?</i>	• Developing research capacities as an explicit area of programme interventions • Modalities of research capacity development interventions • Mechanisms for strengthening collaborative capacities • Instances and methodologies for multidisciplinary research • Practices that capture and develop personal and collective learning	• Level to which the newly acquired or strengthened skills influenced research • Stakeholder engagement and relationship building • Communications (of research) • Strategic partnerships • Credible, relevant and contextualised evidence • Utilisation of research • Reflective project management practices • Capacity to adapt and understand dynamics of the complex context • Institutional policies and practices of professional development • Gender (analysis, gender-relevant research) • Policy influence methodologies • Extent to which new fields of research are created	'Research-into-use' framework • Document review (including project technical reports) • Interviews • Site visits • Project staff survey
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Q3. Research to policy influence · To what extent and in what ways were the INASSA supported projects successful in achieving relevant and significant research to policy influence? · Where policy influence was below expectation, were there ways in which INASSA could have been more effective in supporting research to policy uptake? <i>Q3.A To what extent has the INASSA programme influenced agenda setting (national/international), whether on (i) technical policies, (ii) developmental policies, and/or (iii) at their intersections, in the four targeted sectors: Governance, Education, Science, and Entrepreneurship in Creative Industries?</i> <i>Q3.B Were the relative weights placed on advancing policy-related capacities for both researchers and policy-makers appropriate and consistent with programme design (ToC)?</i> <i>Q3.C What was the level of leverage of UN partners</i>	• Building policy capacities for researchers (to exert policy incidence) and for policy-makers (to make good use of available knowledge) • Expanding policy horizons for policy-makers, institutions and public actors (e.g. media) • Incidence in policy regimes and agenda ⁶ (national, regional, global)	• In what ways did research affect new or reformed policies or programmes • Informing, programmes, training, education, research, or monitoring systems • Monitoring the achievement of objectives on areas of research • Improving policies, strategies, or legislative frameworks • Developing and/or adopting, and implementing practices emerging from research • Expanded resources (human, financial) for areas identified by research • Facilitation of and strengthened relationships between researchers and policy makers	'Knowledge-to-policy' framework • Document review (including project technical reports) • Data collected by IDRC / Logframe • Web metrics • Interviews • Site visits • User survey • Case studies
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and others with access to policy makers?			
Q4. INASSA implementation and management · To what extent was the implementation of INASSA efficient and economical, relative to its purpose and intended outcomes? · Were resources (e.g. staff) used efficiently to manage the projects and program? · What have been the strengths and weaknesses of the program's management?) and/or the value proposition of funding (e.g. business case, leveraging existing programming). <i>Q4.A Was the programme's ToC (its logic, assumptions, intended outcomes, scaling up strategy, etc.) used to guide programme implementation and management? And, was there a clear understanding of and alignment to programme's ToC among programme staff?</i> <i>Q4.B To what extent did the project actions reflect the initial INASSA design? Were the priorities and choices responsive to the intent?</i> <i>Q4.C How were lessons learned from previous programmes and projects utilised to drive programme strategy and interventions?</i>	• Critical review of ToC • Was adaptive management used to capture and share learnings and analyse, use and adapt programming accordingly (within the limits of the agreement with DFID)? • When changes to programme design were made, were significant strategic decisions and choices evidence-based, communicated, and documented? • External influencing factors and effect over programme implementation • Analyses of divergences from initial prodod, and rationales for them • Unintended outcomes or consequences from the work of INASSA • Alignment to overall IDRC corporate priorities, DFID priorities and programme design • Adherence to gender strategy (derived from wider I&N or NE programs) • Overall understanding of organisational effectiveness using the PARC model (people, org. architecture, routines, culture) and the Balduck and Buelens model (system resources, goals, strategic constituency and internal processes) • Gender analysis/ programming	• Supported relevant and effective relationship building and knowledge sharing through • Facilitating networks with stakeholders • Connections with IDRC resources • Connections with DFID • Pooling resources between INASSA projects • Management practices; organisational structure, routines and culture as well as resources, goals, stakeholder engagement, and internal processes • Role of IDRC staff as thought leaders • Decision making related to changing environment (financial, staff IDRC and project) and evidence-based decisions, returning to the TOC • Adapting to IDRC	Theory of change; IDRC programme management strategy • Document review (including programme reviews, annual reports) • Interviews • Site visits • Project staff survey

<i>Q4.D What factors were responsible for any modifications or deviations, and how were lessons learned during the implementation incorporated into any such changes?</i> <i>Q4.E What actions undertaken at the programme level were aimed at expanding the enabling environment for outcome achievement? Which non-project-specific actions were aimed at adding value to the programme overall?</i> <i>Q4.F How were programme goals/actions/strategies fit within current IDRC corporate objectives (such as building leaders or scaling up) and DFID objectives?</i> <i>Q4.G How well were gender analysis and gender programming integrated, and what role did IDRC staff play in it?</i>	capacities of programme staff	strategic and policy changes as well as DFID requirements • Level and extent of inclusion of gender	
Q5. Understanding project modalities (network-based and institution-led)* • How did the modality of projects (network-led and institution-led) contribute (or not) to achieving project outcomes? • What worked? What did not? How could the modalities be improved? <i>Q5.A What is the configuration of the INASSA network/ecosystem?</i>	• Mapping of outputs, outcomes by actor • Network strategies and their methodologies • Think tank strategies and their methodologies • Coherence between programme design (ToC) and project modalities (e.g. network approaches, think tank activities) • Review of Theory of Change, assumptions, and intention around	• In what ways did each modality facilitate project stakeholder engagement, utilisation of research and policy influence? • In what ways did each modality facilitate project outcomes? • What do we learn when comparing and contrasting the different	Output/outcome review, network analysis • Document review • Web metrics • Interviews • Project staff/user surveys • Case studies

<i>Q5.B What were the underlying principles for the networks' methodologies/strategies?</i> <i>Q5.C In what ways do network-based and institution-led projects operate?</i> <i>Q5.D What kind of explicit activities fostered network vibrancy and the achievement of network effects?</i> <i>Q5.E What kind of explicit goals, activities, engagement fostered achievement of think tank outcomes?</i> <i>Q5.F What was the progression from one modality to another? (I.e. was there a logical progression from single organisation to network to think tank?)</i> *NB: "Institution" can refer to a think tank or single organisation.	progression from one methodology to another	modalities?	
Q6. Role of IDRC staff for project outcomes - To what extent was the role of the IDRC staff significant in contributing to project outcomes? (e.g., formative learning, meta-synthesis, network buildings, networking, building credibility/legitimacy of the field). - How could these contributions be improved?	- Main guidelines on programme management/project supervision for IDRC staff. - Analysis of how context has been addressed in programming and implementation	- Lessons learned from question 4 - Relationships with IDRC strategic plan(s) - Decision making processes and priorities	Theory of Change - Document review - Interviews - Site visits - Project staff survey

Q6.A To what extent do priorities and choices made by IDRC staff reflect responsiveness to the context (e.g. social, technical, cultural), particularly to changes in and complexity of the external environment during the course of the programme?

Q6.B Did IDRC staff undertake conscious, explicit actions to exploit complementarity among projects and with initiatives outside INASSA (within IDRC and DFID)?

Q6.C What were the relative levels of thought leadership by IDRC staff in the three main outcome areas, and how that played out in their contributions to outputs/outcomes?

Q6.D What was the effect of INASSA staff changes on outcome achievements?

ANNEX F: EVALUATION PARTICIPANTS

The evaluation methodology included a wide range of methods for data collection. An initial inception workshop was conducted in Ottawa with IDRC staff to provide an initial background and ensure a common understanding of the evaluation design and methodology. Secondary data was collected through relevant IDRC evaluations and existing project documentation. Extensive primary data collection included site visits to Myanmar, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Tanzania, where interviews, participatory focus groups and field visits were conducted. Site visits, virtual interviews, partner and end-user surveys, and case studies were complementary and provided unique results for the findings.

Chart 1: Methods for Data Collection

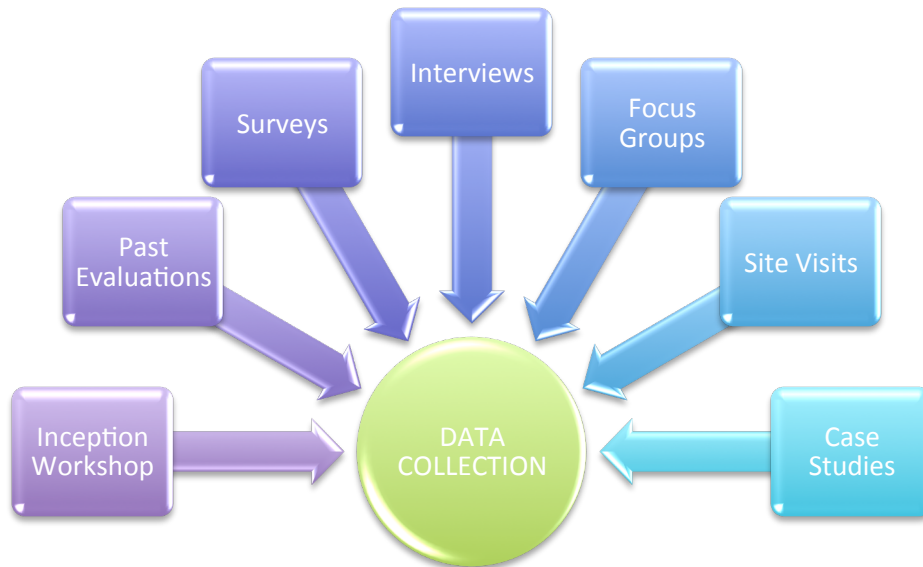


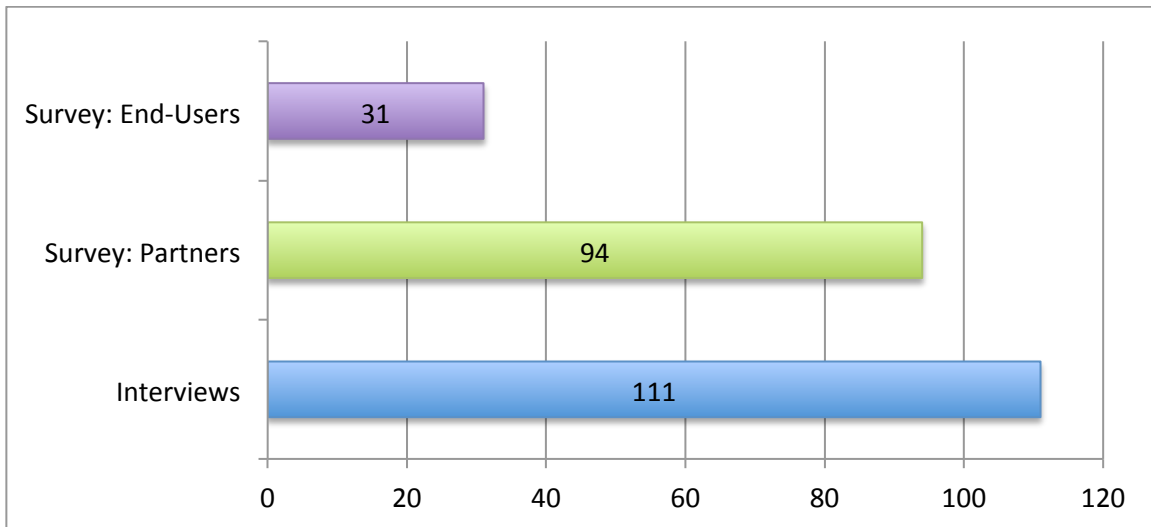
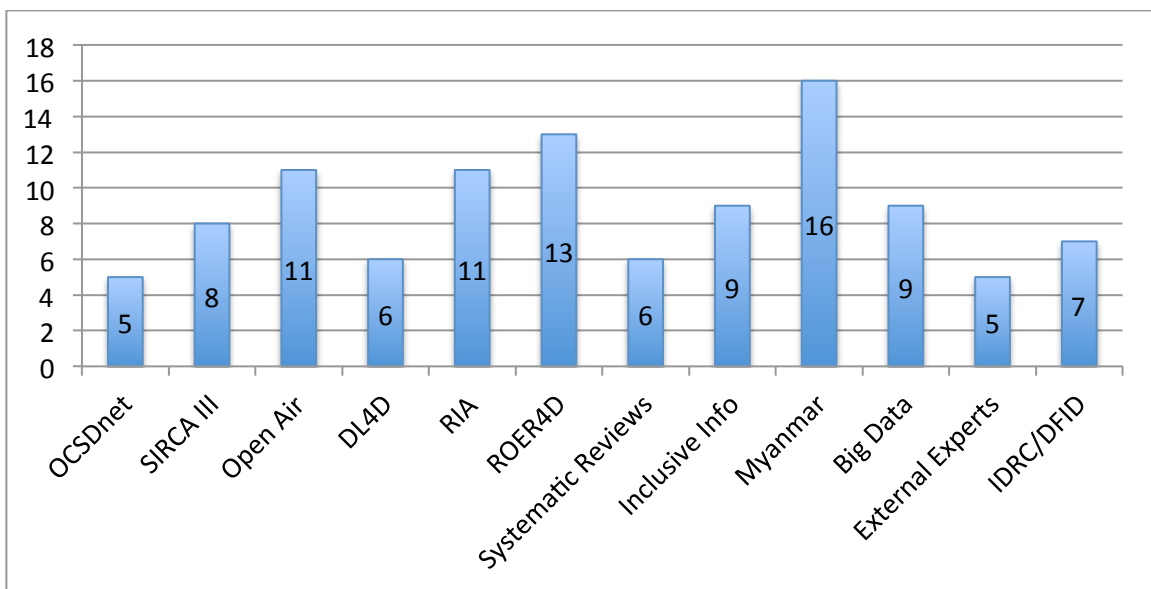
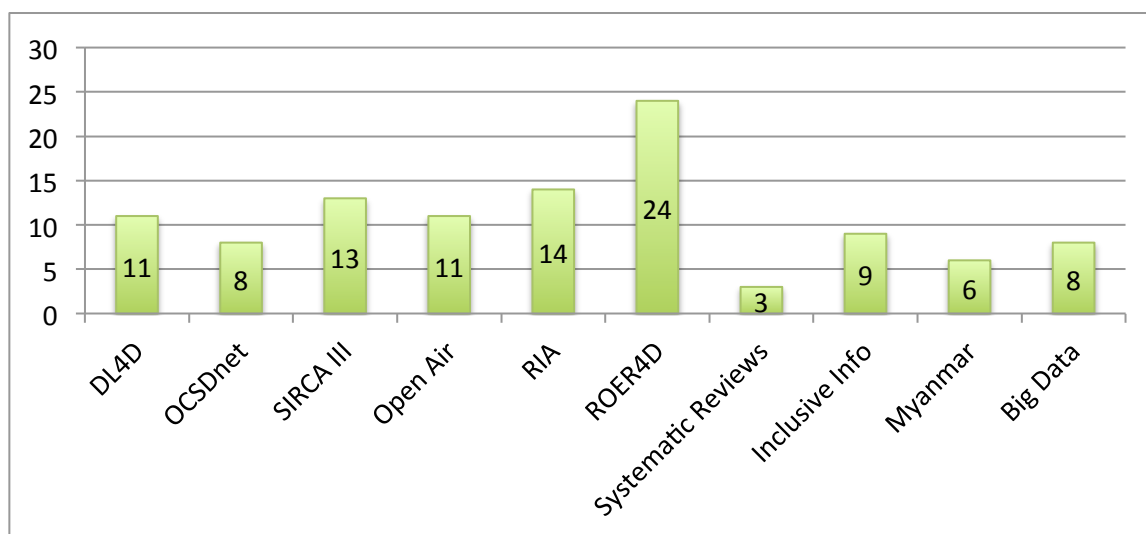
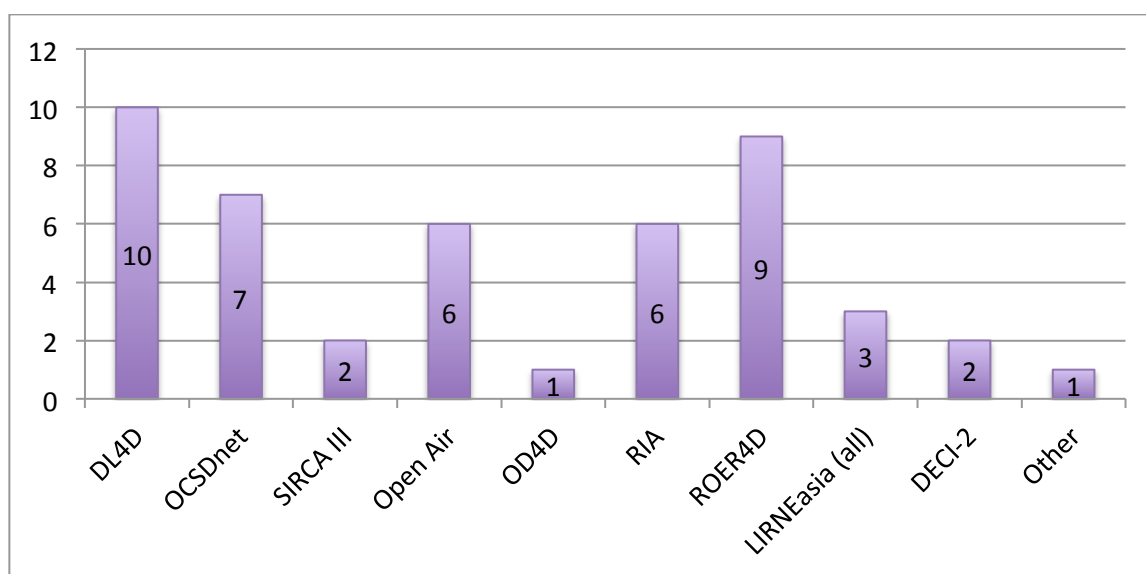
Table 1: Total Participants by Method of Data Collection**Table 2: Total Participants Interviewed**

Table 3: Total Participants in Partners/Grantees Survey**Table 4: Total Participants in End-User Survey**

ANNEX G: WORKSHOPS WITH IDRC - OTTAWA

INCEPTION WORKSHOP AGENDA

Information and Networks in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa (INASSA) Evaluation

Orientation & Work-planning Meeting

August 10, 2017

5th floor, Room 500

Objectives of workshop for INASSA evaluation team:

- Deepen the team's understanding of the INASSA programme
- Review the scope of work of the evaluation
- Meet the Networked Economies team and other IDRC programme support staff
- Learn about project management at IDRC and logistical requirements for the evaluation
- Discuss evaluation design and work-planning

Participants:

Evaluation team	
Judith Kallick jkallickrussell@yahoo.com	Evaluation team leader
Patrick Mc Namara patrick.mcnamara@transformkonsult.com	Team member
Patrick Breard patrick@breard.com	Team member (participating via skype from Paris, +6hrs)
Manuel Acevedo manuel@manuelacevedo.net	Team member (participating via skype from Buenos Aires, + 1hr)
IDRC - Networked Economies/INASSA Programme	
Laurent Elder lelder@idrc.ca	Programme Leader, Networked Economies
Matthew Smith msmith@idrc.ca	Senior Programme Officer, Networked Economies (Responsible officer for INASSA programme)
Katie Clancy kclancy@idrc.ca	Programme Management Officer, Networked Economies
IDRC - Programme support	
Tricia Wind twind@idrc.ca	Senior Programme Specialist, Policy and Evaluation Division (evaluation advisor to Networked Economies)
Mano Buckshi mbuckshi@idrc.ca	Grant Administrator (in charge of evaluation contract)

Absent: Amy Etherington aetherington@idrc.ca, Senior Programme Officer, Policy and Evaluation Division (managing INASSA evaluation)

Time	Activity	Lead
8:30 – 9:00	<i>Evaluation team only – preliminary discussion (support for skype set up, Wi-Fi, and access passes)</i>	Judith
9:00 – 9:20	Welcome and introductions Review agenda, logistics	Trish
9:20 – 9:45	Introduction to IDRC and Information & Networks (2010-2015) Networked Economies (2015-2020) programmes	Laurent
9:45 – 11:15	Presentation and discussion on INASSA programme - Overview of the INASSA programme and partnership with DFID - Orientation on INASSA project portfolio (thematics, geographic spread, diversity) with a deeper dive on core projects	Matthew
11:15 – 11:30	Break	
11:30 – 12:30	Review evaluation scope of work - Use and users: how can we ensure an appropriate balance between accountability and learning? - Evaluation questions: ensure collective understanding of each question, identify sub-questions, prioritise areas of focus - Ensuring a programme-level focus for the evaluation	Trish
12:30 – 2:00	Working lunch (pick up in 3rd fl. cafeteria) <i>Evaluation team only – workplan and design discussions</i>	
2:00 – 3:15	Evaluation design – opportunity for the evaluation team to gather insights from the NE programme team in designing the evaluation (i.e. what do you think we need to consider in the design?) - Data sources: IDRC and DFID staff, research teams, research users, external perspectives - Data collection: web metrics, interviews, site visits, survey(s), case studies - Data analysis: qualitative and quantitative - Advisory group: desired expertise, engagement and input	Judith
3:15 – 3:45	Documents, project files, and information systems - Google drive - Project management at IDRC, what's in a typical project file - Project budgets	Allie/ Matthew
3:45 – 4:00	Contract, travel, invoicing Evaluation team only meets with Mano	Mano
4:00	End for day	

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS WORKSHOP AGENDA

Information and Networks in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa (INASSA) Evaluation

Preliminary Findings Meeting

December 7-8, 2017

Objectives of meeting:

Presentation to the Networked Economies team to share and validate emerging findings - this is an opportunity to uncover potential evidence gaps and refine findings for write-up in the evaluation report

Participants:

Evaluation team		
Judith Kallick jkallickrussell@yahoo.com		Evaluation team leader
Patrick McNamara patrick.mcnamara@transformkonsult.com		Team member (TBC: participating via skype from Paris, +6hrs)
Patrick Breard patrick@breard.com		Team member (TBC: participating via skype from Paris, +6hrs)
Manuel Acevedo manuel@manuelacevedo.net		Team member (TBC: participating via skype from Buenos Aires, + 1hr)
IDRC - Networked Economies/INASSA Program		
Laurent Elder lelder@idrc.ca		Program Leader, Networked Economies
Matthew Smith msmith@idrc.ca		Senior Program Officer, Networked Economies (Responsible officer for INASSA program)
Ruhiya Kris Seward rseward@idrc.ca		Senior Program Officer, Networked Economies
TBC: Fernando Perini, Phet Sayo, Raed Sharif		
Katie Clancy kclancy@idrc.ca		Program Management Officer, Networked Economies
IDRC - Program support		
Amy Etherington aetherington@idrc.ca		Senior Program Officer, Policy and Evaluation Division (managing INASSA evaluation)

DAY 1 – DEC 7	DAY 2 – DEC 8
Morning: - Evaluation team meeting - meet with POEV to review preliminary findings	Morning: - Evaluation team meeting to consider feedback - Optional meetings with NE and/or IDRC Eval team for further discussions
LUNCH	LUNCH
Afternoon: Present preliminary findings to NE team, followed by response and discussion	Afternoon: Evaluation team meeting

ANNEX H: INTERVIEW GUIDES

INTERVIEW GUIDE: PARTICIPATORY FOCUS GROUP

Purpose of Focus groups:

- To deepen understanding of project impacts, with a focus on informing the contribution Analysis, and Q3, Q4, Q5, and Q6
- To explore IDRC's role in INASSA
- To identify the changing contexts that projects work within

Focus Group for GRANTEES/PARTNERS

1. ***Introductions***
2. ***Identify most/least impactful outputs***
 - a. What do you feel are the outputs created through INASSA that have had the most impact in helping you to achieve your ultimate goal (policy change, field of research)?
 - b. What outputs do you feel have not been as successful?
3. ***Context and contribution analysis***
 - a. Purpose: to help us better understand the overall context you work within.
 - b. What helps you get to your ultimate goal (development of research capacity, development of policy capacity, partnerships, policy environment and change, field of research, etc.)? What are the obstacles/hindrances?
4. ***Stakeholders map***
 - a. Develop a list or visual of the categories of stakeholders influencing the projects
5. ***Final Thoughts or Comments***
 - a. What insights came from these exercises for you about using research to influence policy and using INASSA materials to meet your goals?
 - b. What could be done differently to be more effective? More innovative? Move things forward?

INTERVIEW GUIDE: INASSA PARTNERS AND SUB-GRANTEES

Name:

Organization:

Position in organization:

INASSA project # :

Country based:

Interview date:

Contact details:

Interview file location (included recording, if done):

This interview is part of the process for the external INASSA program evaluation currently underway. To gain a deeper understanding of each project within the program, we are interviewing people involved from a range of perspectives.

This interview it is not assessing the performance or processes of your particular project (or any of the projects within the INASSA portfolio). We expect to gain a deeper understanding of the overall program through the projects and their activities.

The information that you provide in the interview is confidential. If a quote from the interview is used in the evaluation report or supporting documentation, the source would not be identified and care would be taken that it can't be inferred from the context.

I would like to record the interview for my own purposes, so that I can go back and make sure I'm representing accurately what you've shared. These recordings will only be shared with my evaluation team members, and not with IDRC or others.

CAPTURE ON RECORDING: Do you consent to being recorded?

ER Guiding Questions	Interview Questions
Q1 – Research Quality	
Overall, to what extent was the quality of the research produced by INASSA research networks and think tanks acceptable (given the context/intended purpose/etc.)?	<i>Q1.A What would you consider to be research quality in your network/project?</i> <i>Q1.B Which research products would you highlight from your project?</i> <i>Which were most useful and why? (beyond what was positive or largest scale – anything that was challenging that was an important learning)</i> <i>Q1.C Was the research mainly conducted by academics or by development practitioners?</i> <i>Q1.D What were the key, common influencing factors for research in your project, in terms of</i>

	• risks (technical, political), • researcher capacity, • maturity of the field Q1.E IDRC assesses research quality for development in an integrated way, examining several criteria. How would you briefly characterize the research in your project in terms of the following criteria: • Integrity (standards, methodology) • Legitimacy (preventing negative consequences, inclusiveness, gender-responsive) • Importance (originality, developmental relevance) • Positioning for use (accessibility, timeliness).
<u>Additional Info:</u>	
Q2 – Research Capacity Development	
To what extent and in what ways was INASSA capacity strengthening of southern researchers effective, relevant, and significant?	Q2.A What were the specific activities of your project's work on research capacity development? And the intended/achieved results? Q2.B What research aspects featured more prominently into research capacity development actions (note: refer back to research quality dimensions in Q1 if needed), i.e. technical, ethical (incl. do-no-harm, gender, local inclusivity) positioning for policy uptake, etc. Q2.C What specific type(s) of support was provided by the INASSA program/through the project in terms of: • Interdisciplinary work for an integrated approach to research on a complex field such as 'an inclusive networked society'? • Promoting or building collaborative capacity for research to avoid the issue of researchers working in silos (disciplinary/institutional)? Q2.D How well was gender analysis incorporated into the projects (its design, implementation and monitoring)? • Did you have sufficient capacity to allow for gender-responsive project design/implementation?
<u>Additional Info:</u>	

Q3- Research to policy influence

To what extent and in what ways were the INASSA supported projects successful in achieving relevant and significant research to policy influence?

Where policy influence was below expectation, were there ways in which INASSA could have been more effective in supporting research to policy uptake?

Q3.A: How did your project intervene to influence policies?

- Can you point out any instances of policy influence in your sector (e.g. on (i) technical policies, (ii) developmental policies, and/or (iii) at their intersections) resulting from INASSA/IDRC-supported research on information networks in A/SSA?
- If policy changes have been implemented, what have been their outcomes?

Q3.B Which policy issues have more priority, in your opinion, for information networks in Asia/South Saharan Africa in your sector?

Q3.C What are, in your opinion, the main challenges in effectively linking research to policy in this field?

Q3.D Did your project include specific activities to strengthen the capacities of either

- i. Researchers to influence policies?
- ii. Policy-makers to incorporate evidence?

Q3.E Should initiatives aimed at linking evidence/research to policy put more effort into (a) researchers (to reach policy makers) or (b) on policy-makers (to help them make sense and appreciate evidence)?

Additional Info:

Q4 – INASSA implementation and management

To what extent was the implementation of INASSA efficient and economical, relative to its purpose and intended outcomes?

• Were resources (e.g. staff) used efficiently to manage the projects and program?

• What have been the strengths and weaknesses of the program's management?) AND/OR the value proposition of funding (e.g. business case,

Q4.A From your perspective, how coherent was INASSA/IDRC's support of your project, ie., in terms of being intelligible, consistent and well integrated as a program?

Q4.B Were there factors during your project's implementation that required any modifications to the work originally intended? If so, how was the INASSA/IDRC staff engaged to facilitate these changes?

Q4.C From your perspective, which actions undertaken at the program level enhanced the enabling environment for your project (i.e. for achieving its objectives)? Which non project-specific actions helped to add value to the program overall?

Q4.D Did your project interact with DFID? In what ways?

leveraging existing programming).]	Q4.E Did your project interact with other INASSA/IDRC projects? How did the connections come about? In what ways did or do you interact?
<u>Additional Info:</u>	
Q6- Role of INASSA/IDRC staff for project outcomes	
To what extent was the role of the IDRC staff significant in contributing to project outcomes? (e.g., formative learning, meta-synthesis, network buildings, networking, building credibility/legitimacy of the field). How could these contributions be improved?	Q6.A To what extent were INASSA/IDRC staff responsive to the project context (e.g. social, technical, cultural), as evidenced by their actions and decisions, particularly if there were changes in such context? Q6.B In what ways, if any, did INASSA/IDRC staff support synergies across projects within INASSA/IDRC or with other organizations? Q6.C What role did INASSA/IDRC staff play in supporting the integration of gender analysis in your project, and in developing capacities for gender-responsive programming? Q6.D In what ways did INASSA/IDRC staff contribute substantively to your work? What would you say were the one or two areas that were their most significant value added? (research generation, research capacity development, research-to-policy)?
<u>Additional Info:</u>	
<u>Any other information regarding the interview/interviewee:</u>	

Q5- Exploring project implementation modalities (network vs. institution-led)	
How did the modality of projects (network- versus institution- led) contribute (or not) to achieving project outcomes? What worked? What did not? How could the modalities be improved?	Q5.A (for network managers/grantees) In your view, what were the operating methodologies promoted by INASSA/IDRC for networks like yours? How did you network operate in relation to the programme-wide view? Q5.B (for think-tank staff/grantees) What kind of explicit goals, activities, engagement by INASSA/IDRC fostered achievement of think tank outcomes? In what ways does this align with your organizational goals? Q5.C (for those who participate/ interact with both modalities) To the extent that you may be aware of, how would you describe the

	<i>differences between the operating modalities of network-based vs. institution-led projects (taking your own project as a reference)?</i> <i>Q5.D (for network managers/grantees) What specific characteristics fostered a dynamic environment in your network? What activities aimed at obtaining network effects⁴⁷?</i> <i>Q5.F (for think-tank staff/grantees) What was the evolution of becoming a think tank?</i> <i>Q5.G (for all informants) What broad effects do you perceive that INASSA/IDRC generated? How did it generate them?</i>
<u>Additional Info:</u>	

Final Comments:

1. *Imagine that you could change, enhance or improve anything about the way INASSA/IDRC works or supports you, what would be the one or two top things that you would recommend to them?*

2. *Is there anything else that you would like to share that we haven't covered?*

⁴⁷ Network effects to be interpreted as the positive benefits of direct/indirect interactions among network nodes; it refers to the added value that a network environment can generate (in comparison with a set of separate activities)

INTERVIEW GUIDE: PROGRAM STAFF AND DONORS

Name:

Organization: IDRC / DFID

Position in organization:

INASSA Projects responsible for (if any): #

Country based:

Interview date:

Contact details:

Interview file location (included recording, if done):

This interview is part of the process for the external INASSA program evaluation currently underway. To gain a deeper understanding the program overall and of its projects, we are interviewing people involved from a range of perspectives including those like you with broader program responsibilities/view.

The information that you provide in the interview is confidential. If a quote from the interview is used in the evaluation report or supporting documentation, the source would not be identified and care would be taken that it can't be inferred from the context.

I would like to record the interview for my own purposes, so that I can go back and make sure I'm representing accurately what you've shared. These recordings will only be shared with my evaluation team members, and not with IDRC or others.

CAPTURE ON RECORDING: Do you consent to being recorded?

ER Guiding Questions	Interview Questions
Q1 – Research Quality	
Overall, to what extent was the quality of the research produced by INASSA research networks and think tanks acceptable (given the context/intended purpose/etc.)?	<i>Q1.A In what ways do you think the concept of research quality (from IDRC, RQ+) has been understood by INASSA partners/sub-grantees? Incorporated into their research work?</i> <i>Q1. B What are the most significant INASSA research products in your view and why?</i> <i>Q1.C What, if any, have been common influencing factors for research in the overall INASSA program?</i> <i>Q1.D What do you think have been the strong/weak points of research (in terms of research quality) for INASSA as a whole? Pls refer to the RQ+ dimensions below for a more precise description:</i> <i>Integrity (standards, methodology)</i> <i>Legitimacy (preventing negative consequences, inclusiveness, gender-responsive)</i>

	• Importance (originality, developmental relevance) • Positioning for use (accessibility, timeliness).
<u>Additional Info:</u>	
Q2 – Research Capacity Development	
To what extent and in what ways was INASSA capacity strengthening of southern researchers effective, relevant, and significant?	<i>Q2.A What research dimension featured more prominently into INASSA research capacity development actions (note: refer back to research quality dimensions in Q1 if needed)?</i> <i>Q2.B The I&N External Review pointed at significant challenges in achieving systemic and interdisciplinary research for a complex, multidisciplinary domain described as ‘an inclusive networked society’. Was INASSA able to overcome some of those difficulties?</i> <i>Q2.C In what ways, if any, did the program make efforts to build collaborative capacity for research, or otherwise to avoid researchers working in disciplinary/institutional silos?</i>
<u>Additional Info:</u>	
Q3- Research to policy influence	
To what extent and in what ways were the INASSA supported projects successful in achieving relevant and significant research to policy influence? Where policy influence was below expectation, were there ways in which INASSA could have been more effective in supporting research to policy uptake?	<i>Q3.A. How did your project intervene to influence policies (directly from research products or with other resources)?</i> • Can you point out any instances of policy influence in your sector (e.g. on (i) technical policies, (ii) developmental policies, and/or (iii) at their intersections) resulting from INASSA/IDRC-supported research on information networks in A/SSA? • If policy changes have been implemented, what have been their outcomes? <i>Q3.B Which policy issues have more priority, in your opinion, for information networks in A/SSA in your sector?</i> <i>Q3.C What are, in your opinion, the main challenges in effectively linking research to policy in this field?</i> <i>Q3.D Did your project include specific activities to strengthen the capacities of either</i>

	iii. Researchers to influence policies? iv. Policy-makers to incorporate evidence? Q3.E Should initiatives aimed at linking evidence/research to policy put more effort into (a) researchers (to reach policy makers) or (b) on policy-makers (to help them make sense and appreciate evidence)?
<u>Additional Info:</u>	
Q4 – INASSA implementation and management	
To what extent was the implementation of INASSA efficient and economical, relative to its purpose and intended outcomes? • Were resources (e.g. staff) used efficiently to manage the projects and program? • What have been the strengths and weaknesses of the program's management?) AND/OR the value proposition of funding (e.g. business case, leveraging existing programming).]	Q4.A To what extent was the implementation of INASSA efficient and economical, relative to its purpose and intended outcomes? Q4.B What considerations were taken in the use of resources for the efficiency of the program and projects? Q4.C What have been the strengths and weaknesses of the program's management? AND/OR the value proposition of funding (e.g. business case, leveraging existing programming). Q4.D In what ways do you refer to the program's ToC (its logic, assumptions, intended outcomes, scaling up strategy, etc.)? Any specific examples? Q4.E How were lessons learned from previous programs and projects utilized to drive program strategy and interventions? Q4.F How effective has the implementation been of the new NE strategy for gender-responsive programming? Did it come too late for INASSA⁴⁸ or was there enough time to make it work? Q4.G What factors were responsible for any modifications or deviations? • What was the decision-making process for these modifications? (e.g., who was included in what types of discussions? Did you need to reflect back on the project's theory of change?) • Was there any feedback on learnings during the INASSA implementation? Q4.H What actions undertaken at the program level were aimed at

⁴⁸ It was specifically requested by DFID in 2nd annual review

	<i>expanding the enabling environment for outcome achievement? Which non project-specific actions were aimed at adding value to the program overall?</i> <i>Q4.I How were program actions/strategy made to converge to overall IDRC corporate objectives, such as building leaders or scaling up?</i>
<u>Additional Info:</u>	
Q6- Role of IDRC staff for project outcomes	
To what extent was the role of the IDRC staff significant in contributing to project outcomes? (e.g., formative learning, meta-synthesis, network buildings, networking, building credibility/legitimacy of the field). How could these contributions be improved?	<i>Q6.A To what extent were INASSA/IDRC staff responsive to the overall program context (e.g. social, technical, institutional, cultural), as evidenced by their actions and decisions? Any significant changes in such context during INASSA's implementation?)</i> <i>Q6.B What role did INASSA/IDRC staff play in supporting the integration of gender analysis in your project, and in developing capacities for gender-responsive programming?</i> <i>Q6.C In what ways, if any, did INASSA/IDRC staff support synergies across projects within INASSA/IDRC or with other organizations?</i> • <i>among INASSA projects?</i> • <i>with other IDRC or DFID initiatives outside INASSA?</i> • <i>with initiatives outside IDRC or DFID?</i> <i>Q6.D In what ways did INASSA/IDRC staff contribute substantively to your work? What would you say were the one or two areas that were their most significant value added? (research generation, research capacity development, research-to-policy)</i> <i>Q6.E Was there anything you would have liked to do in order to contribute to INASSA outcomes that was not feasible in the context of program implementation conditions?</i>
Q5- Exploring project implementation modalities (network vs. institution-led)	
How did the modality of projects (network- versus institution- led) contribute (or not) to achieving project outcomes? What worked? What did not?	<i>Q5.A What is the configuration of the INASSA network/ecosystem? Was there an explicit/tacit network strategy for the overall INASSA program?</i> <i>Q5.B What were the underlying principles for the networks' methodologies/strategies? Did they share the same understandings, or did some of them followed different principles (deliberately).</i>

How could the modalities be improved?	<i>Q5.C What kind of explicit goals, activities, engagement fostered achievement of think tank outcomes?</i> <i>Q5.C (for those who participate/ interact with both modalities) To the extent that you may be aware of, how would you describe the differences between the operating modalities of network-based vs. institution-led projects (taking your own project as a reference)?</i> <i>Q5.E Which would you identify as the most salient network effects⁴⁹ generated by INASSA (in some projects, at the overall programme level)?</i> <i>Q5.F (for think-tank staff/grantees) What was the evolution of becoming a think tank?</i>
<u>Additional Info:</u>	
<u>Any other information regarding the interview/interviewee:</u>	

Final Comments:

Imagine the INASSA program 5 years from now. (Give them a moment to visualize) What would it look like? What are the top one or two things that would need to happen so that this vision could be realized?

Is there anything else that you would like to share that we haven't covered?

⁴⁹ Network effects to be interpreted as the positive benefits of direct/indirect interactions among network nodes; it refers to the added value that a network environment can generate (in comparison with a set of separate activities)

INTERVIEW GUIDE: EXTERNAL EXPERTS/ STAKEHOLDERS

Name:

Organization:

Position in organization:

Country based:

Interview date:

Contact details:

Interview file location (included recording, if done):

This interview is part of the process for the external INASSA program evaluation currently underway. The INASSA program *“supports the development of research that will build and strengthen evidence on the connections between the growing use of digital information networks and economic growth, democratic reform, and increased educational opportunities in the developing world.”*

To gain a deeper understanding of each project within the program, we are interviewing people involved from a range of perspectives. One key group we are including are experts and stakeholders such as you who are outside the INASSA program’s framework. We are seeking your insights and opinions in ways that will be helpful to the evaluation team when assessing the relevance and effects of the programme. Their information will be complementary to those from programme actors, and will help the evaluation team get a more well-rounded understanding of INASSA performance and processes

The information that you provide in the interview is confidential. If a quote from the interview is used in the evaluation report or supporting documentation, the source would not be identified and care would be taken that it can’t be inferred from the context.

I would like to record the interview for my own purposes, so that I can go back and make sure I’m representing accurately what you’ve shared. These recordings will only be shared with my evaluation team members, and not with IDRC or others.

CAPTURE ON RECORDING: Do you consent to being recorded?

Main Evaluation Questions (EQs)	Interview Questions
	<i>To what extent are you familiar with the work that IDRC carries out on ICT for Development?</i> <i>Have you heard, or participated in any activity from the following global programs: Information & Networks (2011-2015), Networked Economies (2016-2020), Open Data for Development (2013, 2017), or</i>

	INASSA (2013-2018)?⁵⁰ <i>In which of the following sectors are you more involved regarding the relations between information networks (or, more widely, ICT4D): Governance, Education, Science, or Entrepreneurship in Creative Industries?</i>
Q1 – Research Quality	
Overall, to what extent was the quality of the research produced by INASSA research networks and think tanks acceptable (given the context/intended purpose/etc.)?	<i>Q1.A How would you define or describe quality research-for-development?</i> <i>Q1.B INASSA/IDRC'S concept of research quality goes beyond academic excellence, including dimensions such as</i> <i>• Legitimacy (preventing negative consequences, inclusiveness, gender-responsive)</i> <i>• Importance (originality, developmental relevance), and</i> <i>• Positioning for use (accessibility, timeliness).</i> <i>What do you think of this concept? To your knowledge, is it a concept shared and practice by most/some/few other development organizations?</i> <i>Q1.C What do you think are important external influencing factors for research in A/SSA, for example in terms of:</i> <i>• risks (technical, political),</i> <i>• researcher capacity,</i> <i>• maturity (of some topics)</i> <i>Q1.E To what extent do you think that IDRC is making a significant difference in terms of research quality for information networks 4D research in A/SSA?</i>
<u>Additional Info:</u>	
Q2 – Research Capacity Development	
To what extent and in what ways was INASSA capacity strengthening of southern	<i>Q2.A What aspects of research capacity development do you think a program in ICT 4 development should support? i.e. technical, ethical (incl. 'do-no-harm', gender, local inclusiveness), positioning it for policy</i>

⁵⁰ This includes conferences like the International Open Data Conferences (IODC) celebrated in Ottawa 2015 or Madrid in 2016.

researchers effective, relevant, and significant?	<i>uptake, etc.</i> <i>Q2.B How important is it to promote and actively support interdisciplinary work for research on a complex field such as ‘an inclusive networked society’?</i> <i>Q2.C To what extent should programs in ICT 4 development support capacity building for collaborative research? (eg. to achieve among other things breaking out of the ‘silo-mentality’, promoting networked development actions, etc.)</i>
<u>Additional Info:</u>	
Q3- Research to policy influence	
To what extent and in what ways were the INASSA supported projects successful in achieving relevant and significant research to policy influence? Where policy influence was below expectation, were there ways in which INASSA could have been more effective in supporting research to policy uptake?	<i>Q3.A Are you aware of any research products supported by IDRC in the field of Information & Networks in Asia and SSAfrica⁵¹? Which ones? How did you learn about them? How did they contribute to or influence policies (directly from research products or with other resources)?</i> <i>Q3.B Can you point out any instances of policy influence in your sector (e.g. on (i) technical policies, (ii) developmental policies, and/or (iii) at their intersections) resulting from IDRC-supported research on information networks in A/SSA?</i> • <i>If policy changes have been implemented, what have been their outcomes?</i> • <i>Did they include specific activities to strengthen the capacities of either</i> v. <i>Researchers to influence policies?</i> vi. <i>Policy-makers to incorporate evidence?</i> <i>Q3.C Which policy issues have more priority, in your opinion, for information networks in A/SSA in your sector?</i> <i>Q3.D What are, in your opinion, the main challenges in effectively linking research to policy in this field?</i> <i>Q3.E Should initiatives aimed at linking evidence/research to policy put more effort into (a) researchers (to reach policy makers) or (b) on</i>

⁵¹ Have at hand a list with the best known ones that can help them. Many will know about IDRC work without knowing where it comes from

	<i>policy-makers (to help them make sense and appreciate evidence)?</i>
<u>Additional Info:</u>	
Q4 – INASSA implementation and management	
To what extent was the implementation of INASSA efficient and economical, relative to its purpose and intended outcomes? • Were resources (e.g. staff) used efficiently to manage the projects and program? • What have been the strengths and weaknesses of the program's management?) AND/OR the value proposition of funding (e.g. business case, leveraging existing programming).]	<i>Q4.A If you are familiar with INASSA, what is your perception of how it was conceived and how it is managed?⁵²</i> <i>Q4.B In your opinion, is Gender a truly significant issue in the ICT 4 Development field?</i> • <i>Is it usually well integrated in such research?</i> • <i>Do researchers/research organizations have sufficient capacity for gender analysis and gender-responsive project design?</i> • <i>How would you describe IDRC's commitment and actions on gender issues in ICT 4 development?</i> <i>Q4.C How can a program (or a program architecture) in ICT 4 development add value to the work performed by individual projects? How can it improved or create a more enabling environment in which the projects operate?</i> <i>Q4.D In the last few years, what new issues have emerged in the field of information networks that merit being considered by new ICT 4 development programs?</i>
<u>Additional Info:</u>	
Q6- Role of IDRC staff for project outcomes	
To what extent was the role of the IDRC staff significant in contributing to project outcomes? (e.g., formative learning, meta-synthesis, network buildings, networking, building credibility/legitimacy of	<i>Q6.A In what ways did INASSA/IDRC staff contribute substantively to your work? What would you say were the one or two areas that were their most significant value added? (research generation, research capacity development, research-to-policy)?</i> • <i>Can you point to any specific individuals and their contributions?</i>

⁵² As a reminder, INASSA is a research programme that is "building an evidence base on the connections between the growing use of digital information networks and economic growth, democratic reform and increased educational opportunities in the developing world. It aims to identify the most effective strategies for harnessing these opportunities in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa while also providing a critical perspective on the potential negative impacts that could result from the spread of digital technologies."

the field).	
How could these contributions be improved?	
<u>Additional Info:</u>	
<u>Any other information regarding the interview/interviewee:</u>	
Q5- Comparing project implementation modalities (network vs. institution-led)	
How did the modality of projects (network- versus institution- led) contribute (or not) to achieving project outcomes? What worked? What did not? How could the modalities be improved?	Q5.A What are, in your opinion, the main characteristics of effective, productive development networks? Q5.B What are the pros and cons of implementing projects via (a) institutional networks or (b) individual organizations? From your experience, do either of the two generally generate better results for development programs (or large projects)? Q5.C What specific actions/features foster a dynamic network environment? What types of activities can be effective in generating network effects⁵³ in a development network?
<u>Additional Info:</u>	

Final Comments:

Imagine that you could create the ideal program to support local researchers, systems, and organizations in ICT 4 development. What would be the top two components you would want to be sure was in that program?

Is there anything else that you would like to share that we haven't covered?

As we are interesting in gaining a range of perspectives, are there other stakeholders who you think would be useful for us to hear from? We might request their feedback through a brief survey or contact them for an interview.

⁵³ Network effects to be interpreted as the positive benefits of direct/indirect interactions among network nodes; it refers to the added value that a network environment can generate (in comparison with a set of separate activities)

ANNEX I: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES

Survey for INASSA projects' staff and sub-grantees

Foreword

This short survey invites you to assess the effectiveness of the 'Information and Networks in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa programme (INASSA). **INASSA** supports research on the connections between the growing use of digital information networks and (i) economic growth, (ii) democratic reform, (iii) educational opportunities, and (iv) socially-relevant scientific endeavours. It is funded by UK's **DFID** and managed by Canada's **IDRC**.

This questionnaire is only provided to staff and sub-grantees of INASSA-funded projects.

The focus of this evaluation is on the performance and aggregate results of the INASSA programme and not of your project or organization. Evidence and data will be gathered from across the different projects with a view to generating insights on INASSA overall performance and to inform findings that speak to the program as a whole.

The survey should take less than 30 minutes to complete. All survey questions are optional but we encourage you to respond to the entire questionnaire and click "Finish survey" at the end. If you have any questions or difficulties, please contact < Manuel Acevedo manuel@manuelacevedo.net > from the evaluation team.

The deadline for completing the questionnaire is November 6th. We hope this gives you enough time.

The survey is confidential. Data will be aggregated at the programme level, no project data will be presented.

Thank you for your contribution!

Survey for INASSA projects' staff and sub-grantees

Personal Profile

1. What is your main job function?

- ☐ Management or coordination (team leader, programme manager, etc.)
- ☐ Research / Academic / Technical specialist
- ☐ Policy making
- ☐ Other specialist (e.g. evaluation, donor relations, communications, innovation etc.)
- ☐ Operations support and administration (admin, HR, finance, ICT, etc.)
- ☐ Professional/practitioner in one of the thematic sectors related to the INASSA program: Education, Governance, Entrepreneurship, Science
- ☐ Other (please specify)

2. What is your relationship to the INASSA program?

- ☐ Project staff
- ☐ Subgrantee (for research sub-projects)
- ☐ Other (please specify)

3. How do you identify your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Survey for INASSA projects' staff and sub-grantees

About the INASSA Program

4. Through which project(s) have you been supported by the INASSA programme?

- ☐ **DL4D** - Digital learning for development #108045
- ☐ **OCSNet** - Open and collaborative science for development network #107650
- ☐ **ROER4D** - Research on open educational resources for development #107311
- ☐ **SIRCA III** - Strengthening information society research capacity III #107708
- ☐ **Open AIR** (African Innovation Research) - Scaling technology start-ups in Africa #107956
- ☐ Catalyzing broadband in Africa (through **RIA**) #107383
- ☐ Leveraging mobile network big data for development (through **LIRNEasia**) #108008
- ☐ Towards a networked economy in Myanmar (through **LIRNEasia**) #107970
- ☐ Inclusive information societies: Creating growth and employment opportunities in Asia (through **LIRNEasia**) #108000
- ☐ Inclusion in the information society in Asia (through **LIRNEasia**) #107077
- ☐ Building Research Capacity for Systematic Reviews (through **LIRNEasia**) #107548

5. Which of INASSA's overall **lines of action** and **targeted thematic sectors** has your project been involved in? (1: No involvement; 2: Little involvement; 3: Moderate involvement; 4: Significant involvement)?

	Governance	Education	Science	Entrepreneurship (in Creative fields)
Research/knowledge generation				
Research capacity building				
Policy influence				

6. Please identify up to 3 examples of key outputs (or products) generated by your project:

Example key output:

Example key output:

Example key output:

7. To which of these **INASSA outcome fields** has the knowledge generated by your project contributed to?

	No contribution	Little contribution	Moderate contribution	Significant Contribution	Do not know
Openness: Enhancing the quality of Openness (open processes, products and fields) that networked technologies enable.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rights in the digital age: Protecting citizens', consumers', and creators' rights.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Inclusion in the network society: Including marginalized communities in the benefits of information networks	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

8. Please identify up to 3 examples of key outcomes (or developmental changes) achieved by your project or to which your project has had a specific contribution:

Example key outcome:

Example key outcome:

Example key outcome:

9. In terms of the responsiveness of the project to **gender equity and women's empowerment** which statement best describes the work of your project:

- ☐ Women are included in the project, though they are not specifically targeted
- ☐ Women are included as a target group (e.g., as beneficiaries or participants)
- ☐ Our project focuses on women but does not carry out a detailed analysis of gender relations (between women and men)
- ☐ Our project incorporates a gender analysis in the context of overall research questions
- ☐ Our project contributes to a deeper understanding of gender inequality, could help improve womens' lives and may inform long-term practical changes in structural power relations, roles and norms that define the differentiated experiences of men and women.

Any comments on why you selected that statement or concrete examples on how INASSA's role in supporting your project to be gender-responsive?

10. The following **assumptions** were identified during the initial design of the INASSA program (in its theory of change). How strongly did these assumptions hold true during your experiences with the INASSA program?

	Poorly or unsatisfactorily	Partially	Satisfactorily	Do not know
Core research capacities exist in the South	☐	☐	☐	☐
Researchers have willingness for cross-disciplinary engagement and partnerships	☐	☐	☐	☐
Conditions are in place for articulating research results	☐	☐	☐	☐
Researchers are committed to policy outreach	☐	☐	☐	☐
Policy makers have interest to engage with research	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is a research uptake strategy in place and functioning	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is commitment and an environment for evidence-based policy	☐	☐	☐	☐
There exists political commitment to gender equity	☐	☐	☐	☐

There are other assumptions or areas that IDRC or DFID might consider for their future programmes about these issues?

Survey for INASSA projects' staff and sub-grantees

Research capacity development

11. How effectively would you say the INASSA programme **developed research capacity** through your project for:

	Highly ineffective	Moderately ineffective	Moderately effective	Highly effective	Do not know
Generating credible, relevant and contextualised evidence	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Increasing stakeholder engagement and relationship building	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Improving communications (of research)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Expanding and/or strengthening strategic partnerships	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fostering utilisation of research, including via effective policy influence	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Adapting and understanding dynamics of the complex context (e.g. adaptive leadership)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Institutionalizing policies and practices for researchers' professional development	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Incorporating Gender factors (through gender analysis, data disaggregation, women's involvement, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Any comments or concrete examples on how the newly acquired or strengthened skills have influenced your research work?

Survey for INASSA projects' staff and sub-grantees

Research Quality

12. How would you assess the quality of the research outputs (products) generated by your project, using the following criteria?

	Low	Limited	Good	Excellent	Not applicable or do not know
Academic/scientific merit (references, methodology, rigour)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Addressing potential negative consequences of the research	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Gender responsiveness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Inclusiveness of vulnerable populations in the research	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Engagement with local knowledge	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Originality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Relevance of the research to existing needs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dissemination and accessibility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Timeliness and actionability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Survey for INASSA projects' staff and sub-grantees

Policy influence

13. In your opinion, what have been the contribution levels from the research and other actions from your project to the following dimensions of **policy influence**?

	No contribution	Little contribution	Moderate contribution	High contribution	Do not know
Expanding policy capacities (human and institutional) , e.g. for evidence-based monitoring of objectives, interpretation of research knowledge, analysis, communications, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Broadening policy horizons , e.g. by incorporation of new topics/innovations into policy fields, relationships between researchers and policy makers, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Affecting policies or policy framework , e.g. in terms of the improvement of policies or legislative frameworks; the adoption or implementation of practices emerging from research, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

14. Could you identify a specific example of the above where you think the INASSA-funded research had significant influence?

Survey for INASSA projects' staff and sub-grantees

About the INASSA Ecosystem/Network

The list of projects here is larger than the one in question 4 because it includes all projects under the INASSA portfolio, including some that have been previously evaluated. In order to examine the INASSA ecosystem from a network perspective all its initiatives need to be included in the following questions for the sake of completeness.

15. Which INASSA projects have you **received resources from** (data, knowledge, apps, training materials, etc.)? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ **DL4D** - Digital learning for development #108045
- ☐ **OCSNet** - Open and collaborative science for development network #107650
- ☐ **ROER4D** - Research on open educational resources for development #107311
- ☐ **SIRCA III** - Strengthening information society research capacity III #107708
- ☐ **Open AIR** (African Innovation Research) - Scaling technology start-ups in Africa #107956
- ☐ **SEED** Alliance to Scale Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship #108044
- ☐ **DECI-2** - Developing Evaluation and Communication Capacity in Information Society Research 2 #107064
- ☐ **OD4D** - Harnessing open data to achieve development results in Asia and SSAfrica #107574
- ☐ Building Research Capacity for Systematic Reviews #107548
- ☐ Strategic Communications for the INASSA and Information and Network (I&N) programs #107613
- ☐ Consultation on Inclusion in the Network Society #107734
- ☐ New learning opportunities in a networked world #107628
- ☐ Catalyzing broadband in Africa (implemented by **RIA**) #107383
- ☐ Leveraging mobile network big data for development (implemented by **LIRNEasia**) #108008
- ☐ Towards a networked economy in Myanmar (implemented by **LIRNEasia**) #107970
- ☐ Inclusive information societies: Creating growth and employment opportunities in Asia (implemented by **LIRNEasia**) #108000
- ☐ Inclusion in the information society in Asia (implemented by **LIRNEasia**) #107077
- ☐ Other IDRC-funded projects (please specify)

16. Which INASSA projects have you **provided resources to** (data, knowledge, apps, training materials, etc.)? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ **DL4D** - Digital learning for development #108045
- ☐ **OCSNet** - Open and collaborative science for development network #107650
- ☐ **ROER4D** - Research on open educational resources for development #107311
- ☐ **SIRCA III** - Strengthening information society research capacity III #107708
- ☐ **Open AIR** (African Innovation Research) - Scaling technologystart-ups in Africa #107956
- ☐ **SEED** - Alliance to Scale Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship #108044
- ☐ **DECI-2** - Developing Evaluation and Communication Capacity in Information Society Research 2 #107064
- ☐ **OD4D** - Harnessing open data to achieve development results in Asia andSSAfrica#107574
- ☐ Building Research Capacity for Systematic Reviews #107548
- ☐ Strategic Communications for the INASSA and Information and Network (I&N) programs #107613
- ☐ Consultation on Inclusion in the Network Society #107734
- ☐ New learning opportunities in a networked world #107628
- ☐ Catalyzing broadband in Africa (implemented by **RIA**) #107383
- ☐ Leveraging mobile network big data for development (implemented by **LIRNEasia**) #108008
- ☐ Towards a networked economy in Myanmar (implemented by **LIRNEasia**) #107970
- ☐ Inclusive information societies: Creating growth and employment opportunities in Asia (implemented by **LIRNEasia**) #108000
- ☐ Inclusion in the information society in Asia (implemented by **LIRNEasia**) #107077
- ☐ Other IDRC-funded projects (please specify)

17. With which project(s) have you **collaborated**?

By collaboration we mean that you have worked together with one or more projects of the INASSA portfolio network on some research or other activity, in order to (i) to generate a product, (ii) to provide a service, (iii) to jointly advocate for a policy, etc. Please select all that apply.

- ☐ **DL4D** - Digital learning for development #108045
- ☐ **OCSNet** - Open and collaborative science for development network #107650
- ☐ **ROER4D** - Research on open educational resources for development #107311
- ☐ **SIRCA III** - Strengthening information society research capacity III #107708
- ☐ **Open AIR** (African Innovation Research) - Scaling technology start-ups in Africa #107956
- ☐ **SEED** - Alliance to Scale Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship #108044
- ☐ **DECI-2** - Developing Evaluation and Communication Capacity in Information Society Research 2 #107064
- ☐ **OD4D** - Harnessing open data to achieve development results in Asia and SSAfrica #107574
- ☐ Building Research Capacity for Systematic Reviews #107548
- ☐ Strategic Communications for the INASSA and Information and Network (I&N) programs #107613
- ☐ Consultation on Inclusion in the Network Society #107734
- ☐ New learning opportunities in a networked world #107628
- ☐ Catalyzing broadband in Africa (implemented by **RIA**) #107383
- ☐ Leveraging mobile network big data for development (implemented by **LIRNEasia**) #108008
- ☐ Towards a networked economy in Myanmar (implemented by **LIRNEasia**) #107970
- ☐ Inclusive information societies: Creating growth and employment opportunities in Asia (implemented by **LIRNEasia**) #108000
- ☐ Inclusion in the information society in Asia (implemented by **LIRNEasia**) #107077
- ☐ Other IDRC-funded projects (please specify)

Survey for INASSA projects' staff and sub-grantees

Assessment of the Management of the INASSA Programme

18. To what extent do you find the **functioning of the INASSA programme** satisfactory?

	Highly unsatisfactory	Moderately unsatisfactory	Moderately satisfactory	Highly satisfactory	Do not know
Opportunities for your institution to contribute to the INASSA programme through feedbacks and participation in reviews, planning, and decision-making	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Alignment of the INASSA activities with your institution's strategies or activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Provision of up-to-date information on INASSA activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Supporting network building and facilitating networking with program stakeholders	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pooling resources between INASSA projects	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Connections with IDRC resources outside INASSA	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Connections with DFID (UK or locally)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Connections with other outside organizations or funding sources	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Role of IDRC staff as thought leaders (i.e., with significant intellectual influence)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Timely decisions related to changing program environment (financial, staff IDRC, projects)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Any comments?

19. Please share any recommendations to IDRC or DFID for future programmes

20. Any final comments? Is there anything we left out? Or: Is there anything else that would be important for the evaluation team to know about?

Survey for Users of INASSA project Outputs/Products

Foreword

This short survey invites you, as a **user** of outputs/products of projects implemented under the **INASSA** programme from **IDRC** and **DFID**, to help us assess the value of those products. Your inputs will contribute to an external evaluation process currently underway, which will help these and similar projects in the future.

You have accessed this survey because of your connection or interest in one or more of INASSA-supported projects (such as ROAR4D, Open Air, SIRCA III, OSCDNet, OD4D, etc.) or its implementing organizations (like LIRNEasia and RIA). The full list will be shown in the questionnaire.

A brief introduction to INASSA. The 'Information and Networks in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa programme (INASSA) is a 5 year programme, to be completed at the end of 2017, that supports research on the connections between the growing use of digital information networks and (i) economic growth, (ii) democratic reform, (iii) educational opportunities, and (iv) socially-relevant scientific endeavours. As its name indicates, it is focusing on Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, but also includes some activities in other regions.

The survey should take 15-20 minutes to complete. All survey questions are optional but we encourage you to respond to the entire questionnaire and click "Finish survey" at the end.

The deadline for completing the questionnaire is November 6th. We hope this gives you enough time.

The survey is confidential. Only the evaluation team will see your responses and your individual assessment will not be shared with the project, IDRC or DFID. Data from the survey will be presented in aggregate form.

Thank you for your time and valuable contribution!

Survey for Users of INASSA project Outputs/Products

Personal Profile

1. What is your main job function?

- ☐ Management (projects, teams, coordination, etc.)
- ☐ Policy-making (rules, laws, regulations, etc.)
- ☐ Corporate (business development, sales, marketing, production, etc.)
- ☐ Research / Academic (thematic/technical expertise, etc.)
- ☐ Entrepreneur
- ☐ Producer, farmer or maker/artist
- ☐ Educator
- ☐ Communications
- ☐ Civil society activism
- ☐ Support services (administration, HR, finance, IT, etc.)
- ☐ Other (please specify)

2. In which type of organization do you work?

- ☐ Government, National Ministry, or Agency
- ☐ Academia, Education or Research
- ☐ UN agency or Inter-governmental Organization
- ☐ Bilateral Donor Organization
- ☐ Civil Society Organization or NGO
- ☐ Business/ Enterprise/ Entrepreneur/ Consultant
- ☐ Other (please specify)

3. What is (are) the thematic sector(s) that relate the most to your area of work or interest? (Please select all that are relevant)

- ☐ Governance: Open government; Privacy; Security; Citizen Participation and Empowerment; Open government data
- ☐ Education: Open educational resources; alternative learning processes; Enabling environments for technology-driven learning
- ☐ Science: Open science (activities/models); open access to scholarly publishing; crowdsourcing data collection
- ☐ Entrepreneurship in the area of creative industries: Intellectual property rights regimes and economic growth; Open Business Models

4. In which country are you currently based?

5. How do you identify your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Survey for Users of INASSA project Outputs/Products

A. About the Program

6. Following is the portfolio of IDRC/INASSA projects from which you may have used outputs/products (data, technical papers, policy reports, digital apps, training materials, blog posts, virtual groups, trainings, conferences, etc.). If you , please identify them from the following list:

- ☐ **LIRNEasia** (several projects)
- ☐ **RIA** - Research ICT Africa (several projects)
- ☐ **DL4D** - Digital learning for development
- ☐ **OCSDNet** - Open and collaborative science for development network
- ☐ **ROER4D** - Research on open educational resources for development
- ☐ **SIRCA III** - Strengthening information society research capacity III
- ☐ **Open AIR** (African Innovation Research) - Scaling technology start-ups in Africa
- ☐ **OD4D** - Harnessing open data to achieve development results (in Asia and South-Saharan Africa)
- ☐ **DECI-2** - Developing Evaluation and Communication Capacity in Information Society Research 2
- ☐ Building Research Capacity for Systematic Reviews
- ☐ Strategic Communications for the INASSA and Information and Network (I&N) programs
- ☐ Other (please specify)

7. What were the **main purposes** for using these resources?

- ☐ Advocacy
- ☐ Supporting research generation
- ☐ Contributing to build research capacity
- ☐ Influencing policy formulation and/or decision making
- ☐ Direct policy formulation and/or decision making
- ☐ Programme/project formulation
- ☐ Donor funding decision making
- ☐ Innovation (creating, scaling)
- ☐ Expand partnerships, collaboration
- ☐ Organizational effectiveness
- ☐ Entrepreneurial/enterprise development
- ☐ Other (please specify)

8. Which statement best describes your experience with these outputs/products in relation to **gender equality and women's empowerment**. The resource:

- ☐ Has no effect or is irrelevant for gender equality / women's empowerment
- ☐ Could have some minor, incidental effect for gender equality and/or expanding women's empowerment
- ☐ Is focusing on women as one of the specific target groups, and could contribute to some changes in gender equality / women's empowerment
- ☐ Is centered on gender issues, and could have significant effects in gender equality / women's empowerment

Survey for Users of INASSA project Outputs/Products

B. Research Quality

9. For the INASSA project from which you used research outputs the most, how would you assess the **quality of those outputs** according to the following criteria?

	Unacceptable	Less than acceptable	Acceptable to good	Very good	Not applicable or do not know
Scientific merit (i.e., it has academic rigour)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Originality (i.e., it contains novelties or innovation relative to the local context)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Accessible (i.e., it was easy to access it)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Relevance (i.e., for human development and/or your work)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Timeliness (i.e., it came at a good time to have some use)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Usefulness (i.e., it is practical, can be applied)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Any comments on the quality of INASSA supported research outputs?

Survey for Users of INASSA project Outputs/Products

C. Development of Research Capacity

10. If you have used any INASSA outputs/products for the purpose of **developing your research capacity or that of your organization**, how effective would you say those resources have been for the following purposes?

	Highly ineffective	Moderately ineffective	Moderately effective	Highly effective	Do not know
Generating credible, relevant and contextualised evidence	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Increasing stakeholder engagement and relationship building	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Expanding and/or strengthening partnerships	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fostering utilisation of research to shape policies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Improving research project management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Institutionalizing policies and practices for researchers' professional development	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Improving research communication capacities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Incorporating gender analysis and gender factors into research	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Any comments or concrete examples on how the newly acquired or strengthened skills have influenced research?

Survey for Users of INASSA project Outputs/Products

D. Policy influence

11. In terms of the existing **policy-making context**, which statement best describes the official environment in which you have used (or intend to use) INASSA research outputs/products?

- ☐ Clear government demand and use for such research
- ☐ Government interest in such research, but leadership absent in making use of it
- ☐ Government interest in such research, but with a capacity shortfall to fully understand and make use of it
- ☐ A new or emerging issue activates the generation of such research, but leaves policymakers uninterested
- ☐ Government treats research with disinterest, or hostility

12. If you have used any INASSA outputs/products for the purposes of **shaping, formulating or affecting public policies** in any way, what level of contribution do you think those resources have had or could be expected to have in the various aspects of policy influence listed below?

	No contribution	Little contribution	Moderate contribution	High contribution	Do not know
Expanding policy capacities (human and institutional) , e.g. for evidence-based monitoring of objectives, interpretation of research knowledge, analysis, communications, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Broadening policy horizons , e.g. by incorporation of new topics/innovations into policy fields, relationships between researchers and policy makers, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Affecting policy regimes , e.g. in terms of the improvement of policies or legislative frameworks; the implementation of practices emerging from research, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

13. Could you identify a specific example in your work where the INASSA outputs had significant policy influence?

Survey for Users of INASSA project Outputs/Products

E. The INASSA Network

14. Besides having access to resources produced by INASSA projects (question 6 before), have you **engaged or collaborated** with any of the projects below? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ **LIRNEasia** (various projects)
- ☐ **RIA** - Research ICT Africa (various projects)
- ☐ **DL4D** - Digital learning for development
- ☐ **OCSDNet** - Open and collaborative science for development network
- ☐ **ROER4D** - Research on open educational resources for development
- ☐ **SIRCA III** - Strengthening information society research capacity III
- ☐ **Open AIR** (African Innovation Research) - Scaling technology start-ups in Africa
- ☐ **SEED** Alliance to Scale Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- ☐ **OD4D** - Harnessing open data to achieve development results (in Asia and South-Saharan Africa)
- ☐ **DECI-2** - Developing Evaluation and Communication Capacity in Information Society Research 2
- ☐ Building Research Capacity for Systematic Reviews
- ☐ Strategic Communications for the INASSA and Information and Network (I&N) programs

Survey for Users of INASSA project Outputs/Products

F. Recommendations

15. Please share any recommendations for IDRC and DFID (as the INASSA funders and managers) for future programmes.

ANNEX J: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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ANNEX K: TERMS OF REFERENCE

INFORMATION AND NETWORKS IN ASIA AND SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (INASSA)

Final Evaluation TORs

1. Background Information

INASSA is a five year research programme that is building an evidence base on the connections between the growing use of digital information networks and economic growth, democratic reform and increased educational opportunities in the developing world. It is aiming to identify the most effective strategies for harnessing these opportunities in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa while also providing a critical perspective on the potential negative impacts that could result from the spread of digital technologies.

The programme looks to promote positive social and economic change in a context where public policies and technological practices are increasingly inadequate to serve the goals of enabling better governance, increasing opportunities for learning, and enhancing the quality and production of science and entrepreneurship.

INASSA supports the three primary activities:

- (i) Generating and improving evidence on the linkages between rapid socio-economic change and the increasing diffusion of networked technologies in the areas of governance, learning, science, and entrepreneurship in creative industries through southern led research networks;
- (ii) Strengthening research and research communications capacity of southern researchers within research networks through structured support by IDRC, intra-network mentoring arrangements, and learning-based evaluations;
- (iii) Enhancing research uptake and expanding policy horizons among academic, policy and practitioner communities of findings, emergent research issues, and programme level synthesis.

The management and implementation of the programme is carried out by IDRC Canada. In addition to managing DFID's £6.3m contribution to INASSA, IDRC also provides CAD 3.5M (~£1.9m) of funding over the course of the programme, bringing its total value to £8.2m. INASSA began in September 2013 and ends March 2018.

A key activity of the last year of the INASSA programme is the final evaluation which will serve both accountability and learning purposes (detailed below).

2. Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation will cover the following ten projects that have received INASSA funding.

Networks	Think Tanks
DL4D - Digital learning for development OCSDNet - Open and collaborative science for development network ROER4D - Research on open educational resources for development SIRCA III - Strengthening information society research capacity III Open Air - Scaling technology start-ups in Africa	Research ICT Africa - Catalyzing broadband in Africa LIRNEAsia - Leveraging mobile network bid data for development - Towards a networked economy in Myanmar - Inclusive information societies: Creating growth and employment opportunities in Asia - Inclusion in the information society in Asia

Three projects will be excluded as they have all been recently evaluated:

- Seed Alliance – evaluated 2014
- OD4D – evaluated 2016/7
- DECI 2 – evaluation 2016/7

INASSA has gone through three annual reviews in [2014](#), [2015](#), and [2016](#). Evaluators will be expected to draw on these past evaluations and reviews as part of the INASSA evaluation.

3. Purpose / Objectives / Rationale

The INASSA final evaluation has two primary purposes:

- Ensure accountability to DFID and IDRC for the implementation of the programme and delivery of programme results; and
- Provide input to future programming for learning and improvement.

4. Intended user(s) and use(s)

The primary intended users of the evaluation are DFID management and staff responsible for overseeing the INASSA programme. The evaluation will provide insight and guidance to determine the programme's results and potential for future contributions. IDRC Networked Economies management and programme staff will also use the evaluation to generate lessons and inform potential future programming. The INASSA evaluation is a component of Networked Economies five year learning plan and the evaluation findings will contribute to a key moment of reflection at the mid-point of their 2015-2020 strategy period. The evaluation team can expect a high level of engagement and dialogue with the Networked Economies team. Secondary users of this evaluation also include IDRC's Board of Governors.

User	Uses
DFID (PRIMARY)	Accountability and learning
IDRC Networked Economies (Secondary)	Learning – improving programming
IDRC Board of Governors (Secondary)	Accountability

5. Evaluation questions

ACCOUNTABILITY:

Q1. Overall, was the quality of the research produced by INASSA research networks and think tanks acceptable (given the context/intended purpose/etc.)?

Q2. To what extent and in what ways was INASSA capacity strengthening of southern researchers effective, relevant, and significant?

Q3. To what extent and in what ways were the INASSA supported projects successful in achieving relevant and significant research to policy influence? Where policy influence was below expectation, were there ways in which INASSA could have been more effective in supporting research to policy uptake?

Q4. To what extent was the implementation of INASSA efficient and economical, relative to its purpose and intended outcomes? Were resources (e.g. staff) used efficiently to manage the projects and programme? What have been the strengths and weaknesses of the programme's management? AND/OR the value proposition of funding (e.g. business case, leveraging existing programming).]

LEARNING:

Q5. How did the modality of projects (network- versus institution- led) contribute (or not) to achieving project outcomes? What worked? What did not? How could the modalities be improved?

Q6. To what extent was the role of the IDRC staff significant in contributing to project outcomes? (e.g., formative learning, meta-synthesis, network buildings, networking, building credibility/legitimacy of the field). How could these contributions be improved?

6. The principles and approach that will guide the evaluation

Utility:

Each evaluation is designed to meet the needs of its intended users, including IDRC management, donor partners, programme staff, and/or grantees. Evaluations should produce actionable findings to help us learn from successes and failures, to manage uncertainty and to take appropriate risks. Users' participation in evaluation processes helps ensure relevance and ownership of the evaluation findings.

Independence:

External evaluators must be, and must be seen to be, credible and independent in order for the final evaluation to be rigorous and useful. A strict standard must be maintained to guard the independence of the evaluation. Evaluators may not:

- have received any project funding from the programme over the programme period,
- be in negotiation for future projects or consultancies with the programme,
- have a personal relationship with programme member(s) that would impede their impartiality, or

- anticipate receiving funding from the programme under review for one year from the completion of the review.

Evaluators who have worked with the programme as evaluators can be considered. Evaluators must have no conflicts of interest with the programme and have no stake in the outcome of the review. Reviewers and programme staff and management are responsible for declaring any potential conflicts of interest.

Quality and Ethics:

Evaluation must meet high quality standards. Quality includes the utility of evaluation, the use of rigorous methods, and safeguarding ethical standards. Evaluation design must consider possible ethical challenges and seek to address them. Evaluators should seek to avoid harm to participants and establish clear expectations for confidentiality and how evidence from individual sources will be shared. Evaluation is not value neutral, and specific attention needs to be paid to including diverse perspectives and addressing inequalities in the evaluation process.

Knowledge sharing and transparency:

Learning about the findings, practice, and theory of evaluation should be documented and shared. Knowledge sharing helps build evaluation capacity both within IDRC and among our grantees, and ensures evaluation remains relevant to the issues and priorities for development and development research.

Evaluations should be publicly accessible. Evaluations commissioned by IDRC are available through the Centre's public digital library.

7. Preliminary evaluation design and methodology guidance

We welcome creative proposals for how to address the key evaluation questions, in particular evaluation designs will have to address causality with an assessment of the contributions being made by INASSA projects to longer-term outcomes. If deemed appropriate, IDRC will make available existing frameworks for adaptation by the successful proponent(s) such as:

- Research Quality-Plus Assessment Framework, includes scientific rigor as well as research legitimacy, importance, and positioning for use as dimensions of research quality. It also takes into consideration key influences (enabling or constraining factors) either within the research endeavor or in the external environment, and includes customizable assessment rubrics that make use of both qualitative and quantitative measures.
- Knowledge to policy. Making the most of development research, shows how research can contribute to better governance in several ways: by encouraging open inquiry and debate, by empowering people with the knowledge to hold governments accountable, and by enlarging the array of policy options and solutions available to the policy process
- Capacity development for research, elaborates good practices for capacity development and sets out the 'Research into Use' framework for five categories of capacity development activity for IDRC.

To launch the evaluation, IDRC's Policy and Evaluation Division will facilitate an inception workshop with the evaluation team and the IDRC Networked Economies programme team. The purpose of this workshop will be to discuss the evaluation scope

of work and further develop the evaluation design based in the initial proposal submitted by the evaluation team. The evaluation approach should promote process use and engagement with users to support learning and uptake of findings.

We expect the level of effort for this evaluation to include:

- Participation in an inception workshop
- Comprehensive review of relevant documents from the Networked Economies programme and up to 10 INASSA funded projects, including possible travel and project visits;
- Review of previous programme and project evaluations;
- Communication and engagement with DFID staff, IDRC staff, and project representatives
- Communication with targeted research users
- Additional data collection as determined by the evaluation design
- Preparation of a series of outputs, detailed below, incorporating comments and feedback from the evaluation users.

Travel to project sites for data collection and to IDRC in Ottawa, Canada to engage with programme staff is anticipated. Specifically, travel to Ottawa for an inception workshop for all or part of the evaluation team is required. Further travel will be determined by feasibility and evaluation design.

8. Roles and responsibilities

The evaluation will be managed by IDRC's Policy and Evaluation Division. Input and guidance from intended users will help guide the process of the evaluation at key milestones.

We anticipate the following division of roles and responsibilities.

Role/Responsibility	Evaluator(s)	IDRC- Networked Economies	IDRC-Policy and Evaluation	IDRC- Grant Admin.	DFID
Inception workshop	Participate	Participate	Facilitate		
Develop workplan	X	Review	Approve		Review
Collect and analyze data	X				
Make logistical arrangements	X		Support	Support	
Provide information and access to documents		X	Support		If relevant
Manage the contract & serve as a liaison			X		
Present preliminary findings	X	Engage / respond	Facilitate		
Write the evaluation report	X	Review draft	Review draft & approve final		Review draft

Facilitate use of the evaluation	Present findings	disseminate findings	disseminate findings		disseminate findings
Arrange travel				X	

9. Reporting requirements

We expect:

- An initial workplan and evaluation methodology
- An oral presentation of preliminary findings to be shared with the IDRC Networked Economies team
- A draft written report of no more than 25 pages
- A final written report of no more than 25 pages with supporting annexes
- A five-page Executive Summary that will be shared with IDRC's Board of Governors
- A two-page brief of key findings and recommendations for the IDRC Networked Economies team.

10. Estimation of the cost

Budget not to exceed CAD\$180,000 - \$200,000 (TBD) inclusive of travel and expenses.

11. Timeline and milestones

Expected Start date: June X, 2017

Expected end date: DEC 15, 2017

Activity	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Planning							
Data collection / collation							
Data analysis							
Presentation of preliminary findings							
Reporting							

12. Quality assessment of the evaluation report [To be completed]

The evaluation will be judged by IDRC's Evaluation team on four internationally recognised standards: utility, feasibility, accuracy, and propriety. Refer to the Evaluation Guideline "[Quality Assessment of IDRC Evaluation Reports](#)."

ANNEX L: ABOUT THE EVALUATION TEAM



Judith Kallick is an expert in **programme and project design, management and evaluation** of local governance, community development, peace building and human rights. She has the unique combination of being a **high quality evaluator with first-hand knowledge of the practitioner's reality**. Her approach to evaluation focuses on **results based management** using a range of **appreciative and participatory methodologies**. She has vast experience working on corporate level evaluations that include **qualitative and quantitative methods, project and meta analyses, case studies, and specially designed, innovative participatory methodologies**. She has worked in over 20 countries in Africa, Asia, CIS and Latin America. Her clients include: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Volunteers programme (UNV), the MasterCard Foundation, and the Institute of International Education (IIE), among other NGOs and foundations. She is a Fellow at the Research Centre for Leadership in Action at the Wagner School of **New York University (NYU)**, and a member of Developing Together and Action Evaluation Collaborative. She is a native English speaker and is fluent in Spanish.



Patrick Breard, Ph.D., has focused most of his career on Organizational Development for bilateral and international development organizations in different parts of the world. He has a strong experience in carrying out evaluations and reviews of knowledge initiatives and networks. In 2001 he joined the United Nations Development Programme to coordinate UNDP's corporate Knowledge Management activities. In this position he helped to transform UNDP into a globally networked and knowledge-based organization. Among his responsibilities he managed during 6 months the UNDP's ICT for Development knowledge network. From 2004 to 2008 he was the instructor for the e-learning course on **Managing for Development Results** at UNDP Virtual Development Academy. The course was attended by more than 300 staff from UN organizations and partners. Simultaneously, he performed several **mid-term reviews** and **final evaluations** for a number of UNDP projects focusing on Capacity Development and Institutional Transformation. From 2005 to 2011 he conducted half a dozen reviews and global surveys to assess organizational capacities and knowledge needs of staff and partners from international organizations (IFAD, UNV, UNIFEM, UNESCO, UNCCD, and the GEF). In the early 2010's he advised the Secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) on approaches to foster **knowledge uptake** and to bridge policy, science, and practice. In 2014 he led the **institutional evaluation** of **SDC networks**. In 2015 he conducted the **outcome evaluation** of FAO's contribution to the **dissemination of knowledge** on food, agriculture, and natural resources. In 2016 he joined the team evaluating UNDP's Strategic Plan 2014-2017. More recently he led the **evaluation** of the **Green Growth Knowledge Platform**, an initiative aimed for knowledge development to contribute to the transition to a green economy.



Patrick McNamara is an independent consultant and social entrepreneur focusing on **social innovation, leadership development, and institutional transformation**. He has 20 years experience facilitating change with international organizations, corporations, NGO's and government agencies. Patrick helped design and coordinate an **institutional learning and change**

process with a 2,500-employee government agency; facilitated organizational development work in two United Nations departments; and assisted in leadership development of 75 professionals across sectors in Ghana and in Mauritius to formulate breakthrough initiatives to adapt to the complex issues of climate change and poverty. He has worked in 25 countries with organizations such as Motorola, Helen Keller International, the State of California, UNDP Learning Resources Centre, UN Department of Public Information, and the UN Department of Political Affairs. He is fluent in English, French and Spanish and has a working knowledge of German and Portuguese and is learning Arabic. In addition to his **Kellogg MBA**, Patrick studied **Political Science** at the University of Strasbourg, France, completed the Global Excellence in Management Program at Case Western University, and is active at the Presencing Institute (MIT). He is a facilitator in the Design Thinking and Designing Organizations for Creativity and Innovation courses at Stanford University Graduate School of Business.



Manuel Acevedo-Ruiz has ample experience on both the evaluation of development programs, as well as in their formulation/management (the latter while at UNDP, UN Volunteers and the Latin American Telecentre Network). Over the last two decades, he has worked on the broad area of the effects and applicability of digital technologies for development, particularly in relation to Openness and Networks and in areas such as Education, Governance and Public Access. During this time, he has witnessed and learned about trends and innovations of ICT-based solutions in developing country contexts, realizing that human and institutional capacity strengthening is key to harness the value of ICTs to empower people and advance Human Development processes, and examining the limitations of supply-side technological solutions. In terms of evaluating development research, he has come to realize that there is more beyond academic quality in assessing the quality of developmentally-relevant research, partly on the basis of his own research into development networks. The influences from its wider environment, its legitimacy or its timeliness play a significant part as well (as has been reflected in an instrument like IDRC's RQ+). In recent years he has participated in several evaluations thematically related to the INASSA program, which include for IDRC: (i) Open Data for Development (2017); (ii) Information & Networks (2015); (iii) Connectivity and Equity in the Americas / Institute for Connectivity in the Americas (CEA/ICA) (2010). For the European Commission: Alliance for the Information Society between Europe and Latin America 2 (@LIS2) (2014). For Hivos (the Netherlands): Information and Media (2009) program.