



## **GDN'S 14<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE, MANILA (JUNE 2013)**

**QUALITY, IMPACT AND SHORT TERM OUTCOMES**

**CONFERENCE FEEDBACK SURVEY RESULTS**

**NOVEMBER 2013**

**GDN M&E UNIT**

## **A. ABOUT THE CONFERENCE**

The Global Development Network (GDN) held its 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Global Development Conference on 'Inequality, Social Protection and Inclusive Growth' in Manila on 19-21 June 2013. The conference was attended by 560 participants, representing 59 countries including those in the East Asia and Pacific region.

GDN conferences are characterized by not only the number of participants that attend, but also in the range of issues they discuss and the regions they represent. The conference was a platform for the exchange of ideas on the theme with internationally renowned researchers, early-career developing country researchers, representatives of national and international organizations and sponsors of research.

An innovative feature of the 2013 GDN Annual Conference was that it provided promising, early-career researchers from developing countries with the opportunity to showcase their research at an international forum and benefit from interaction with world-renowned academics and policymakers. This resonates a positive implication for capacity building that is a central element of GDN's mission.

## **B. CONFERENCE FEEDBACK SURVEY**

A survey was sent out to the conference participants to solicit their views on the quality of the conference and assess the influence of the discussions on participants. This section will highlight the findings from the feedback survey fielded after the conference.

The survey was undertaken by 167 conference participants. By excluding media persons (who were not sent the survey), the response rate to the survey is 42%, which can be taken as a representative sample of conference participants.

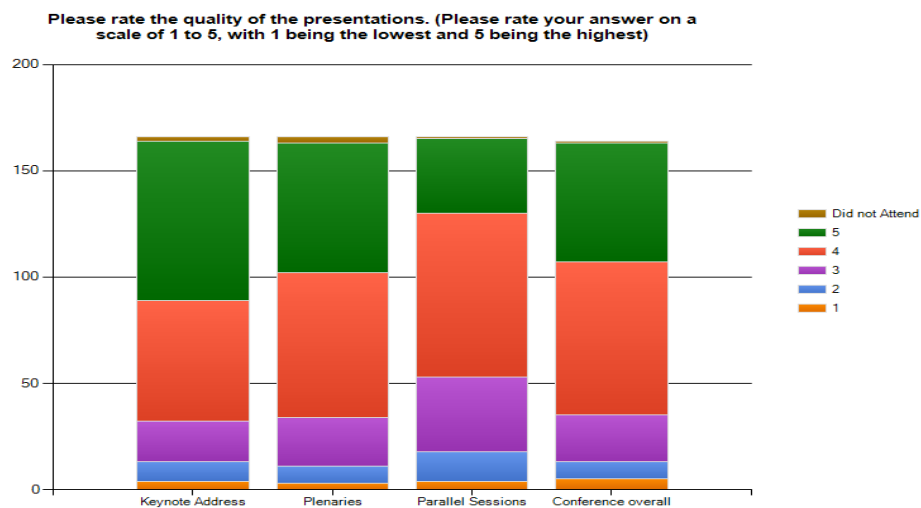
### **B.1 Perceptions on Conference Quality**

The respondents were asked to rate the quality of different conference sessions; keynote address, plenaries, parallel sessions and the overall conference. The keynote address and plenary sessions were reported to be of very high quality with an average of 4.0-4.1 out of 5 ratings. The overall conference and parallel sessions also received high ratings with an average of 3.7-3.9 ratings. A small difference noted between the ratings shows that the plenary sessions received lower ratings than the other sessions. In terms of quality, the respondents rated the key note address to be of the highest quality.

Information was also solicited on whether the participants thought that the conference was worth attending. In this regard, almost 83% of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the conference was worth participating in.

Given their perception of quality and worth, participants were asked if they would recommend their colleagues to attend the next GDN conference. Over 97% of the respondents said they would recommend their colleagues to attend the next GDN conference.

**Table 1: Quality of Presentations**



**Mix of participants:** About 64% of the respondents strongly agreed that the conference had the right mix of participants (policymakers, experts, early-career developing country researchers). However, about 13% of the respondents gave an average rating on this statement and around 13% gave a low rating of 1 or 2 (disagree). About 79% of the respondents agreed that the content of the conference was pertinent to their work.

**Information Sharing and Networking Opportunities:** A high percentage, almost 80% of the respondents completely agreed or agreed that the conference provided them with a platform for sharing ideas and knowledge. Fewer than 4% of respondents thought that there were not able to share information.

In terms of networking opportunities provided at the conference, the respondents rated this aspect even higher than information sharing opportunities. Almost 50% of respondents completely agreed and 31% agreed that the conference was valuable for networking and making new contacts.

## B.2 Influence and Impact

**Influence on Knowledge:** The results of the survey show that the greatest value added of attending the conference has been on the informing the knowledge of the respondents. Nearly 80% of the respondents reported that the sessions informed their thinking on the conference theme - Inequality, Social Protection and Inclusive Growth.

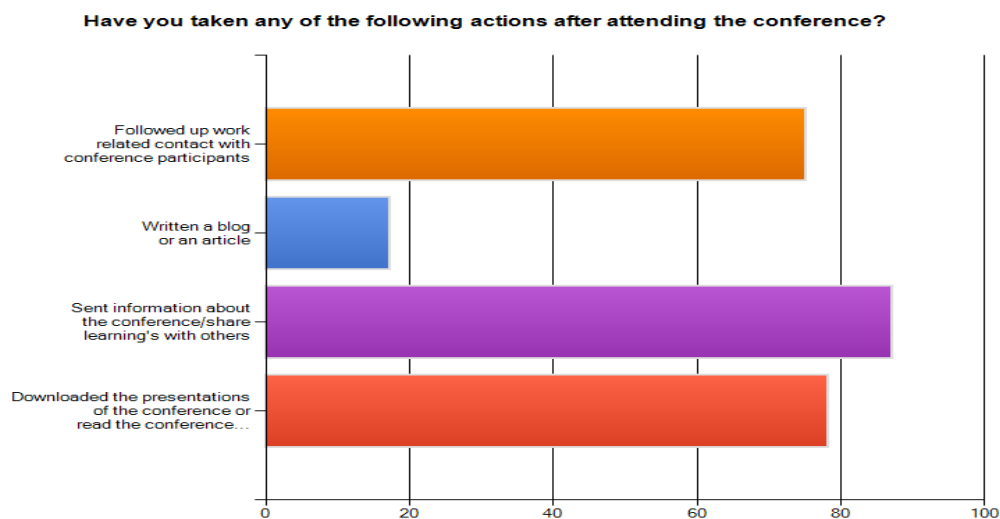
*“The key message for this conference is about how social protection is actually helping to improve the inclusive growth in different countries across the world”. – Conference participant.*

*“For economic growth to be meaningful it has to be inclusive. And for economies to be able to attain growth that is inclusive, it would be important to understand inequality so as to find ways to address it; as well as to formulate social policies to improve the state of poor and marginalized sectors”. – Conference participant.*

**Influence to Undertake Actions:** The influence on knowledge has been reported to translate into action as well. Almost 95% of the respondents have reported that they were able to apply some of the knowledge gained during the conference in their work.

The respondents reported to have undertaken concrete actions as a result of the conference. Around 60% of the respondents have reported to share their learning’s from the conference with others and over 47% of the respondents downloaded the conference presentations and readings. Networking and information sharing opportunities at the conference have also continued beyond the conference and almost 46% of the respondents followed up on work-related contact with conference participants. Over 10% have also written a blog or an article as a result of attending the conference.

**Table 2: Concrete Actions after Attending Conference**



### **B.3. Showcasing Developing Country Researchers**

A new feature of this specific conference was to provide early-career researchers from developing countries with the opportunity to showcase their research in an international forum. A spotlight was placed on the Global Development Awards and Medals finalists who presented their research papers at plenary sessions with experts and well-established scholars acting as discussants and panelists.

By showcasing their work at the conference, 70% of the early-career researchers who responded to the survey have stated that the opportunity increased their confidence and improved their visibility. Only one such researcher did not feel that the platform contributed to their confidence or visibility. The results show that the greatest value added of providing such a platform to the early-career developing country researchers has been to receive useful and insightful comments from a diverse audience.

Almost 69% of the respondents who attended the sessions which showcased the early-career developing country researchers have agreed or highly agreed that listening to the perspectives of developing country researchers gave them new insights on the topic of Inequality, Social Protection and Inclusive Growth. Their presentations were also found to be of high or very high quality by over 58% of the respondents.

### **C. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

Many respondents suggested key areas of improvement:

- Different perspectives: Bring in experts from other disciplines, more diversity in the panels from different countries; bring in practitioners for their opinions;
- Information-sharing: Make papers available ahead of the conference, or in conference bags or in electronic form right after the conference;
- Quality: Introduce quality control in the selection of panelists as parallel sessions need to improve in quality; plenaries to be focused more on experts and not emerging researchers;
- Duration: Well organized but too long and days could be shorter.

### **CONFERENCE INFORMATION: MEDIA COVERAGE AND PAPERS ONLINE**

The conference enjoyed a lot of publicity and wide media coverage. The conference had extensive media coverage of the Opening Ceremony, interviews of GDN President Pierre Jacquet by Devex and Fiji National TV, amongst others, and the Conference Op-ed published in BusinessWorld, Philippines' leading business daily. The strategic media coverage (in Philippines and internationally) comprised 6 broadsheet stories, 31 online stories, 4 TV broadcasts, and radio coverage on all Philippines radio channels. In addition, the conference was also profusely written about in the conference participants' blog posts. Media stories can be accessed at GDN's online media center - <http://www.gdn.int/html/gdnmedia2.php>.

Please see further details about the conference, relevant conference features, the conference trailer, the detailed conference program, conference committees, conference papers and presentations and other conference material in the following link:

<http://www.gdn.int/html/page2.php?MID=3&SID=24&SSID=73&SCID=29>