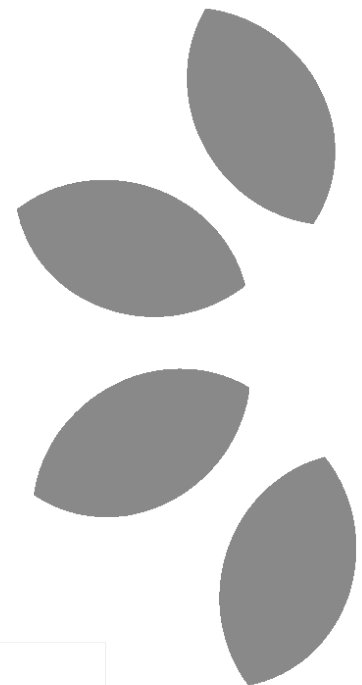




Demand-driven change in higher education. What role for international funding?

Francesco Obino, Head of Programs

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What is the Global Development Network?

Where GDN comes from:

Founded in 1999 at the World Bank

Became independent in 2001

Became a Public International Organization and moved to New Delhi, India, in 2005



A unique mandate:

To strengthen policy-relevant social science research in developing countries

Not a donor:

Re-grants development aid funding for research

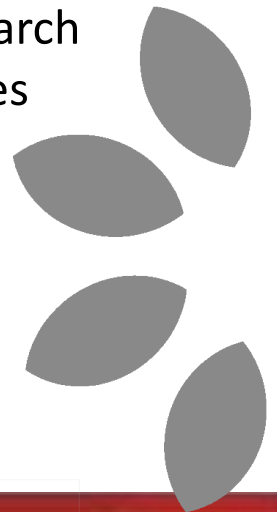
Works in partnership to build, fundraised for and implement research and research capacity building programs

Strategy for 2017-22

Pillar 1: Work with institutions to build research capacities

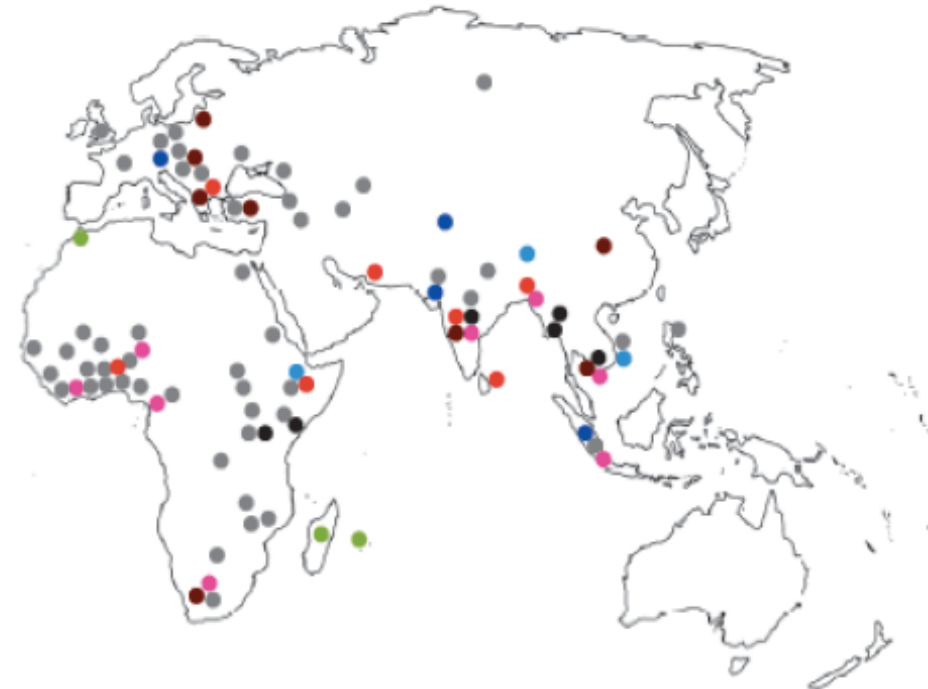
Pillar 2: Catalyze high quality research from developing countries

Pillar 3: Link research and policy debates



In 2016, GDN had active programs in over 60 countries

PROGRAMS



Key

- Regional Research Competition
- Japanese Award for Outstanding Research on Development
- Japan Social Development Fund Award
- Most Innovative Development Project
- Natural Resources Management-Natural Wealth Accounting
- Strengthening Research Capacity of Small Countries in Latin America and the Caribbean to Promote Better Informed Policymaking
- Doing Research – Assessing the Environment for Social Science Research in Developing Countries
- Building Research Capacity in Least Developed Countries
- Global Research Competition

Africa: Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, The Gambia, Togo, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

Asia Pacific: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Turkey, The Philippines and Vietnam.

Eastern Europe & Central Asia: Armenia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Georgia, Hungary, Kyrgyz Republic, Macedonia, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

Latin America: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua and Peru.

Interrogating the role of international funding for HE and its links to internationalization.

What does it mean?...

Basic assumptions of a 'critical'/reflective approach:

- Internationalization is not intrinsically good. (normative vs analytical research agenda)
- Internationalization means different things to different actors (theoretical Vs empirical research agenda)
- Internationalization is a *strategy* to advance HE (operational implications - everyday politics of change in HE)
- Whether international funding has a role to play, is (and should remain) an open question
- What role international funding has to play, is also (and must remain) an open question

Interrogating the role of international funding for HE and its links to internationalization.

...Why does it matter?

- Full disclosure: it matters to...me.
 - Critical reflection underway at GDN on how to work with HE institutions: changing expectations defining the scope of work of a network
 - GDN/networks can influence donors
- It matters to everyone else, too.
 - Access to international funding is itself an integral part of internationalization
 - Its volume and disbursement strategy influences priorities, incentives, practices and achievements of internationalization
 - Institutions need to know 'what they are getting into' when accessing international funding, if they don't already (they mostly do)
 - Donors need to know how and why to support internationalization efforts as part of their support to HE

Case Study:

Building research capacities in least developed countries **A GDN program (2014-17) with funding from IDRC**

In a nutshell

Between 2014 and 2017, GDN provided

- FUNDING: up to 140,000 USD over 24 months
- MANAGEMENT SUPPORT: on-going support on financial, project and outreach work
- MENTORING: on-demand and regular feedback on strategic issues relating to the development and implementation of the project

to institutions based in LDCs, with the goal to implement their own blueprints for stronger research trainings at their own institution.

Basic assumption 1: institutional capacities are key to boosting both the demand and the supply of high quality local research

Basic assumption 2: there is a gap in funding for research institutions in LDCs

Basic assumption 3: funding for demand-driven project has higher chances to work, particularly in low resource environments where institutions are overstretched

Case Study:

Building research capacities in least developed countries

- 400 applications, 140 eligible, 4 grants assigned
 - Royal University of Law and Economics (Cambodia) in collaboration with the Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences – FOCUS: summer school
 - The Institute for Gross National Happiness for the Royal University of Bhutan FOCUS: young lecturers
 - The African Center for Higher Studies in Management (CESAG), Senegal FOCUS: laboratory
 - Haramaya University, Ethiopia FOCUS: Masters and PhD students
- The diversity of HE institutions and projects involved offered an interesting testing ground for GDN's approach to support demand-driven change

Case Study:

Building research capacities in least developed countries

What does demand driven change looks like?

Haramaya University: the Building Ethiopia's Research Capacity in Economics and Agribusiness (BERCEA) project (2014-17).

Problem identified: Quality of postgraduate research in the areas of economics and agribusiness has been decreasing.

Response, three interrelated actions (no. of beneficiaries in pilot):

- introduced **small fieldwork grants** for Masters and PhD dissertation work (23)
- introduced **intensive training workshops** on data collection and data analysis (171)
- Supported **staff exchange** and networking to strengthen pedagogical and supervision capacities (2)

➤ International funding make a pilot project/proof of concept possible.

Case Study:

Building research capacities in least developed countries

What was GDN possibly right about?

- Change is about **practices, politics and proof of concept**, and institutions are the immediate place where all these interact and take shape. Working with institutions as laboratories of change should remain a priority.
- **Institutions are overstretched** - even demand-driven projects can move to the back burner if the momentum is lost.
- **Institutions care for more than funding**: mentoring and project management support were hugely appreciated by grantees, according to an external evaluation.

Case Study:

Building research capacities in least developed countries

What did GDN learn?

- 'Assumption 2' (there is a gap in funding for research institutions in LDCs) is only partly true:
 - There is a clear funding gap for *institutional development*, (much beyond LDCs)
 - Even when institutions have financial resources (Haramaya: USD 60m/year!)
 - they are risk averse: budgetary re-allocation only happens once the value of a new activity is tested and proven, including politically
 - they do not prioritize research training – high risk/low priority
- **Teams** – not institutions – drive innovation. Change levers are insiders. Their imagination is shaped by internationalization.
- International support's most significant contribution is to **legitimize the work of a team** within an institution – international support makes the debate about change easier, and it helps institutions outsource (manage) the risks they see in innovation.
- Mentoring was a key part of the legitimising mechanism. Funding alone is not enough.

Case Study:

Building research capacities in least developed countries

What questions remain unanswered?

- How to move from institutions to systems? What would make a virtuous example of demand-driven change “contagious” at the national level?
- How to professionalise mentoring?
- Basic assumption 1 (institutional capacities are key to boosting both the demand and the supply of high quality local research) remains to be tested – over the long term. **How long is long enough?**



Conclusion:

Can international funding ever support demand-driven change in HE?

Short answer: YES. International funding can support innovation in HE, particularly through a mix of ‘outsourcing of risk’ and ‘legitimation’ of teams of insiders with a clear vision of HE development at the scale of their institution.

Longer answer: YES IF international support becomes much more than funding. Networks can have a critical role in structuring and channelling funding flows for HE, complementing it with substantive non-financial support (project management, financial management, mentoring, outreach development, etc.).

QUESTIONS?

Thank you

fobino@gdn.int