

# ***GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK***

## **PARTICIPATORY IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE GLOBAL RESEARCH PROJECT ON EXPLAINING GROWTH**

***Fernando Loayza Careaga PhD.***

***Consultant***

**[floayza@sasa-bolivia.com](mailto:floayza@sasa-bolivia.com)**

**Edificio Fortaleza, Piso 3, Ofic. 302**

**Av. Arce 2799, P.O. Box 1387**

**Tel/Fax (591-2) 2434512/2435014**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Global Research Project on Explaining Growth (GRP) was the first project of the Global Development Network (GDN) to unify 7 regions and around 70 countries across the developing and transition worlds under a common research objective and methodology. The GRP was, therefore, a pioneer project and part of a learning and experimental process. The GRP adopted a collaborative method of inquiry that partnered national researchers with internationally recognized development specialists around the world. Its main objective was to compile the most comprehensive assessment possible of economic growth in developing and transition countries.

Within a broader initiative of the Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE) and GDN for evaluating the impact of North-South/North-East research partnerships, the GRP was evaluated by applying participatory impact assessment (PIA). In PIA, the stakeholders in research projects are active participants in shaping the evaluation process through identifying impact indicators and providing criteria for data collection and analysis because PIA seeks to account for the variety of interests and yardsticks used by different stakeholders. Thus, in PIAs, the role of the evaluator is not to act as technocratic judge who follows a pre-ordained procedure, but mainly to be a facilitator of knowledge production and support.

The PIA of the GRP was based on a two-tiered process of consulting stakeholders through an electronic survey. Initially, the GRP stakeholders were consulted on the questions, indicators and criteria to be applied in the assessment. Then, they were requested to complete the E-questionnaires which included their suggestions about the relevant issues required to evaluate the GRP. Even though the consultation required a significant investment in time and work from the participants, 17% and 33% of GRP stakeholders chose to participate in the first and second rounds of consultation, respectively, which are fair participation rates for this type of exercise.

This report contains a detailed analysis of the GRP complemented with suggestions for future GDN's global research projects. Below are the summary of findings and recommendations that resulted from this assessment.

### MAIN FINDINGS ON THE GRP

Although an independent evaluation of the GRP's country studies was not carried out, according to most GRP stakeholders the project's objective of compiling the most comprehensive assessment of economic growth in developing and transition countries was met. The regional thematic reviews contributed useful insights to the growth literature and the International Economics Association evaluated them favorably. In addition, new issues in the growth literature have been explored in the 'microeconomics of growth' and 'the markets and economic growth' reviews.

Arguably, the GRP's greatest impact was building research capacities in developing and transition countries. Researchers from developing and transition countries (DC/TC researchers) benefited from participating in an international project and from regional and global exposure. Learning and upgrading of research skills also resulted from research partnerships between local economists with an in-depth local knowledge and those familiar with modern economic analysis. In addition, regional specialists or specialists from industrialized countries provided technical assistance to the country teams. Furthermore, most researchers acknowledge that participating in the GRP enhanced their teaching skills.

A major weakness of the GRP was to postpone the adoption of a dissemination strategy addressed to the broader policy and development community until the research activities were completed. Diffusion of the research findings at the national level is, therefore, in jeopardy. Moreover, dissemination has followed a traditional approach, exclusively using workshops, conferences, and printed and electronic publications. Publication and convocation activities targeted at policy makers and development practitioners have been of secondary importance.

### **LESSONS LEARNED FOR FUTURE GLOBAL RESEARCH PROJECTS**

For GDN's global research projects, the GRP demonstrated the effectiveness of combining case study methodology and surveys in order to discipline the case study work. The assessment highlighted, however, the need for fine-tuning both the survey findings and the regional calls for country studies proposals to select the country studies more efficiently. To this end, the surveys' main outcomes should be (i) the development of an explanatory framework to be tested by the country studies; (ii) the identification of country studies, which have the potential to shed light on key topics because of their uniqueness when set against the explanatory framework which has been developed; and, (iii) the criteria for choosing additional country studies, which would optimize the ability to compare or replicate within the sample selected. Accordingly, a two-pronged research competition is suggested. On the one hand, proposals for critical country studies should be called for. On the other hand, proposals should also be requested for complementary country studies, which state why a country should be included in the project, explaining their potential to contribute to or challenge the explanatory framework developed in the survey studies.

It is also suggested that GDN should consider setting up a technical assistance project addressed to their regional partners. The project's objective would be to enhance the regional networks' capabilities to apply case study methodologies to development research.

The research partnerships used in the GRP were cost-effective compared to more intensive and broader partnerships where industrialized and DC/TC researchers work together throughout a research project. Not only does the former maximize the resources allocated for supporting DC/TC researchers, but in critical moments it also brings specialized support from resource persons, thus preventing, in practice, threats to project ownership by DC/TC partners. Therefore, GDN's future global research projects would benefit from applying this approach to research partnerships. Leakages in this process, such as funding country research teams formed exclusively by DC/TC researchers who are permanently residing in industrialized countries, should be avoided.

The weakest component of the GRP implementation strategy was the lack of use of electronic help desks. The GRP could not benefit from this tool mainly because regional coordinators were not convinced of the potential advantages of a well-operated electronic help desk. Thus, for future global research projects, GDN should consider the implementation of a technical assistance and training program addressed to its regional partners, and which is aimed at the full use of electronic help desks and web-related technologies.

The GRP was designed and funded globally by the GDN, but managed regionally by the regional network heads--largely an effective organizational approach. However, the assessment showed that some coordination across regional networks is needed. This can only be appropriately provided by the GDN itself. On the other hand, greater participation from the regional networks in designing global projects and more flexibility in managing the GDN grants could have an important pay-off in terms of the regional relevance and quality of the research output. Therefore, it is suggested that in future global research projects, the GDN should have greater coordinating power over the regional networks, which in compensation should have greater participation in the design phase and more flexibility in managing their funds under agreed parameters and procedures with the GDN.

## Glossary

<b>AERC</b>	African Economic Research Consortium
<b>CERGE</b>	Center for Economic Research and Graduate Education
<b>CIS</b>	Commonwealth of Independent States
<b>DC</b>	Developing Countries
<b>DC/TC</b>	Developing and Transition countries
<b>EADN</b>	East Asian Development Network
<b>EERC</b>	Economic Education and Research Consortium
<b>ERF</b>	Economic Research Forum
<b>E-survey</b>	Electronic survey
<b>GDN</b>	Global Development Network
<b>GRP</b>	Global Research Project on Explaining Growth
<b>IAS-RP</b>	Impact Assessment Study for Research Partnerships
<b>IC</b>	Industrialized Countries
<b>IEA</b>	International Economics Association
<b>KFPE</b>	Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries
<b>LACEA</b>	Latin American and Caribbean Economic Association
<b>PIA</b>	Participatory Impact Assessment
<b>SANEI</b>	South Asia Network of Economic Institutes
<b>TC</b>	Transition countries
<b>TORs</b>	Terms of Reference

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 BACKGROUND

### 1.1.1 *Research for Development and Partnerships*

Research for development is an instrument for harnessing knowledge that can help provide insight into complex development issues, generate options for policy, management and action, and empower people and organizations in developing countries to better cope with their problems. It implies that the main purpose of carrying out research is identifying the barriers that hinder development and the means needed, such as policies, institutional arrangements and projects, to overcome them.

Partnerships of various types and intensities between research institutions in industrialized countries (IC) and developing and transition countries (DC/TC) have been used for fostering development research. Having better evaluation and monitoring tools for research partnerships is, therefore, not only in the interest of donors, but also of all development research stakeholders, such as policy makers, researchers and other end-users. As highlighted by Maselli (2001), evaluation and monitoring of partnerships in development research requires a rethinking of the currently available methods of quality and impact assessment. This is due to the fact that, in the toolkit for evaluating and monitoring partnerships in development research, the classical science of evaluation that looks at ratings in citation indexes and contributions to the scientific discourse needs to be tempered with or complemented by social impact parameters, such as equity, ownership and capacity building. In addition, considering current thinking on ownership, participation and sustainability, there is a strong demand for applying participatory approaches in the evaluation and monitoring of partnerships in development research.

### 1.1.2 *Participatory Impact Assessment of Research Partnerships*

With the intention of contributing to the enhancement of the toolkit for evaluating research partnerships, the Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE) has launched an initiative together with the Global Development Network (GDN) to carry out a study called “***Impact Assessment on Research Partnerships***” (***IAS-RP***). The aim of the IAS-RP is to evaluate various types of impact related to North-South/North-East research partnerships. A particular feature of the IAS-RP is the application of the participatory impact assessment (PIA) in evaluating research partnerships.

PIA is a strategy in which the stakeholders (researchers, intermediaries, policy makers and end-users) are active participants in shaping the evaluation process, thus promoting self-sufficiency and sustainability. It allows stakeholders to identify their own impact indicators and to know how data is collected and analyzed in order to account for the variety of interests and yardsticks used by different stakeholders. For example, scientific reputation may be the main goal of some stakeholders. For others, however, the application of knowledge to solve problems at the community level may be the main concern. Another group would be mostly interested in the



effects on natural resource management from changes in behavior induced by the research program. Accordingly it is likely that stakeholders involved in or affected by research programs will differ in their impact assessment of these programs. PIA is an approach to capturing these different views, judgments and observations.

PIA enhances local knowledge, in combination with the expertise of outside specialists, by developing effective decision-making based on their opinions, views and recommendations to make development research more effective. Such PIA can become a learning process, a means of taking action and a catalyst for capacity enhancement and empowerment. The benefits of such a PIA are: greater relevance, greater interest, greater efficiency in planning, strengthened capacity, improved information flows and greater equity (Maselli, D., 2001, p:4).

### **1.1.3 The Global Research Project on Growth**

Within this framework, the GDN commissioned this evaluation of the Global Research Project on Explaining Growth (GRP). The GRP was the first GDN global research project that applied a collaborative method of inquiry, partnerships amongst local authors and development specialists from around the world. It was therefore part of an experimental learning process. At that time, the GDN was not an institution, but a process supported by the World Bank to establish or strengthen regional research consortia in six regions in the developing world, and was aimed at establishing an international association of development economists or a Global Research Network. Accordingly, coordination across regions was rather fuzzy, which sometimes affected the implementation of the GRP as a globally integrated project (see [section 2.2.4](#) on organizational and funding issues.)

The GRP was developed to resemble on a worldwide scale, the AERC Growth Project, which was built around a paper entitled “Explaining African Economic Performance”<sup>1</sup> (Collier, P. and Gunning, J., 1999.) The AERC Growth Project was designed based on four thematic areas (macro/growth, markets, agents, and political economy), and focused on the idea that cross-country growth regressions would be used to motivate and discipline the casework. In 1998, background and framework papers were commissioned in these areas. A contract with Cambridge University Press for publication of the project results as the Cambridge Economic Surveys of Africa was obtained. Later on, country teams were selected, and the background and framework papers were presented at a conference at Harvard. Almost simultaneously to the GRP launch, the first AERC Growth Project conference was held.

Building upon the AERC Growth Project, the main objective of the GRP is to compile the most comprehensive assessment of economic growth in developing and transition countries. The project comprises two phases. In the first phase, six regions of the world – Latin America and the Caribbean, South Sahara Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, East Asia, South Asia, Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States – were the focus of regional studies on the sources of growth, growth and markets, microeconomic determinants of growth and the political economy of growth. These studies provided a framework for the exploration of key issues at the country level. As a result, the second phase of the project turned from broad growth themes to in-depth analysis of growth in about 70 developing and transition countries (see Annex 1).

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<sup>1</sup> This paper was initially published in 1997 by the Centre for Study of African Economies, Working Paper series S97-2.1, Oxford.

In addition to improving our understanding of economic growth, the GRP has sought to strengthen research capabilities in developing and transition economies. To reach this objective, a major instrument has been the utilization of “***focused partnerships***” between researchers from industrialized countries (IC) and developing and transition countries (DC/TC). In this type of partnership, the DC/TC partners implemented the research project, with the role of the IC partners usually being limited to the strategically focused interventions of training and technical assistance during project design and launching, and when mid-term and final reports are produced.

In the first phase, the regional thematic studies were carried out by a mix of TC/DC and IC researchers, assisted by resource persons – scholars with an internationally recognized reputation, including Nobel laureates – located in IC. The research partnership included technical assistance to DC/TC researchers, review of papers and participation in workshops by resource persons. The partnership was short-lived lasting approximately between four and six months.

In the second phase, an even more focused research partnership was designed. DC/TC researchers were expected to carry out the country studies and, in each region, a support group of resource persons was formed. These resource groups were a combination of recognized scholars located in the region or in industrialized countries. Resource persons (i) participated in the opening of regional workshops, guiding methodology discussions and helping to draft country work plans; (ii) participated, in one case, in regional training sessions addressing the areas in which most of the authors had little experience; (iii) offered ongoing technical and methodological support by E-mail; (iv) reviewed drafts and provided comments; and, (v) participated in workshops where mid-term and final reports were presented, providing comments and input. Initially, the second phase had to be undertaken in each region within a year. However, for different reasons some regions took more than a year in completing the second phase.

## **1.2 TERMS OF REFERENCE<sup>2</sup>**

The evaluation of the GRP was framed within the “Impact Assessment on Research Partnerships Study (IAS-RP.)”, briefly discussed below.

### **1.2.1 Objectives of the IAS-RP**

The objectives of the IAS-RP are to:

- A. Create an assessment tool that allows research partnership funding schemes to be more efficient, effective and goal-oriented;
- B. Assess various impacts resulting from North-South/North-East and South-South / East-East research partnerships - in different domains and at different levels - in a participatory way; and,
- C. Draw general conclusions.

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<sup>2</sup> This section is based on the “*Terms of Reference for GDN Case Study on the Global Research on Growth*” formulated by the GDN Secretariat in September 2002.

### **1.2.1 Expected output of the IAS-RP**

The expected output of the overall IAS-RP is:

- A tested methodology for impact studies on research partnerships
- A description and analysis of various case studies
- A synthesis of and lessons learnt from the evaluation process
- In addition, the impact assessment aims at increasing the analytical capacities of Southern and Eastern partners in particular, enabling them to develop their own capacities for evaluating partnership experiences and for designing their own rules and strategies for dealing with external assistance.

### **1.2.2 Objectives of the GRP Assessment**

The GRP evaluation looked specifically at the following items:

- a) The technical effectiveness of the support given by the IC researchers; e.g. the impact on research quality and research capacity.
- b) The cost effectiveness of the support; e.g. evaluation of the effects on capacity building for the amount spent on the IC researchers.
- c) The ability or desire of DC/TC researchers to take full advantage of this support.
- d) The positive or negative effects on project ownership of this model.
- e) The commitment of support persons people to the project, despite (often) limited personal gain to themselves.
- f) The impact of the model on research dissemination and policy impact.

The evaluation was undertaken using the participatory approach as described in Maselli, D., (2001). As explained in the section on Methodology below, this approach was adapted to fit the specific characteristics of the GRP project. The primary (or first level) stakeholders in the project were the DC/TC researchers. The second level of stakeholders was made up of policymakers or technocrats. However, it was too early to evaluate the impact on these stakeholders.

### **1.2.3 Tasks**

The **overall tasks** of the Evaluator were to:

- a) Evaluate the global research project on growth (GRP) with respect to quality, capacity building, output, and impact; and,
- b) Assess the effectiveness of the 'focused research partnership' in helping the GRP to meet its objectives.

Following Maselli, D., (2001), the evaluator concentrated on evaluating impact on the following domains:

- Changes in attitudes & new knowledge generation (including networks)
- Individual and institutional capacity building and strengthening
- Inputs in policy-making (including research policy and international conventions)
- Benefits to end-users.

The **specific tasks** of the Evaluator were to:

- a) Evaluate the project design and organization of phase 1 of the GRP;
- b) Evaluate the research output of phase 1 of the GRP with respect to quality, capacity building, and impact;
- c) Assess the contribution of organizational design to the evaluation carried out in step (ii).
- d) Evaluate the project design and organization of phase 2 of the GRP;
- e) Evaluate the research output of phase 2 of the GRP with respect to quality, capacity building, and impact;
- f) Assess the contribution of organizational design to the evaluation in step (v);
- g) Assess the contribution of phase 1 to the output of phase 2;
- h) Evaluate the dissemination strategies of phases 1 and 2;
- i) Make recommendations on the use and modification of the 'focused research partnership' for future projects; and,
- j) Contrast the 'focused research partnership' with more intensive partnerships, such as twinning institutions.

## **1.3 METHODOLOGY**

For the evaluation of the GRP, the PIA as proposed by Maselli, D., (2001) was adapted as explained in the following section.

### **1.3.1 Participatory Electronic Survey**

Usually, in PIAs, workshops are used for building commitment in stakeholders and for aiding them to identify indicators. However, in the assessment of the GRP, using workshops was neither practical nor cost-effective, due to it being implemented in seven regions<sup>3</sup>, with around 70 countries involved. In addition, when the project was evaluated at least three kinds of stakeholders were identified: the regional coordinators, resource persons/reviewers and

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<sup>3</sup> In the first phase of the GRP, the Eastern European countries and the Former Soviet Union were treated as one region while in the second phase they were separated into two regions. This explains why the GRP documentation indicates seven regions in relation to the second phase but only six regions for the first phase.

researchers. Consequently, it would have been necessary either to hold seven regional workshops or at least a large global workshop to achieve equitable participation from GRP stakeholders. This was far beyond the resources available for the assessment. Had only the representatives of stakeholders been convened in a small workshop, such an option would have had the shortcoming of introducing a bias in the participatory approach, as many different and sometimes conflicting views would not have been duly taken into account.

These limitations were addressed by replacing the use of workshops by an electronic survey. For the electronic survey to be participatory, unlike ordinary surveys, its design had to consider stakeholders' preferences and comprise the issues and indicators deemed relevant by the diverse stakeholders. This was done through a two-tiered electronic consultation process. First, GRP stakeholders received the proposal for the survey questionnaires, plus the criteria for analyzing the data to be collected. They were requested to review this information and to make the changes that they would consider most appropriate for assessing the GRP. Second, GRP stakeholders were duly informed of any changes in the revised criteria for data analysis and were requested to fill in the revised questionnaires, which included their requested changes or adjustments to the issues and indicators for the evaluation.

In the first round of consultation, the stakeholders received a four-page document that explained the participatory assessment approach adopted (see Annex 2), in addition to the draft questionnaires and criteria for analyzing the data. Unfortunately, the proper consideration of all these documents demanded a significant amount of their time. The stakeholders may have therefore felt that this participatory approach required a much larger effort from them than ordinary surveys. This may have led to a rather low rate of response to the first consultation<sup>4</sup>. For the second consultation, not only was the explanation of the participatory approach unnecessary, but the questionnaires were also presented in a more compact format (see Annex 3 and 4). The much greater response rate to the second consultation would likely be due to the lower amount of work required of the GRP stakeholders<sup>5</sup>. In addition, each stakeholder was contacted via personal E-mail message instead of the collective and impersonal messages sent in the first round of consultation.

### **1.3.2 Role of the Evaluator**

Following the methodological approach proposed by Maselli, D. (2001), the evaluator's role was mainly to facilitate the consultation and participation processes for assessing the GRP, and to digest the information collected through the E-survey according to the criteria adopted by the stakeholders (see Annex 5). His role was not to be that of a technocratic judge performing a pre-ordained evaluation, but merely one of facilitation of knowledge production and support.

With the assistance of the GDN Secretariat's database, the information available on the GDN's web site ([www.gdnet.org](http://www.gdnet.org)), and the complementary data requested from the regional coordinating institutions, the evaluator identified who the GRP stakeholders were. From 186 stakeholders identified, 170 stakeholders were contacted to participate in the PIA of the GRP. Sixteen were

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<sup>4</sup> From 170 people consulted; 29 replied (17%.) It should be noted, however, that this percentage is likely to underestimate the number of stakeholders that actually participated in the first round of consultation, because not answering in this round implied that the stakeholder did not object to the proposed questionnaires and criteria (see Annex 2, section on the stakeholders/respondents' role and questionnaire administration.)

<sup>5</sup> In the second round of consultation, from 170 stakeholders contacted, 56 replied (33%.) Two persons complained about the lack of attention to their work by the regional coordinating institutions. Although they were encouraged to fill in the questionnaires to make their voices heard, they chose not to participate in the evaluation.

excluded from the evaluation exercise because of technical reasons, since they had no electronic address available from the records consulted. The alternative of incorporating them into the assessment through ordinary mail services and by telephone would have been impractical. Firstly, the schedule for the evaluation would have had to be extended significantly to accommodate the greater time requirements of ordinary correspondence. This would have impaired the management of the E-survey by creating large gaps between the two rounds of consultation. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, the Internet, which was used for the E-survey, opened a straightforward and cheap line of communication between the evaluator/facilitator and the GRP stakeholders. Using E-mail messages, several stakeholders asked for clarifications or simply made comments to the evaluator/facilitator. In a few cases, these exchanges meant actual dialogues with several instances of contact between the stakeholder and the evaluator. This was crucial that the consultation resemble a participatory exercise, which would have been impractical to do by ordinary mail and rather expensive if done over the telephone.

For formulating the draft questionnaires that were considered by the GRP stakeholders during the first round of consultation, project documents, terms of reference, grant applications and contracts provided by both the GDN Secretariat and the regional coordinating institutions were reviewed. In addition, samples of comments from resource persons on the GRP's regional and country studies were analyzed. Due to the ease and readiness of electronic access to this information from the GDN Secretariat and the regional hubs, it was possible to collect the minimum required information in electronic format without needing to travel or to physically access their archives.

### ***1.3.3 Processing of the E-Survey Responses***

Questionnaires for both phases of the GRP were formulated in a participatory way. Each questionnaire allowed for the categorization of the respondents by region, through the regional coordinating institution they were related to; namely, AERC (South Saharan countries), CERGE (Eastern European countries), EADN (East Asian countries), EERC (Former Soviet Union), ERF (Middle East and North African countries), LACEA (Latin American and Caribbean countries) and SANEI (South Asian countries.) It also allowed for categorization by the role performed within the GRP, namely, regional coordinator, resource person/reviewer and researcher.

Although initially the evaluation was designed with a regional level focus, the number of participants in the E-survey was insufficient for this level of breakdown in the analysis. For the first phase of GRP, for example, there were no respondents from SANEI and responses from AERC researchers and from EADN and EERC resource persons were not received (see Table 1.)

**Table 1.- Structure of respondents in the First Phase of GRP**

	AERC	CERGE	EADN	EERC	ERF	LACEA	SANEI
<b>Regional coordinators</b>	1	1	1	1	1	1	--
<b>Resource persons</b>	1	2	--	--	1	1	--
<b>Researchers<sup>6</sup></b>	--	1	3	1	2	2	--
<b>Total</b>	2	4	4	2	4	4	0

Source: E-survey database

Under-representation in the sample at regional level even reached the transition and developing country level of analysis. For example, from the researchers' category only two responses were received from CERGE and EERC. Therefore, the first phase was assessed keeping a global perspective, because the sample was reasonably balanced through the inclusion of six regional coordinators, five regional resource persons and nine researchers.

Table 2 shows the structure of replies received corresponding to the second phase of the GRP.

**Table 2.- Structure of respondents in the second phase of the GRP**

	AERC	CERGE	EADN	EERC	ERF	LACEA	SANEI
<b>Regional coordinators</b>	1	1	1	1	1	1	--
<b>Resource persons</b>	--	2	3	2	1	1	--
<b>Researchers</b>	4	7	3	8	4	3	3
<b>Total</b>	5	10	7	11	6	5	3

Source: E-survey database

On the one hand, problems remain in attempting the regional level analysis, as in the cases of AERC and in SANEI where entire categories of stakeholders – regional coordinators and resource persons – did not participate in the evaluation. Moreover, researchers from the South Saharan region (AERC) are under-represented, since out of the 27 contacted, only four replied. On the other hand, the regions representing transition countries (CERGE and EERC) had the highest rate of response. The degree of representation achieved in these regions is very significant, as 55% of the researchers contacted chose to participate in the evaluation. Not taking into account the AERC case, participation of contacted researchers from the remaining regions varied from 27% (ERF and LACEA) to 43% (EADN.) Accordingly, in the impact assessment of the second phase of the GRP, the aforementioned limitations and differences were accounted for by analyzing the developing countries (AERC, EADN, ERF, LACEA and SANEI) separately from the transition countries (CERGE and EERC.) Whenever required and possible, however, specific regional remarks are provided in the report.

The data gathered through the questionnaires was stored as an ACCESS database. For processing the questionnaires, a computer program based on Visual Basic language was

<sup>6</sup> DC/TC researchers or authors of the regional thematic papers are not separated out from IC researchers, because only two of the respondents among the researchers' group (Djavad Salehi Isfahani and Fabrizio Coricelli) were residing in industrialized countries. Had these subgroups been separated for the analysis, an IC researcher's opinion would have been much more significant in prevalence (50%) than any of their DC/TC counterparts (11%). To avoid this bias in the analysis, the IC researchers were incorporated into the resource persons' group to which they fit most closely in comparison to the regional coordinators' group. Therefore, the researchers categories in the first phase of GRP represent the voice of DC/TC researchers exclusively.

developed, which interacts with ACCESS databases. For optimizing the efficiency and speed of the program, Jet 4.0 was used as the engine database. All of the answers and comments of the respondents are registered in this data storage system of around 180 fields..

## **1.4 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The consultant would like to acknowledge the cooperation received from the regional networks that kindly provided copies of sample contracts, terms of reference and additional information requested in relation to the GRP. Great appreciation is also expressed to the GRP stakeholders that chose to participate in the PIA in spite of the demand for such a significant amount of their time and effort. Very useful comments and suggestions on earlier drafts of this report were received from the IAS-RP colleagues during the GDN annual conference held in Cairo in January 2003.

## **1.5 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT**

The results of the evaluation are presented in four chapters. Chapter 1, Introduction, presents the terms of reference and methodological approach applied in the evaluation. The PIA that was implemented through an electronic survey is discussed here in detail. Chapters 2 and 3, respectively, evaluate the impact of (i) the regional partnerships used; (ii) the regional thematic studies (GRP phase I); and (iii) the country studies (GRP phase II). The evaluation analyzes the impact of the GRP on knowledge and attitudes, strengthening of individual and institutional capacities, as well as the benefits to end-users, including its influence on policy. These chapters have a final section where conclusions are drawn in relation to: (i) the impact on institutional and individual capacities; (ii) the effect of the research partnership on project ownership by DC/TC researchers; and (iii) the dissemination of research results and the influence on policy and development of each evaluated GRP phase. Finally, the evaluation includes a Conclusion and Recommendations chapter where the main results of the assessment are presented in relation to: (i) the quality of the research done, the overall impact on capacity building, and the influence on policy and development of the GRP; and (ii) the lessons learned from the GRP for future GDN global research projects. The analysis is complemented by constructive suggestions to enhance the use of PIA in GDN global research projects.



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## 2. FIRST PHASE: REGIONAL THEMATIC STUDIES

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### 2.1 BACKGROUND

#### 2.1.1 Objectives and expected output

The main objective of the thematic studies of the GRP (the project's first phase) was to provide an analytical framework for the country studies (the project's second phase), where an in-depth analysis of economic growth was sought. The analytical framework attempted to highlight the key issues to explore at the country level, point to areas warranting additional work, and identify countries that in some respect present a unique issue or problem that warrants separate analysis.

The thematic studies were undertaken regionally<sup>7</sup> and encompassed four themes. “The first focused on sources and determinants of **aggregate growth** and sought to deliver to country case study authors a summary of cross-country growth analysis. The second turned to the role of **markets** in influencing economic growth. Authors explored the functioning of key markets—especially those for labor and capital—and assessed the extent to which they have hampered or contributed to growth performance. The third examined the performance of **microeconomic agents** in the growth process. It focused particularly on households and enterprises, and covered such issues as household saving and spending on education, and firm and farm investment and productivity growth. The fourth looked at the **political economy** of growth. Certain policies undoubtedly constitute an important source of variation in growth experiences. The papers on the political economy of growth investigated why countries pursued the particular policies that they did, sometimes even in the face of evidence of their failure.” (McMahon & Squire, 2002, p: 2)

Regional thematic research drew heavily on existing empirical literature to support findings. They sought to review and pinpoint broad similarities, trends and comparable experiences across the developing and transition worlds. Depending on data, authors used a longer historical perspective of 30 to 50 years in order to inform a closer look at recent events and prospects for the future. Annex 6 details the regional studies and their authors. The papers can be downloaded from the GDN website:

([http://www.gdnet.org/activities/global\\_research\\_projects/explaining\\_growth/thematic\\_papers/index.html](http://www.gdnet.org/activities/global_research_projects/explaining_growth/thematic_papers/index.html)).

#### 2.1.2 Organizational Design and Milestones

Forty-six authors drawn from all six regions participated in this initial phase of the project (see Annex 6). Each regional coordinating institution commissioned the studies on the four thematic areas. The authors worked with one another as well as with eminent economists designated to provide support to the researchers. Among the resource persons were Angus Deaton of Princeton University, Robert Solow of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Joseph Stiglitz of Columbia University. They were available for each particular theme, as well as for those covering each region (see Annex 6). The resource persons provided technical assistance,

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<sup>7</sup> Regions include East Asia, South Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, the Middle East and North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa.

reviewed papers, and participated in workshops. At the same time, the “help-desk” data service at the World Bank that facilitates access to data was available to the regional thematic authors.

Most of the authors of the thematic papers and several of the resource persons met in a one-and-a-half-day workshop held in Cairo on October 28–29, 1999. The program included working sessions organized by theme, as well as sessions organized by region. The GRP was launched on the occasion of the First Annual Global Development Conference entitled “Bridging Knowledge and Policy”, held in Bonn, from 6-8 December 1999.

Prior to publication, the International Economics Association (IEA) undertook an independent review of the thematic papers in a meeting held on 10-11 June 2000 at CERGE in Prague. This review sought to ensure that the papers met the highest of all possible professional standards. In the working sessions, regional authors presented their papers, followed by two speakers and an open discussion. In the final working session, the group discussed themes that were common amongst the papers, notable omissions in the papers, and the issue of direction for the country studies. The results of this session were then presented and discussed in the plenary session (see Annex 7 [A-7]). According to Robert Solow, president of the EIA, “it is an important and special characteristic of this project that it is in the hands of trained research economists, mainly from the developing countries themselves. The hope is that the network structure will encourage and foster both international comparisons and international collaboration in research with a consequent exchange of ideas, methods and results.” (McMahon & Squire, 2002, p:iv)

Carrying out the first phase of the GRP took around seven months and cost US\$ 700,000 which breaks down as follows<sup>8</sup>:

•	24 Thematic papers	US\$	240,000
•	Cairo workshop	US\$	270,000
•	External resource persons	US\$	28,000
•	Regional workshops	US\$	150,000
•	Overhead	US\$	12,000

## **2.2 IMPACT ON KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES**

In this section, the assessment focuses on the impact on knowledge and attitudes of the first phase of GRP. First, the impact of this initial stage of the project on the literature on growth is evaluated based on the opinions of the suppliers and users of knowledge within the GRP. Then, the impact of key complementary activities such as workshops or independent reviews on the quality of the regional thematic papers is discussed. Finally, the degree of involvement of policy makers in the design and implementation of the regional review cycle is analyzed as an indicator of a proactive attitude for bridging the gap between researchers and policy makers.

### **2.2.1 Quality of Research**

The output of the first phase of the GRP is fairly well-appreciated by the majority of GRP stakeholders although there are some opposing views on the quality of research among the minorities. The dominant perception of the GRP stakeholders is that the regional thematic papers provided useful insights on growth in DC/TC countries. As a result, the reviews met their objectives. As discussed below, for TC stakeholders this perception is clearer and much more

<sup>8</sup> See “GDN Proposal for Country Studies”, Proposal for Funding, 2000.

consistent than that of DC stakeholders, who have opposing minority views on the quality of research in relation to the 'Aggregate Growth' and 'Political Economy of Growth' reviews. The 'Markets and Economic Growth' paper was highly appreciated by a minor but relevant fraction of authors from transition countries, due to the use of innovative methodologies. On the contrary, the largest minority of authors from developing countries felt that this paper simply repeated conventional wisdom.

As shown in Table 3, the majority opinion - of both suppliers/stakeholders that wrote the regional thematic papers– and the users/stakeholders that used the regional thematic papers as an input for the country studies– regarding the knowledge provided was that the regional thematic papers' contribution to the literature on growth was mainly through the provision of useful insights.

**Table 3- Regional Thematic Papers: Quality of Research**

<b>Knowledge Suppliers (Global Level)</b>				
	<b>Aggregate growth</b>	<b>Markets and economic growth</b>	<b>Microeconomics of growth</b>	<b>Political economy of growth</b>
<b>Broke new ground</b>	5	10	10	15
<b>Provided useful insights</b>	63	70	85	70
<b>Showed the use of new or innovative methodologies</b>	5	0	10	15
<b>Repeated conventional wisdom</b>	30	25	5	5
<b>Knowledge Users (Developing Countries)</b>				
	<b>Aggregate growth</b>	<b>Markets and economic growth</b>	<b>Microeconomics of growth</b>	<b>Political economy of growth</b>
<b>Broke new ground</b>	19	8	4	19
<b>Provided useful insights</b>	62	65	65	73
<b>Showed the use of new or innovative methodologies</b>	15	4	8	15
<b>Repeated conventional wisdom</b>	23	35	15	19
<b>Knowledge Users ( Transition countries)</b>				
	<b>Aggregate growth</b>	<b>Markets and economic growth</b>	<b>Microeconomics of growth</b>	<b>Political economy of growth</b>
<b>Broke new ground</b>	5	10	10	5
<b>Provided useful insights</b>	62	81	67	67
<b>Showed the use of new or innovative methodologies</b>	10	19	14	14
<b>Repeated conventional wisdom</b>	9	5	10	0

**Source:** Derived from E-survey database

A small but still relevant portion of stakeholders in the first phase of GRP, not including those in the transition region, considered that the regional thematic papers on 'Aggregate Growth' and 'Markets and Economic Growth' only repeated conventional wisdom. This result must be approached with caution, however, as it was heavily influenced by the opinion of the regional coordinators, of whom 50% supported this view, while researchers and resource persons were less harsh. Moreover, there is a consensus across resource persons that the 'Markets and Economic Growth' reviews do not repeat conventional wisdom and only 10% of the researchers thought that the 'Aggregate Growth' papers do so.

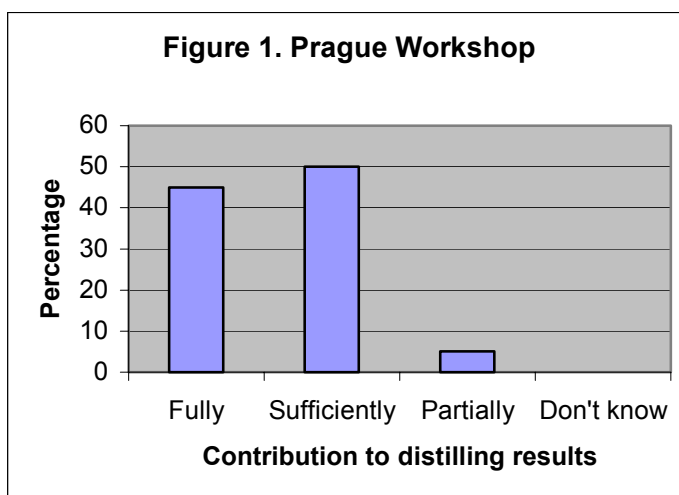
Within DC stakeholders in the second phase of the GRP, there are two minority subgroups with mutually exclusive perceptions in relation to the 'Aggregate Growth' and the 'Political Economy of Growth' papers. While around 20% of them felt that these papers repeated conventional wisdom; another 20% felt that they broke new ground. In the same group, there is a relevant minority opinion that the paper on 'Markets and Economic Growth' repeated conventional wisdom. Surprisingly, there is almost total consensus across TC stakeholders that the regional thematic papers did not repeat conventional wisdom. Moreover, there is a small but significant minority that felt that the 'Market and Economic Growth' paper, which is precisely the least favored paper of DC stakeholders, shows the use of new or innovative methodologies.

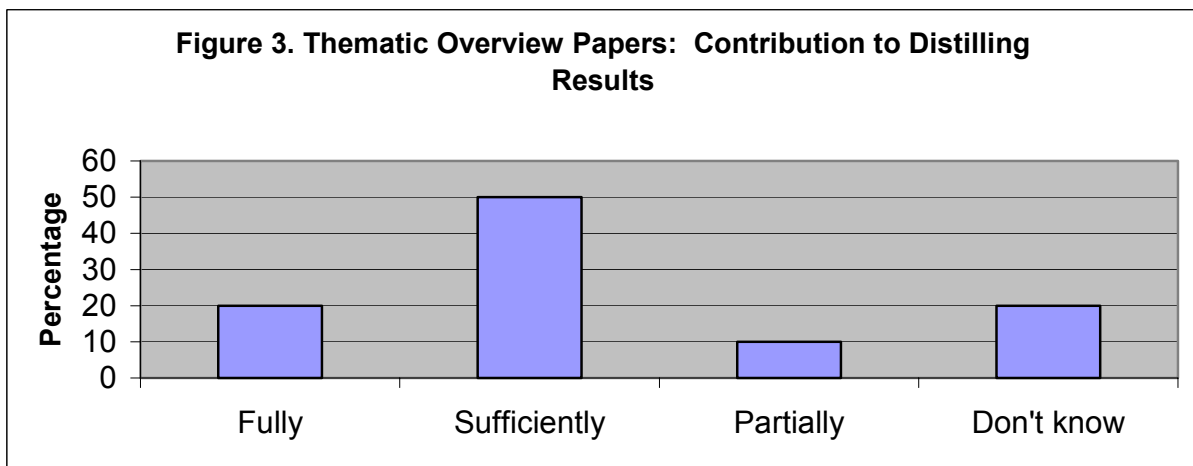
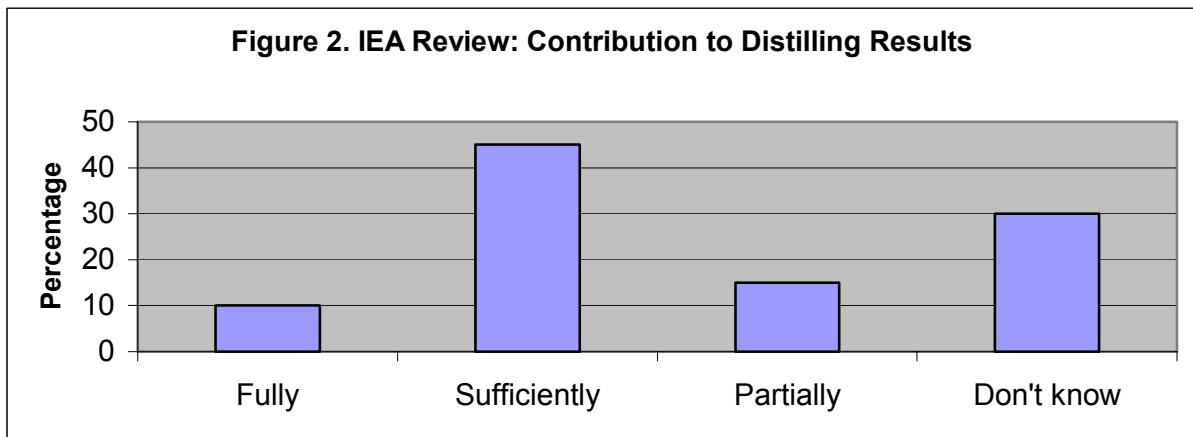
### 2.2.2 Impact of complementary activities on the regional thematic reviews

The impact on the regional thematic reviews of the Prague workshop, where final drafts of these papers were discussed; the IEA review; and, the overall thematic papers was rather differently appreciated by researchers and regional coordinators, on the one hand, and resource persons, on the other. While the resource persons were more inclined to favor the EIA review, researchers and regional coordinators were more in favor of the Prague workshop.

Stakeholders were fully aware of the Prague Workshop (see figure 1.) In the opinion of researchers and regional coordinators, this event contributed to a thorough distilling of the results; while for most resource persons this contribution was merely sufficient.

As figures 2 and 3 show, the contribution to digesting the results of the GRP first phase IEA review and the thematic overview papers was considered less significant than the Prague workshop, but still sufficient.





Regarding the impact of the IEA review and the thematic overview papers on the research quality of the regional thematic reviews, resource persons valued these activities more than the researchers. For example, of the resource persons group, three quarters and one quarter, respectively, feel that the IEA review contributed to the research sufficiently and fully. Meanwhile, in the researchers group nobody thought that the IEA review contributed fully to improving the quality of papers, with a third feeling that this contribution was only partial. This may be an indication that IC researchers (resource persons) benefited more than DC/TC researchers from the IEA review and the thematic overview papers. Partial satisfaction with the contribution of the overview thematic papers was also expressed from half of the regional coordinators who expressed an opinion regarding this activity.

### **2.2.3 Seeking Policy Makers' Involvement**

Although policy makers were ultimately the targeted audience of the GRP project, their involvement was not systematically sought for the project's first phase. There was no strategy for interacting with policy makers, even though in the proposal for the second phase of the GRP emphasized the formulation and initial implementation of a dissemination strategy for bringing research results into the public domain and to the attention of policy makers<sup>9</sup>. In quite a traditional

<sup>9</sup> See "GDN Proposal for Country Studies", Proposal for Funding, 2000.

way, policy makers would have participated only when the findings of the regional thematic studies were presented. They would not have had a say during the design and implementation phases.

As Table 4 shows, there is a broad consensus across the GRP stakeholders that policy makers were not involved in the design and implementation of the regional thematic studies. It is also striking that almost half of the DC/TC researchers and between 60% and 80% of the resource persons reported a lack of knowledge regarding the participation of policy makers in the first phase of the GRP. This is certainly an indicator that the involvement of policy makers at this stage was not deliberately and systematically sought, otherwise, the implementers of the first phase of the GRP would have been better informed about it.

**Table 4.- Policy Makers Involvement in the Thematic Papers Cycle (by percentage)**

<b>DESIGN</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Not</b>	<b>Don't know/ Not answered</b>
Researchers (DC/TC)	0	56	44
Resource Persons (mainly IC)	0	20	80
Regional Coordinators	17	67	17
<b>All Stakeholders</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>			
Researchers (DC/TC)	0	56	44
Resource Persons (mainly IC)	0	20	80
Regional Coordinators	0	83	17
<b>All Stakeholders</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>REVIEW OF RESULTS</b>			
Researchers (DC/TC)	11	44	44
Resource Persons (mainly IC)	20	20	60
Regional Coordinators	33	50	17
<b>All Stakeholders</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>

Source: Derived from the E-survey database

The large majority of stakeholders who expressed their position on the involvement of policy makers reported that they had participated in workshops to provide comments on work-in-progress reports. During these events, policy makers shared their concerns with researchers or simply limited themselves to listening to the research findings presented.

## **2.3 STRENGTHENING OF INDIVIDUAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES**

As explained in the Introduction, an important purpose of the GRP was to strengthen individual and institutional economic research capacities in DC/TC. To that effect, one main tool was the utilization of partnerships between DC/TC and IC researchers. In the first stage of the GRP, the model followed used strategic interventions of IC partners (resource persons) during the design, implementation and review of findings, complemented by the GDN formulation of TORs, free access to the World Bank help desk data service, and regional and global workshops. This section evaluates the effectiveness of this model. In doing so, attention is also paid to relevant organizational and funding issues.

### 2.3.1 Appropriateness of TORs

The TORs prepared by the GDN for the regional thematic papers were praised as very useful and relevant to the majority of stakeholders. However, the majority of stakeholders also felt that the scope and value-added expected of these reviews were less well-defined. This limitation would be mainly due to the insufficient participation of GRP stakeholders in the formulation of TORs, insufficient clarity regarding the methodological purpose of the reviews, and the lack of a well-established body of literature covering some thematic areas.

Table 5 shows that the TORs provided the authors of the regional thematic papers with a useful outline to follow and relevant specific questions to address in the reviews. These preferences reflect the perceptions of both researchers and resource persons but overestimate the preferences expressed by the group of regional coordinators<sup>10</sup>. Less significant was the guide that the TORs provided in relation to the added value expected from the regional reviews and the scope of the thematic areas. This may imply that the stakeholders were not as well oriented as they could have been regarding what the main use intended for their research was, which could be argued as being methodological. Researchers and resource persons concentrated on making the best possible regional reviews of their topic areas. They seem to have been rather unaware that the review could also help to define the rationale and criteria for choosing country studies within each region or, when selecting a country, should point out the issues to examine, in order to include all the relevant phenomena in the regional samples of country studies. In short, the results of the regional thematic reviews were mainly intended to be of use to every country study in a region, rather than for giving sound criteria in the selection of country studies, and to aid each country study selected in highlighting specific phenomena that warranted in-depth analysis.

**Table 5.- Regional Thematic Papers: Usefulness of the Terms of Reference (by percentage)**

	A great deal	A certain amount	Not at all	Don't know/not answered
A useful outline	60	35	5 (0)	0
Relevant specific questions to address	55	40	5 (0)	0
A clear idea of the added value expected from the review	10	75	10 (5)	5
A well defined scope of the thematic areas	30	65	5 (0)	0

Source: Derived from the E-survey database

One could also argue that the TORs may not have been sufficiently discussed with the researchers and regional coordinators during their formulation. Lack of sufficient participation of regional coordinating institutions in the formulation of the TORs might also explain their less favorable perception of the relevance and clarity of the TORs mentioned above. For example, one of the stakeholders from one of the transition countries stated, “the transition region has too many features that did not fit well into the general development-driven framework of the GRP.” It is likely that this inadequacy would have been ameliorated or avoided, had TC stakeholders been better consulted during the formulation of TORs. In addition, insufficient clarity of the TORs may result from rather undeveloped areas in economic growth literature. Another stakeholder stated that “... ‘aggregate growth’ and ‘political economy of growth’ were fine because they could rely on well

<sup>10</sup> Of the group of regional coordinators, 50% and 33%, respectively, felt that the TORs provided a useful outline and key questions for the regional reviews.

established literature. Things were much less clear for ‘markets’ and ‘microeconomics’ simply because these areas were less researched.”

### **2.3.2 Effects of the Research Partnership**

As explained below, the first phase of the GRP was not, in practice, a capacity building component, probably because most of DC/TC researchers were well established scholars. Therefore, the effect on the quality of regional studies due to participation of IC researchers was moderate. In practice, IC researchers mostly participated in guiding discussions on methodology and providing comments and input on drafts. There is some indication that DC/TC researchers transferred knowledge to IC researchers on the institutional and historical dimensions of growth. Consequently, it is not strange that the majority of GRP stakeholders, who participated in the first phase, consider that the main effect of the research partnership was on promoting learning, which would have similarly benefited both DC/TC and IC researchers.

According to the overwhelming majority of stakeholders, the main contribution of resource persons (IC researchers) to the first phase of the GRP was their participation in workshops, guiding methodology discussions and providing comments and input on drafts. Their participation in the design and implementation stages of this phase is acknowledged by the majority of the regional coordinating institutions - with the exception of EADN, which reported that “resource persons assigned to EADN did not participate in any meeting or provide any input.” Also, in the case of the AERC, which distinguishes between AERC and GDN reviewers, the latter would have only provided referee reports. In contrast, only a minority of researchers (22%) acknowledged the participation of resource persons during the implementation phase. This might indicate, on the one hand, that the potential for technical assistance from the IC partners during the implementation stage was unfulfilled. However, it could also be an indication that substantive technical assistance from IC researchers was not required. In the transition region, for example, resource persons helped to coordinate among the various thematic studies in response to the initial lack of sufficient clarity as to what topics fell under the various categories, especially in relation to the micro and market studies. This would explain why only a third of the researchers and regional coordinators acknowledge that resource persons provided technical assistance. No stakeholder acknowledged that resource persons trained DC/TC researchers.

Consequently, DC/TC researchers and regional coordinators perceived only moderate impact on the quality of regional thematic studies from IC researchers acting as advisors and reviewers. Only around a fifth of the researchers and regional coordinators consider that resource persons had a significant impact on the quality of the regional thematic studies.

Nevertheless, it must be stressed that different groups of stakeholders can have divergent opinions about the actual effect of the research partnership (see Table 6). Not only did the majority of DC/TC researchers largely coincide with the resource persons that the research partnership had a significant impact on promoting learning, but also their largest minorities agreed with each other on the significance (a certain amount) assigned to this impact. In contrast, the views of researchers and resource persons are opposed in relation to the impact of the research partnership on the regional reviews achieving an international standard of quality. While the majority of researchers believe that the impact of the partnership was not significant in this respect; the majority of resource persons believed of the opposite. Moreover, one of the regional coordinators in the transition region found an East-West transfer of knowledge regarding the institutional and historical dimensions of the phenomena under investigation. As for the AERC, the thematic regional reviews seemed not to have been designed as a capacity building



component. “Thematic papers were all written by economists of international stature, whether African or not.”<sup>11</sup>

**Table 6. Regional Thematic Papers: Effects of Research Partnership (by percentage)**

<b>PROMOTING LEARNING</b>	<b>Significant</b>	<b>A certain amount</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>Don't know/ Not answered</b>
Researchers (DC/TC)	56	33	0	11
Resource Persons (mainly IC)	60	20	20	0
Regional Coordinators	33	17	33	17
<b>All Stakeholders</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>ACHIEVING INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS</b>				
Researchers (DC/TC)	22	56	10	22
Resource Persons (mainly IC)	60	20	0	20
Regional Coordinators	33	33	33	0
<b>All Stakeholders</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>

**Source:** Derived from the E-survey database

Due to the rather limited contact between researchers and resource persons and to the nature of the partnership, which gave full control of the studies to the DC/TC researchers, the stakeholders did not feel any threat to the DC/TC partners' full ownership of the project. Yet, DC/TC researchers were, to a large extent, unaware of any potential utilization of the results of the regional thematic studies by their IC counterparts.

### **2.3.3 Use of Help Desk Data Service**

As shown in Table 7, if the stakeholders that did not answer or answered “Don't know” are set aside, half of the stakeholders have significantly used the World Bank help desk data service for the regional reviews. Of the remainder, around 30% did not use the service at all, and a fifth seldom used it.

**Table 7. Use of Help Desk Data Service (by percentage)**

	<b>A great deal</b>	<b>Seldom</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>Don't know/ Not answered</b>
Researchers (DC/TC)	56	22	22	0
Resource Persons (mainly IC)	40	20	0	40
Regional Coordinators	33	17	50	0
<b>All Stakeholders</b>	<b>45 (50)</b>	<b>20 (22)</b>	<b>25 (28)</b>	<b>10 (0)</b>

**Source:** Derived from the E-survey database

Furthermore, around 80% of DC/TC researchers state that they used the help desk data service of the World Bank and 56% of them used it to a significant extent. Resource persons also used the service, with a fair portion of this group (40%) doing so significantly. However, regional

<sup>11</sup> Comments of a stakeholder in the AERC project

coordinators have a different perception as half of them consider that this service was not utilized. The conclusion would be that the help desk data service was useful and accessible to the DC/TC and IC researchers, but that the regional coordinators would have liked to see a greater use of this complementary service by researchers.

### **2.3.4 Organizational and Funding Issues**

The first phase of the GRP was implemented before the GDN Secretariat was established. In this initial stage, rather than coordinating and managing the GRP, the World Bank transferred these responsibilities to the regional coordinating institutions. The grant agreement for supporting the preparation of GRP established that the regional coordinating institution should prepare a research proposal to commission a set of thematic framework papers for the region. There was, in fact, a common analytical framework based upon the AERC Growth Project that informed the formulation across regions using fairly common terms of reference for the thematic reviews. The grant agreement also stated the maximum amounts applicable to the different activities. In practice, this approach, in which a global coordinator for the GRP was absent, had several shortcomings. Regional networks could not adhere to the same timetables. Ensuring a common approach across regions for mid-term reviews was difficult and, therefore, so was the collecting of common suggestions for the completion of work. In order to deal with this situation, the GDN secretariat was obliged to take over the overall coordination of the GRP at the third GDN annual conference in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

A main shortcoming of this subsidiary approach adopted for managing the GRP was that funds earmarked for activities were not flexible enough to properly address the regional requirements for optimizing the quality of their research output. For example, in the grant provided by the World Bank to the regional hubs, up to 30% of the funds were allocated to the hiring of an external resource person, holding a regional meeting and funding the costs associated with the GRP preparatory meeting held in Cairo in October 1999. However, for the AERC Growth Project this was not an efficient use of these resources. As the AERC project was conceived in advance, funds provided to the AERC to finance their participation in the Cairo workshop, which represented a good portion of the funds provided, were in fact much less valuable to AERC than if the funds had simply supported their project budget.

More importantly, the AERC project suffered because the GDN became a major competitor for funds and attention in the donor arena. Although the GDN made a significant effort towards compensating this impact on the AERC by providing a budget for the second phase of GRP many times greater than that of other regions<sup>12</sup>, this was not enough for some AERC stakeholders, who felt that the GRP exerted a net drain on the financial resources available to the AERC Growth Project. For example, due to budgetary constraints, the first AERC authors' conference was scaled down to a conference involving only the steering committee.

Another issue of concern in the management of the GRP relates to the disparity in the competitiveness of the honorariums paid, due to a policy of allocating grants of the same size across regions and which disregarded the acute differences in living costs between regions. This has led to a situation where, at one extreme, TC researchers' honorariums were competitive, while at the other extreme, resource persons in developing countries, particularly, received honorariums

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<sup>12</sup> For Sub-Saharan Africa, 30 country studies were budgeted, while no other region exceeded 15 country studies. See Annex 4 "Proposal for Funding. Global Research Project: Explaining Growth" of **Application to FY2001 Development Grant Facility**.

well below competitive levels<sup>13</sup>. In between are the honorariums of DC researchers and resource persons in transition countries that are perceived by around 50% of those involved as competitive, yet below competitive levels by the other 50%. This is likely to negatively affect the quality of the research output in the developing world because of the indirect incentives to reduce the time and effort invested in these studies.

## **2.4 BENEFITS TO END-USERS**

This section evaluates the benefits to end-users of the first phase of GRP. Phase one's contribution to phase two has been assessed in great detail, because the main objective of this phase was to guide authors regarding the processes and issues worthy of inquiry in the country studies. The dissemination of research findings through publication activities has also been considered, addressing their potential to reach not only the academic growth community but also the policy community. Taking into account that stakeholders in the first phase of the GRP are largely college and universities lecturers, the impact of the project on the quality of their teaching is also evaluated.

### ***2.4.1 Contribution of Regional Thematic Papers to Country Studies***

As analyzed below, suppliers and users of the output of the first phase of the GRP agree that the regional thematic reviews provided a useful analytical framework for the authors of the country studies. This framework also comprised relevant questions that are worth being followed up on in the carrying out the country studies. However, in relation to the contribution of each regional thematic paper to the selection and design of the country studies - by highlighting gaps in knowledge and identifying countries that diverged significantly from regional trends - quite divergent opinions were found among stakeholders.

As a rule (see Table 8), stakeholders in the transition world appreciated the contribution of the regional thematic reviews to the country studies more than stakeholders in the developing world. This could be due to the fact that there are fewer studies on growth in the transition region than in the developing world. It also indicates that, even without judging the higher or lower quality of the thematic reviews in the transition region vis-à-vis the developing world, the impact of the first phase of the GRP was greater in the transition world than in the developing world. To the authors of the country studies, the microeconomics of growth was a subject that aroused similar interest in the developing and transition worlds, and which contributed reasonably to the country case studies.

Considering that the quality of design in the country studies improves when the regional thematic reviews point to gaps both in knowledge and in countries that have the potential for being revelatory case studies, the users of the thematic reviews felt that the greatest contribution was from the 'microeconomics of growth review.' The 'markets and economic growth review' had a second level of impact, while the least significant contribution was found in the papers on 'aggregate growth' and the 'political economy of growth.' This may indicate that the first phase of the GRP could, in itself, constitute a contribution to the economic literature on growth, because it

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<sup>13</sup> All TC researchers and TC regional coordinators considered the honorariums of TC researchers to be competitive, while 75% of DC regional coordinators and 67% of resource persons in DCs regarded the honorariums received by the latter as below competitive levels.

provided insights into the somewhat unexplored areas of ‘the microeconomics of growth’, and ‘markets and economic growth’<sup>14</sup>.

**Table 8.- Contribution of the Regional Thematic Reviews to the Country Studies<sup>15</sup>**

<b>Aggregate Growth</b>	<b>Global (Phase I)</b>	<b>Developing Countries (Phase II)</b>	<b>Transition countries (Phase II)</b>
	<b>SUPPLIERS</b>	<b>USERS</b>	
<b>Proved to be a useful guide</b>	A great deal	A fair amount	A fair amount
<b>Posed key questions to follow</b>	A great deal	A fair amount	A fair amount
<b>Pointed areas warranting additional work</b>	A great deal	A very limited extent	A fair amount
<b>Identified countries that diverged significantly from regional trends</b>	A fair amount	A very limited extent	A fair amount
<b>Markets and Economic Growth</b>			
	<b>Global</b>	<b>Developing Countries</b>	<b>Transition countries</b>
<b>Proved to be a useful guide</b>	A fair amount	A very limited extent	A fair amount
<b>Posed key questions to follow</b>	A fair amount	A fair amount	A fair amount
<b>Pointed areas warranting additional work</b>	A fair amount	A fair amount	A fair amount
<b>Identified countries that diverged significantly from regional trends</b>	A fair amount	A very limited extent	A fair amount
<b>Microeconomics of Growth</b>			
	<b>Global</b>	<b>Developing Countries</b>	<b>Transition countries</b>
<b>Proved to be a useful guide</b>	A fair amount	A fair amount	A great deal
<b>Posed key questions to follow</b>	A fair amount	A fair amount	A fair amount
<b>Pointed areas warranting additional work</b>	A fair amount	A fair amount	A fair amount
<b>Identified countries that diverged significantly from regional trends</b>	A fair amount	A fair amount	A fair amount
<b>Political Economy of Growth</b>			
	<b>Global</b>	<b>Developing Countries</b>	<b>Transition countries</b>
<b>Proved to be a useful guide</b>	A fair amount	A fair amount	A fair amount
<b>Posed key questions to follow</b>	A fair amount	A fair amount	A fair amount
<b>Pointed areas warranting additional work</b>	A great deal	A very limited extent	A fair amount
<b>Identified countries that diverged significantly from regional trends</b>	A fair amount	A very limited extent	A fair amount

**Source:** Derived from Annex 8 and 9

<sup>14</sup> In relation to this review see also section 2.2.1

<sup>15</sup> In Annex 9, “Analysis of Stakeholders’ Perceptions regarding the Contribution of Regional Thematic Papers”, stakeholders’ perceptions are analyzed in detail. The approach was through evaluating the perception trends of the largest and second largest minorities corresponding to three stakeholders groups. First are the stakeholders that wrote the regional thematic papers, and who are evaluated at the global level. Second are the users of the regional thematic papers, who were divided in two groups: DC and TC stakeholders. The most interesting result is that the perception of the largest minority within these groups is an efficient indicator of a group’s perception trend. Therefore, Table 8 represents the stakeholders’ perceptions as seen through the perceptions of the largest minority group of stakeholders from GRP phases I and II.

As seen in Table 8, the regional thematic papers on aggregate growth provided for the second phase of the GRP with a useful framework for guiding the country

studies, including key research questions. For TC stakeholders this framework also provided some insights for furthering research on this topic by identifying areas that warranted additional work and countries with the potential to be revelatory case studies, being as they diverged significantly from regional trends. The same perception, however, was less prevalent in DC stakeholders. They were less inclined to concede that these papers were useful enough to clearly highlight both gaps in knowledge and potentially fruitful country case studies. In this regard, DC stakeholders felt that this type of contribution was very limited.

In relation to the markets and economic growth regional review, suppliers and users of knowledge acknowledged that they contributed key questions to be followed up on and identified gaps that need to be filled. Consistent with this view, TC stakeholders agreed that, to a fair extent, this paper provided a useful guide for the country studies and identified countries that diverged significantly from regional trends. DC stakeholders were less satisfied with the analytical framework given by the markets and economic growth reviews than their TC colleagues. DC stakeholders definitely considered the contribution of these papers of minor, if any, importance in identifying highly relevant country studies within the developing world.

In the review on microeconomics and growth, there is a striking convergence amongst the perceptions of the suppliers and users of knowledge. All stakeholders agreed that these papers provided, to a fair extent, a useful framework for the country studies, a sufficient account of the areas warranting additional work, and that they identified those countries with the potential to be revelatory case studies within the different regions.

The opinions of the majority of stakeholders fully converged in that the political economy of growth review provided country authors with a good analytical framework, which posed relevant questions to be followed up in the country studies. However, rather divergent stakeholder perceptions were also found in relation to this review's contribution to pointing out knowledge gaps and countries that diverged greatly from regional trends. DC stakeholders regarded this contribution as very limited, while TC stakeholders felt that it was fine.

As demonstrated in Annex 8, the opinion of the majority of stakeholders was that there was a disparate degree of overlap across the regional themes surveyed in the first phase of the GRP. DC and TC stakeholders, who used the papers as inputs in the country studies, had opposing views. DC stakeholders felt that overlap across themes was significant, while TC stakeholders felt overlap was very limited or did not occur at all. An intermediate position between these extremes was held by the authors of the papers for whom overlap across themes was evident, but to a limited extent.

#### **2.4.2 Contribution of the Thematic Overview Papers**

For the completion of the first phase of the GRP, the regional thematic papers were complemented by thematic overview papers, which synthesized the main findings across the regional thematic papers<sup>16</sup>. These papers were available to the country studies researchers. As

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<sup>16</sup> See McMahon Gary & Squire Lyn, editors, (2002)

shown in Annex 10, GRP stakeholders felt that the overview thematic papers were helpful or very helpful in designing the country studies.

Table 9 shows how the thematic overview papers ranked in terms of their positive impact on the design of country studies, according to the different GRP stakeholders. A full convergence of stakeholders' perceptions was only found on the 'political economy of growth', which ranked second in usefulness. Users' perceptions converged exclusively with respect to the 'microeconomics of growth' paper. It is striking that the usefulness of the same paper could be differently appreciated by different stakeholders. For example, users from developing countries had divergent or opposing views compared to those from transition countries regarding the usefulness of the 'aggregate growth' and the 'markets and economic growth' overview papers. Rather than differences in stakeholders' knowledge, this likely indicates that the key thematic inputs required for the country studies varied across regions. For the majority of stakeholders in developing countries, the priority for analysis in country studies would be the determining factors of aggregate growth, while in transition countries the key issue might have been the influence of markets on economic growth. Consequently, the political economy of growth and the microeconomics of growth would, in this order, have been a second but common priority amongst the authors of the country papers in developing and transition countries.

**Table 9.- Usefulness Ranking of Thematic Overview Papers for Country Studies Design**

Stakeholders	Aggregate growth	Markets and economic growth	Microeconomics of growth	Political economy of growth
Phase I (Global)	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Phase II (Developing countries)	1 <sup>st</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Phase II (Transition countries)	4 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>

Source: Derived from Annex 9

Considering the findings from the stakeholders' perceptions on the regional thematic and thematic overview papers, the conclusions would be twofold. First, for the country studies, the analytical priority of TC stakeholders may have been the relationship between markets and economic growth, while for DC stakeholders the main issue would have been to examine the determining factors for aggregate growth. Second, DC and TC stakeholders regarded the regional thematic papers on 'microeconomics of growth' as more useful for the country studies than the synthesis achieved in the thematic overview paper. Thus, a common priority for DC and TC country authors would seem to be the analysis of the microeconomics of growth, while the added value of the thematic overview paper on this issue was of minor relevance.

### 2.4.3 Dissemination

The target audiences of the regional thematic papers were country research teams and resource persons from the second phase of the GRP. The findings of the regional thematic papers were also disseminated to broader audiences through regional workshops and conferences, including the GDN's annual conferences. As was discussed in section 2.2.2, only a minority of stakeholders considered that workshops were effective in disseminating research findings to policy makers and receiving feedback from them. However, this weakness of the first phase of the GRP was at least partially addressed by including publication activities in the dissemination process to reach a broader audience than country studies teams. For example, the main findings of the first phase of the GRP, including the overall thematic papers, were published in 2003 by Palgrave Macmillan, in association with the International Economic Association (McMahon, G. & L. Squire editors, 2003.)

Publications activities are mainly the responsibility of the regional coordinating institutions and the GDN itself.

Figure 4 shows the publication media that GRP stakeholders expect will be used for disseminating the regional thematic studies. It calls one’s attention to the divergent expectations of regional coordinators and researchers on this matter. Regional coordinators completely agreed that the regional reviews would be mainly diffused via the Web, while only one in three of the regional coordinators were thinking of publishing books to disseminate the regional thematic papers. On the contrary, the large majority of researchers expected that publishing books would be the main way of disseminating the regional thematic papers. Only a minority of them have thought of the web as an instrument for disseminating the regional reviews. This sort of asymmetrical expectations between regional coordinators and researchers indicates that this issue was not properly discussed and clarified during the design and implementation of the first phase of the GRP. Accordingly, at least at a regional level, during the design of the first phase of the GRP, the planning for publication of findings deserved, at the best, a minor consideration by the GRP regional coordinators. Notwithstanding, at the time of writing this report, AERC, SANEI, ERF and EERC-CERGE have made final or tentative arrangements to publish the regional thematic papers with well-recognized publishers, such as Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press. EADN will not publish its regional thematic papers, because one of them was not completed and had to be aborted.

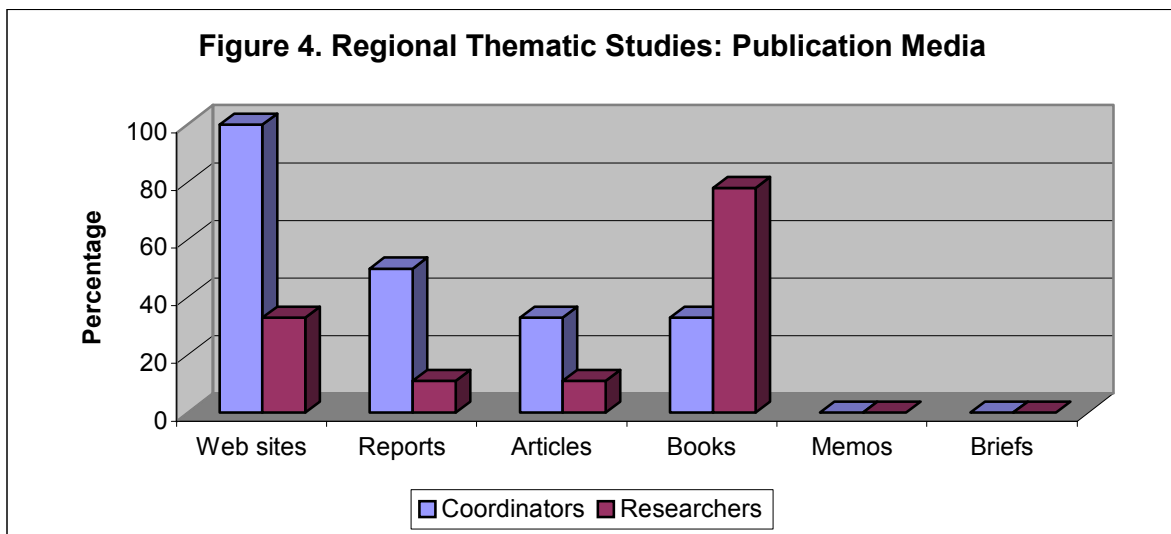
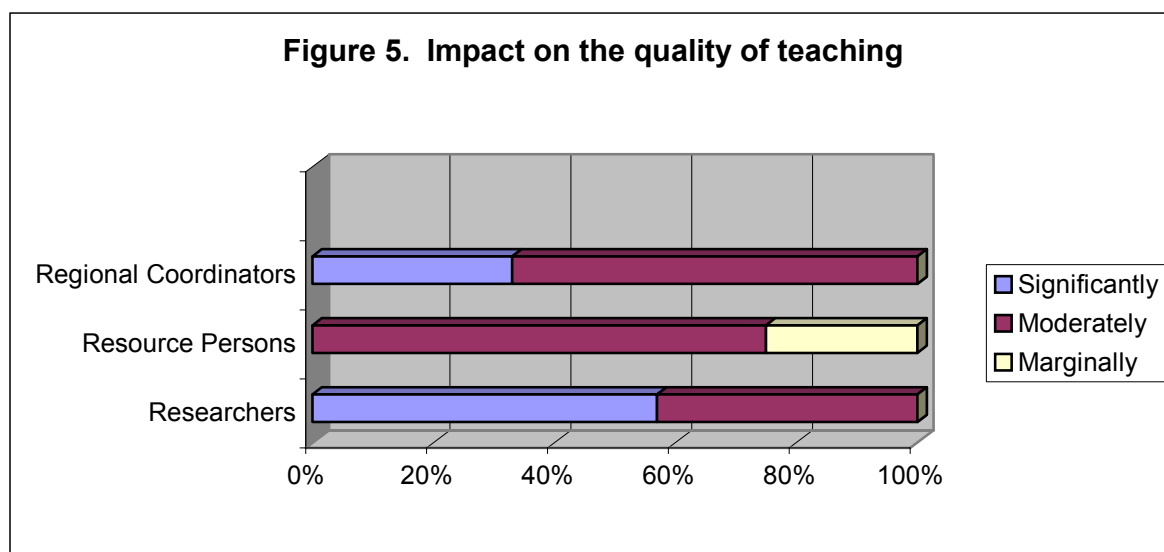


Figure 4 also shows that the production of memos and briefs has not been considered at all as publication activities for the first phase of the GRP. Memos and briefs are, however, very effective mechanisms for disseminating research findings to policy makers and other members of the policy-making community, such as think tanks, consultants and NGOs. Therefore, this could again be an indicator that, during the design stage, little attention was paid to linking the publication of the regional thematic reviews with optimizing their impact on the ‘growth’ policy community. Furthermore, 60% of the respondents, comprising the whole group of resource persons, do not know if relevant public actors such as heads or senior personnel of regional banks, ministers or senior public servants have been informed of the regional thematic reviews’ results. Only half of regional coordinators and a third of DC/TC researchers stated that those people have been informed to some extent. It is likely, however, that this situation would have occurred because the regional thematic reviews were treated as an intermediary output of the

overall GRP project. Consequently, this issue is reevaluated in the section on [‘Potential for Influencing Policy and Development’](#) of the next chapter.

#### 2.4.4 Additional End-Users’ Benefits

In addition to providing an analytical framework and key questions for country studies authors, the first phase of the GRP benefited the quality of teaching of GRP stakeholders to a fair extent, notably that of researchers and regional coordinators (see Figure 5). This is no minor benefit, as 50% of resource persons and almost 80% of researchers teach on a permanent basis at colleges and universities.



Because of the GRP project, the quality of the teaching of DC/TC researchers benefited significantly in comparison to that of resource persons and regional coordinators. Almost 60% of DC/TC researchers feel that participating in the project’s first phase has largely enhanced the quality of their teaching. The GRP was for them a very helpful exercise on development economics. The remainder feel that participating in the project moderately improved the quality of their teaching. A third of the regional coordinators also regarded the impact of the project in their teaching abilities very highly. One of them, for example, designed a new course based on the results of the first phase of the GRP. Regarding the quality of teaching of resource persons, working in the project had mostly moderate impact. In the minority of cases (25%), the impact was negligible. Although one of the resource persons considers that his teaching only improved moderately due to his participation in the project, the project resulted in greater impact on his research skills.

Thus far, stakeholders are largely unaware of any use of the findings of the first phase of the GRP by policy makers. A marginal fraction of stakeholders (10%) stated that these results were used by policy makers but that they did not provide any evidence as to how or when it happened. Therefore, when the PIA was carried out, no evidence was found on the utilization of GRP phase I research results by policy makers.



## 2.5 CONCLUSION

### 2.5.1 *Effectiveness of the Research Partnerships*

The main impact of the research partnership on the first phase of the GRP was in promoting joint learning between IC and DC/TC research partners rather than enhancing the quality of research carried out by DC/TC partners, who were economists of international stature. IC partners guided discussions on methodology and provided comments and inputs on drafts. DC/TC partners brought knowledge of the historical and institutional dimensions of growth. This approach to partnering economists of international stature from both IC and DC/TC countries was effective for delivering regional thematic reviews that surveyed key regional issues on the spheres of aggregate growth, markets and growth, the microeconomics of growth and the political economy of growth.

This partnership reached to the design, implementation and dissemination stages of the study. However, prior to the design, and during the identification of objectives and issues to be covered by the thematic reviews, there was little, if any, participation from DC/TC stakeholders. This limited the effectiveness of the research partnership, as DC/TC stakeholders could not provide input which would increase the relevance of the proposed studies. For example, in the opinion of some TC stakeholders, the analytical framework of the GRP could have been better fitted to the TC region if these stakeholders had been consulted in the identification stage.

Research partners seem to have a different appreciation of the effectiveness of complementary partnership activities, such as participation in workshops and external reviews of the research output. Regional and global workshops are more appreciated by DC/TC than by the IC partners, who found it highly useful that the research outcomes could be refereed by credible outside reviewers such as the IEA. This might indicate that IC and DC/TC researchers could be subject to different incentive systems. The latter may find sharing experiences with or being recognized by colleagues from within and outside a region more rewarding than traditional science's peer review system. .

Since IC partners, who acted as resource persons, participated in specific and focused activities, DC/TC partners had the control of the research project. Therefore, no threat to DC/TC project ownership from IC partners was perceived.

### 2.5.2 *Impact on the Second Phase of the GRP*

The design of the GRP, in which surveys of regional issues were followed by country studies, is a systematic approach to a comprehensive global study on growth. For this approach to fulfill its potential, the regional survey of issues must provide, on the one hand, a well-developed analytical framework that poses key questions to follow and identify gaps in knowledge or understanding. Most GRP stakeholders felt that the regional thematic reviews met this objective to a fair extent. On the other hand, the regional thematic reviews should have helped to draw up country cases because of their potential to contribute significantly to a systematic comparative analysis<sup>17</sup> within a

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<sup>17</sup> The criteria for selection would be because (i) the country is a unique case, such as Botswana, the only mineral economy which has had very high growth rates over a long period, like those of the Asian tigers; (ii) it has the potential to be a revelatory case study, such as Uruguay, which had a medium growth performance even though it presented features identified to be growth impending (McMahon, G. & L., Squire, editors 2003: Chapter 1); or (iii) it is a critical case in the sense that it could be used to test a well formulated growth-related theory; for example, a country that has

developed theoretical framework. However, this methodological objective may have been only partially achieved, since the GRP stakeholders view the reviews as quite limited in terms of identifying countries that diverged significantly from regional trends. This may have impaired a greater robustness and effectiveness of the GRP, as a better-selected sample of country studies would have resulted in a higher quality outcomes and greater cost-effectiveness in the country studies. Certainly, a sample of around seventy countries seems too large for applying case study methodology. A smaller sample would have afforded greater resources for a more in-depth analysis of the countries selected.

From an analytical perspective, GRP stakeholders agreed that the thematic areas of aggregate growth, markets and growth, microeconomics of growth and the political economy of growth for approaching the research's objective were appropriate. Overlap across areas existed, but was not an issue of concern. The review on microeconomics of growth was appreciated in both the transition and developing worlds. Authors of country studies from the developing world were keen on the area of aggregate growth and less appreciative of the issues raised by the regional analysis of markets and growth, while authors from transition countries found the issues raised by the review of markets and growth than the aggregate growth analysis more useful and relevant. In general, TC country authors reported greater impact on their regional thematic review work than DC country authors did.

### ***2.5.3 Impact on the Growth Literature***

The majority of suppliers and users of the regional thematic papers within the GRP felt that the first phase of the GRP contributed useful insights to the literature on growth. Additionally, there is a consistent minority view that, to some extent, the microeconomics analysis and market perspectives of the first phase of the GRP have explored new issues in growth literature, but not up to the point of breaking new ground. For a relevant minority of TC country authors, the markets and growth review has also contributed to growth literature by showing the use of new and innovative methodologies.

### ***2.5.4 Effects on Institutional and Individual Capacities***

Due to the fact that the first phase of GRP was short-lived and, more importantly, to the international stature of most DC/TC researchers, the effect of this GRP phase on strengthening analytical capabilities in the DC/TC worlds was, according to the GRP stakeholders themselves, modest. Conversely, some unintended institutional weakening effects occurred due to the lack of flexibility of the GDN grant for AERC, which was a distinctive regional case, as the GRP itself grew out of the AERC's Growth Project. In addition, AERC might have been affected because of GDN competition for GRP funds in the donor arena. This may have been aggravated by the GRP's lack of a formal global coordinating entity, which was later taken over by the GDN Secretariat. Therefore, flexibility provisions on GDN grants could be a remedial measure for some of these situations, as well as for reducing distortions across regions in terms of the competitiveness of honorariums paid to researchers and resource persons.

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devoted large amounts of resources to create human capital and that has reasonably well functioning labor markets but still has a poor growth performance. In addition, the reviews should have provided a rationale for choosing country studies that promised to render fruitful results because that country exhibits some relevant analytical aspect worthy of being replicated, as well as contrasted in several countries. For example, replicating low fertility and high levels of human capital in countries with rather homogeneous versus highly heterogeneous ethnic compositions.

Most of GRP first phase stakeholders, like the large majority of researchers, teach at colleges and universities. In their opinion, the project had a positive impact on the quality of their teaching, particularly for researchers and regional coordinators. As a result, the first phase of the GRP contributed to the enhancement of the teaching capabilities of the stakeholders located in DC/TCs.

### ***2.5.5 Dissemination and policy influence***

The primary target group for disseminating the output of the first phase of the GRP—regional thematic papers and overall thematic papers—was that of the authors of the country studies. Researchers and resource persons received or accesses the regional thematic papers along with the TORs for the country studies. Complementarily, dissemination of findings was also targeted to policy makers and the broader growth community.

The main findings of the first phase of the GRP, including the overall thematic papers, were published in 2003 by Palgrave Macmillan, in association with the International Economic Association (McMahon, G. & L. Squire editors, 2003.) The dissemination of the reviews to the broader growth and policy communities took place through workshops, conferences and by publishing the reports on the Web. AERC, SANEI, EERC & CERGE, and ERF have made arrangements for publishing their regional thematic papers. EADN will not publish its regional thematic papers because one of them was not completed and had to be aborted.

In the opinion of most stakeholders, the workshops and conferences had limited effectiveness in terms of disseminating research findings to policy makers. Neither were policy makers and the policy community involved in the design and implementation of the reviews, nor were memos and policy briefs produced for distribution to influence policy makers, development practitioners, think tanks and so on. In addition, the majority of researchers and resource persons are unaware of whether public actors such as heads or senior personnel of regional banks and ministries have been informed of the results of the regional thematic reviews. Thus, the dissemination of the regional thematic reviews has been a less than thorough and systematic effort for influencing policy.

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## 3. SECOND PHASE: COUNTRY STUDIES

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### 3.1 BACKGROUND

#### 3.1.1 Objectives and expected output

Building upon the results of the regional and thematic overview reviews, the ultimate objective of the second phase of the GRP is to come up with a new synthesis that revisits and deepens the comparative assessment of growth begun in the first phase of GRP. To achieve this objective, around 70 country studies were carried out by more than 120 DC/TC researchers. The studies were commissioned through competitive calls for proposals organized by the regional hubs in the developing and transition worlds. The country papers can be downloaded from the GDN website; ([http://www.gdnet.org/activities/global\\_research\\_projects/explaining\\_growth/country\\_studies/](http://www.gdnet.org/activities/global_research_projects/explaining_growth/country_studies/)).

In the country studies, the authors analyzed how the regional themes—aggregate growth, markets and economic growth, the microeconomics of growth and the political economy of growth — played out over each nation’s history. The approach was to “divide the years from approximately 1950-2000 into different periods, each of which is distinguished by an important turning point in the country’s growth history. For example, a major policy shift or large natural resource discovery may have set a country off onto a different growth pattern, both quantitatively and qualitatively. For each period, the authors [present] the initial conditions, including the institutional and policy heritage and political interest groups. Then they [undertake] an analysis of: the behavior of agents and their behavior with respect to any exogenous or endogenous shocks; the interaction between the behavior of agents and policy and institutional changes; the growth outcome of each period and any important changes in institutions, policies, and political interest groups; and any important changes in other indicators of development, such as poverty, income distribution, health, education, and the environment. Authors then [outline] the main conclusions of the results of the period analyzed, emphasizing the factors of production that were most important for explaining aggregate growth, and the policies and institutions that helped or hindered the accumulation or efficient use of these factors of production.” (McMahon & Squire, 2002, p: 3)

#### 3.1.2 Organizational Design and Milestones

The responsibility for the organization of the second phase of the GRP rested on the regional networks. They designed and carried out the research competitions for the country studies, held regional workshops for launching the country studies and were responsible for the final regional reviews, comprising a regional synthesis paper of the country studies. Regional coordinators, in addition, provided data<sup>18</sup>, established electronic help desks and assembled a team of advisors or resource persons for assisting country authors. For the most part, resource persons were highly regarded economists from the region who, in several cases, participated as authors in the first phase of the GRP. Resource person’s tasks were (i) attending the opening of regional workshops; (ii) attending the mid-term project workshop held in Rio de Janeiro in December 2001; (iii)

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<sup>18</sup> Annual and half decadal data from 1960 to 1998 was provided along with details of the regression results from the sources of growth review for their region.

commenting on the terms of reference and helping to draft country strategies to undertake the studies; (iv) commenting on the mid-term and final drafts; and (v) answering specific questions by electronic mail. In addition, country authors had access to the World Bank help-desk data service.

Following the AERC workshop held in December 1999 in Nairobi, where the outline of the African studies was defined, a common outline of the country studies for the second phase of the GRP was agreed upon by the different regional network heads in a workshop held in Prague on June 10-11, 2000. Between January and June 2001, opening regional workshops were held in the different regions. The mid-term review of the second phase of the GRP was global, this comprised all of the regions (see Annex 11), and took place in Rio de Janeiro on December 13-14, 2001, after the third GDN conference on “Blending Local and Global Knowledge.” Most final regional reviews took place during 2002. In a plenary session on the GRP at the fourth GDN conference on “Globalization & Equity” held in Cairo, January 20, 2003, , syntheses of the GRP’s first and second phases were presented. The presentation on the GRP’s country studies, however, drew more on the results of the GRP’s regional thematic reviews than on the country studies themselves. At least in part, this may have been due to the lack of the regional synthesis papers on the second phase of the GRP, which would be completed during 2003. By the end of 2003, the GDN Secretariat plans to have a final draft of a book summarizing the main results of the GRP, including the synthesis of the main findings of the country studies.

The cost of the second phase of the GRP was around US\$ 2.5 million, which breaks down as follows<sup>19</sup>:

Country studies	US\$ 1,200,000
Regional Workshops	US\$ 367,600
Mid-term review	US\$ 367,600
Resource persons	US\$ 50,000
Final review and others	US\$ 514,800

## **3.2 IMPACT ON KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES**

At the time the evaluation was carried out, it was only possible to generally assess the impact of the second phase of the GRP on our understanding of growth. In relation to seeking greater involvement from policy makers in the design and implementation of country studies, the traditional academic attitude of pursuing knowledge with a marginal contact with the policy-making community was found to exist. When contact between the researchers and policy makers took place, they often originated from existing relationships between research institutes and government agencies or, in rare cases, from the direct participation of policy makers in the research teams.

### **3.2.1 Quality of Research**

When the PIA was carried out, the second phase of the GRP had not yet been completed. Most country studies had been completed as final drafts. In particular, regional syntheses were not available, which made it unfeasible to assess the extent to which the objectives of the second phase of the GRP were achieved. Thus, it was not possible to ascertain the extent to which the country studies contributed to achieving a new synthesis that revisits and deepens the

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<sup>19</sup> See Annex 4 “Proposal for Funding. Global Research Project: Explaining Growth” of **Application to FY2001 Development Grant Facility**.

comparative assessment of growth begun by the regional thematic papers. Despite this limitation, an evaluation of the GRP stakeholders' general perception of the impact of the country studies on the development literature was attempted. The rationale was that by completing the final drafts of the country studies, the GRP stakeholders acquired a sense of whether the second phase of the GRP had a significant, moderate or marginal impact on our knowledge of growth. As discussed below, the quality of the outcome of the second phase of the GRP is at least reasonably appreciated by the GRP stakeholders.

**Table 10.- Country Studies: Potential Impact on the Growth Literature (by percentage)**

<b>DEVELOPING COUNTRIES</b>	<b>Significant</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Marginal</b>	<b>Don't know/ Not answered</b>
Country study authors	59	29	0	6
Resource persons	20	60	0	20
Regional Coordinators	75	0	0	25
<b>TRANSITION COUNTRIES</b>				
Country study authors	67	27	7	0
Resource persons	75	25	0	0
Regional Coordinators	50	50	0	0

**Source:** Derived from the E-survey database

As shown in Table 10, the majority of authors from both the developing and transition worlds believe that the country studies will have a significant impact on growth literature. As there is usually a favorable bias in judging one's own work, this result could also mean that country authors have learnt significantly about the subject by doing the country studies, which in itself would be a worthwhile result of the second phase of the GRP.

Most resource persons who worked with DC researchers feel that the impact of the country studies on development economics will be moderate, which contrasts to the opinion of the DC regional coordinators, who almost unanimously feel that this impact will be significant. The TC regional coordinators' opinion on the impact of the country studies on economics development literature is split into two camps: one that feels the impact will be significant and another that believes that the impact will be moderate. In contrast, the majority of TC resource persons had high regard for the potential impact of the country studies on the growth literature. Overall, in transition countries the second phase of the GRP is more expected than not to impact significantly on the growth literature, perhaps because growth in countries which are in transition to a market economy is a relatively recent phenomenon, which has been less studied than the growth problems of developing countries.

### **3.2.2 Seeking Policy Makers' Involvement**

In designing and carrying out the country studies, reaching policy makers was not an issue. Researchers understood that the project's ultimate goal was to improve our understanding of growth. Most TC stakeholders recognized, however, that policy makers became somewhat involved in the country studies by sharing their concerns with the researchers. In some cases, this happened because research institutes have close ties with government institutions, but also because some country researchers worked in the government.

In developing countries, policy makers were largely uninvolved in designing and carrying out the country studies. Only a small minority of DC stakeholders (23%) recognize that policy makers participated through attending workshops or sharing their concerns with researchers. For example, it is striking that regional coordinators in DCs were unaware of any participation from policy makers in the process. Unlike developing countries, in transition countries a majority of stakeholders (52%) agree that policy makers were involved in the country studies by sharing their concerns with the researchers. The testimonies that follow explain how this actually happened:

“Andrei Illarionov, the economic adviser to the president, was interested in the studies and had a discussion with the authors [of the Russian study] and some of their colleagues regarding policies aimed at economic growth in Russia.”

“Although only one official from the Ministry of Finance attended the Kiyiv Workshop<sup>20</sup>, one was in a demographic research institute and ten researchers were in economic research institutes with close relations with CIS governments.”

“Some of the team members actually work in government organizations, which facilitated cooperation between the country team and policy makers.”

“There was one exception in our region. A vice-governor of a national bank was the head of a country team... However, most of the country teams seemed to be quite far from policy-makers.”

### **3.3 STRENGTHENING OF INDIVIDUAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES**

The implementation of the second phase of the GRP consisted of three main components: (i) promoting research partnerships formed mainly by nationals who are knowledgeable about a country's institutions and development history, and recent graduates in industrialized countries who are proficient in modern economic analysis; (ii) assisting researchers with regional and thematic reviews, TORs for the studies, resource persons, electronic help desks and access to information support; and, (iii) discussing in regional and global workshops the research proposals and the mid-term and final reports. Most stakeholders coincide that this approach was effective in delivering country studies of good quality and in enhancing research capabilities in the developing and transition worlds.

By promoting research partnerships between national researchers backed by the strategic advice from regional or industrialized countries specialists, the second phase of the GRP maximized its potential for promoting research by in-country DC and TC researchers without compromising the quality of the country studies. Leakages in this process were found but they were not significant. Workshops provided a critical venue for discussing results and sharing ideas, significantly benefiting the quality of the studies. In one aspect, however, workshops could have been improved. The global mid-term review workshop was organized mainly as a conference for the presentation of results, and feedback to frame the country studies in the global context was limited.

Across the transition and developing worlds, the weakest area was the implementation and promotion of information technologies for development research, particularly the use of electronic help desks. Among other things, the main cause for this situation seems to have been the

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<sup>20</sup> The EERC's regional opening workshop.

stakeholders' lack of knowledge on how to use and fulfill the potential of these technologies. Another problem was the disparity in the competitiveness of honoraria between DC and TC country authors resulting from equalizing the cost of country studies across regions. This was a disincentive which affected the management efficiency of the DC regional network heads and may have affected the quality of the DC vis-à-vis the TC studies.

### 3.3.1 Appropriateness of TORs

The TORs for the country studies were fairly adequate for a global research project. On the one hand, they requested that common issues and key questions be addressed across regions, allowing for comparability of outcomes. On the other hand, they provided methodological flexibility across regions, recognizing the need to accommodate the methodology to the specificities of each country study. Yet, there was a large dispersion of DC stakeholders' perceptions regarding the relevance of the country studies' analytical priorities and expected output. Apparently, this was due to the fact that the terms of reference did not properly accommodate the distinct regional research priorities resulting from the significant differences in development levels existent in the developing world. This may have impaired the potential of country studies for breaking new ground on growth analysis.

Table 11 shows that TC stakeholders had, to a significant extent, a clear and consistent perception of the usefulness of the TORs for the country studies. They provided country authors with a useful outline to follow, along with the key questions to be addressed in the studies. Thus, the expected outcome and topics to be covered by the country studies were, for TC stakeholders, satisfactorily defined by the TORs. However, as shown in Table 11, the way to achieve the expected outcome and to research the topics was either less specifically defined, or country authors had much more freedom in choosing the methodological approach than in choosing the topics to be covered in their studies. The following statement of a TC researcher may summarize this perception well: "The progress of the project proved that the TORs were transparent and lucid, as well as covering the relevant key issues for the country."

**Table 11.- Country Studies: Usefulness of the Terms of Reference  
(by percentage)**

<b>DEVELOPING COUNTRIES</b>	<b>A great deal</b>	<b>A certain amount</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>Don't know/not answered</b>
<b>A useful outline</b>	50	42	0	8
<b>A well-defined methodology</b>	23	65	0	12
<b>Key questions to address</b>	42	50	0	8
<b>TRANSITION COUNTRIES</b>				
<b>A useful outline</b>	67	33	0	0
<b>A well-defined methodology</b>	14	67	19	0
<b>Key questions to address</b>	71	29	0	0

Source: Derived from the E-survey database

DC stakeholders agree with TC stakeholders that in carrying out the country studies they had freedom to choose the methodology which best suited each country study. However, the former were less satisfied than the latter in relation to the TORs' definition of the topics and key questions to be covered by the country studies (see Table 11). This is puzzling because DC/TC stakeholders had largely the same TORs. The lower degree of satisfaction with the TORs among



DC stakeholders apparently originates from differences between DC country authors on the research priorities and topics deserving attention in the country studies, probably reflecting differences in development levels between DC regions. For example, Table 12 shows the great dispersion of perceptions regarding the usefulness of the TORs across a sample of DC regions.

**Table 12.- Country Studies: Dispersion of Perceptions in DC Regions about the Usefulness of the Terms of Reference (by percentage)**

<b>A useful outline</b>	<b>A great deal</b>	<b>A certain amount</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>Don't know/not answered</b>
<b>LACEA</b>	80	20	0	0
<b>AERC</b>	50	50	0	0
<b>EADN</b>	29	43	0	29
<b>Key questions to address</b>				
<b>LACEA</b>	60	40	0	0
<b>AERC</b>	25	75	0	0
<b>EADN</b>	29	43	0	29

**Source:** Derived from the E-survey database

Such differences in development seem to have not been properly captured by the TORs, which were mostly based upon the Sub-Saharan experience. As described by an East Asian resource person: "I had the impression that too much stuff was mixed together, so that the researchers were confused, myself as well. Generally speaking, I did not think that the TORs were formulated for this research, with some hundred country papers to break new ground on economic growth analysis. In particular, technology was not deeply looked into beyond an estimation of TFP growth. Rather, the terms of reference are related to chronology, poverty alleviation, and inequality. It did not seem that growth strategy (or, should I say "pro-poor growth" strategy?) would be borne out of the terms of reference." The regional opening workshops held in DC regions, however, would have delivered adjustments to the research proposals to better accommodate the country studies to regional growth priorities (see [section 3.3.3](#))

### **3.3.2 Combining Research Partnerships with Technical Assistance**

For carrying out the country studies, research partnerships of different types were accepted. In both DC and TC, the dominant type of partnership was an in-country team formed by a senior country-based scholar knowledgeable in institutions, and a recent graduate proficient in modern economic analysis trained in an industrialized country<sup>21</sup>. The second preferred alternative in TCs, reaching around 30% of the country teams, was a team consisting of in-country researchers and researchers from industrialized countries. This type of partnership was only used in transition countries. Although only reaching approximately 15% of the country teams, for DCs the second preferred option was a team formed exclusively of researchers from their country who were residing in the industrialized world<sup>22</sup>. The problem with this type of partnership is that it represents a leakage in the GDN's main goal of strengthening research capabilities in developing countries. This type of partnership was not found in transition countries. Finally, in both TCs and DCs, partnerships between in-country researchers and nationals from the region residing in the

<sup>21</sup> 73% of DC and 53% of TC stakeholders identified this partnership as one that was encouraged in their region or one in which they participated.

<sup>22</sup> ERF and AERC accepted this kind of partnership.

industrialized world were also used, but to a very limited extent<sup>23</sup>. No more than 5% of the country teams in the GRP project were accepted without a partnership. Stakeholders, in general, and researchers, in particular, feel that the partnerships enhanced the quality of the country studies without compromising the full ownership of the study by TC/DC researchers.

Research partnerships were complemented by technical assistance provided by resource persons, who were also mostly TC/DC researchers that participated in the first phase of the GRP. The most significant contribution of resource persons to the country studies was acting as reviewers of mid-term or final draft reports. Researchers also acknowledged their contribution as advisors, although their impact on the country studies was less significant than what they had had as reviewers. This seemed to be due to the fact that the support of resource persons as advisors depended on the actual need for advice of research teams. When advice was sought, it had an impact. Otherwise, the impact of resource persons as advisors was, as could be expected, mainly negligible. Finally, in the AERC component, resource persons also supported country authors with training sessions on analytical areas where the latter had little experience.

**Table 13.- Country Studies: Impact of Partnerships (by percentage)**

	Enhanced research quality		Threat for full ownership of the project by the TC/DC partners	
	Researchers	All Stakeholders	Researchers	All Stakeholders
<b>Developing Countries</b>				
A great deal	41	38	0	0
A fair amount	35	38	6	4
A very limited extent	6	4	12	8
Not at all	0	0	24	17
Don't know	18	19	59	62
<b>Transition countries</b>				
A great deal	73	67	0	0
A fair amount	7	19	7	5
A very limited extent	7	5	7	14
Not at all	0	0	73	71
Don't know	13	10	13	10

**Source:** Derived from the E-survey database

Table 13 summarizes the impact of the partnerships on the country studies. It is first noted that the impact perceived by the researchers is very much the same as that perceived by all stakeholders (including resource persons and regional coordinators, in addition to researchers) in the developing and transition worlds. Second, DC and TC stakeholders consider that the partnerships enhanced the quality of the country studies. A much more significant impact, however, is expressed by TC than DC stakeholders. According to one TC researcher, for example, “the partnership was crucial for mixing up-to-date knowledge of theoretical economics with the empirical experience of the team members.” Third, largely because most of the partnerships entailed in-country researchers with different expertise, there was no threat to the full ownership of the country studies by DC and TC researchers. This threat would have only been present in TC studies where partnerships between in-country researchers and researchers from industrialized countries took place. However, as indicated in table 13, if there was any threat, it

<sup>23</sup> Approximately 14% and 8% of country teams were of this type in TCs and DCs, respectively.

would have been of very limited extent, without compromising the ownership of country studies by TC researchers.

As said before, in the second phase of the GRP resource persons provided technical assistance to complement research partnerships. Accordingly, in DC and TC, a two-thirds or greater majority of stakeholders acknowledged that resource persons assisted them by:

- participating in the regional opening workshops, guiding discussions of methodology and helping to draft country work plans
- reviewing drafts and providing comments, and
- participating in workshops where mid-term and final reports were presented by providing comments and input.

A less significant number, yet still a majority, of stakeholders acknowledged that resource persons offered ongoing technical and methodological support to country authors by E-mail. Only a minority of stakeholders, which is of little significance to transition countries (14%), acknowledged that resource persons participated in regional training sessions addressing the areas in which most of the authors had little experience. This was because only AERC had a systematic training program for country authors in Sub-Saharan Africa. In the other regions, the majority of stakeholders<sup>24</sup>, including the resource persons themselves, regarded as negligible the contribution of resource persons acting as trainers.

**Table 14.- Country Studies: Impact of Resource persons  
(by percentage)**

	Advisors		Reviewers	
	Researchers	Regional Coordinators	Researchers	Regional Coordinators
<b>Developing Countries</b>				
Significant	35	75	59	75
Moderate	35	0	29	25
Negligible	0	0	6	0
Don't know	29	25	6	0
<b>Transition countries</b>				
Significant	40	50	60	75
Moderate	13	0	40	0
Negligible	33	0	0	0
Don't know	13	50	0	25

**Source:** Derived from the E-survey database

As table 14 shows, a majority of researchers and regional coordinators coincided that the greatest impact on country studies from resource persons was acting as reviewers. Moreover, they agree that this impact was significant. As advisors, resource persons had a less clear effect on the country studies, perhaps because country teams were fairly well advised by their revised research proposals and the information received during the regional opening conferences. Afterwards, country authors may have mostly needed feedback from resource persons on their preliminary and final reports. Furthermore, even in this situation some resource persons assessed their impact on the country studies as moderate, because the studies were already of good quality.

<sup>24</sup> This results when the blank or 'don't know' answers to the question on resource persons acting as trainers are left out of the analysis.

Country authors' ability or desire to take advantage of the advice provided by resource persons was high in transition countries, as reported by resource persons (75%) and all TC stakeholders (62%). It is therefore striking to see the polarization of TC researchers' perceptions between significant and negligible in relation to the impact of resource persons as advisors on the country studies (see table 14). This may indicate that advisory support was highly effective when it was required. Otherwise, this service was largely redundant for country teams. In contrast the majority of resource persons, in developing countries felt that country authors only took moderate advantage of their advice<sup>25</sup>. Researchers' opinions are divided between a significant or moderate effect of this advice on the quality of the country studies.

### 3.3.3 Workshops

In the second phase of the GRP, workshops were very helpful and highly appreciated by stakeholders, especially researchers. The regional opening and regional final workshops mainly provided country authors with the expected feedback, discussion and exchange of ideas. Thus, workshops were well organized by the regional hubs. The global review workshop was also useful, but it does not appear to have fulfilled its potential in relation to providing the adequate feedback to country authors. This area requires more attention from GDN in future global research projects.

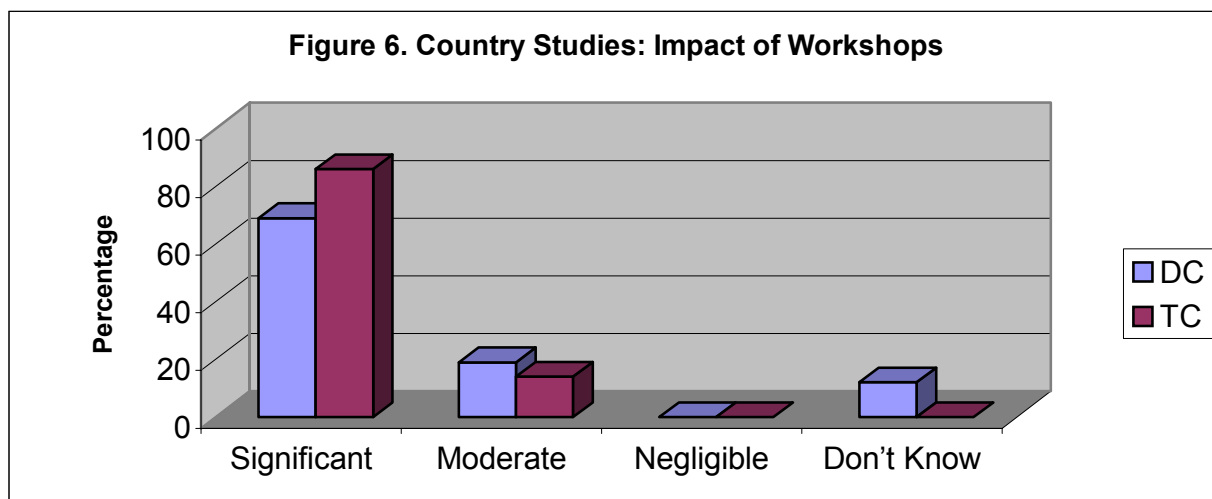
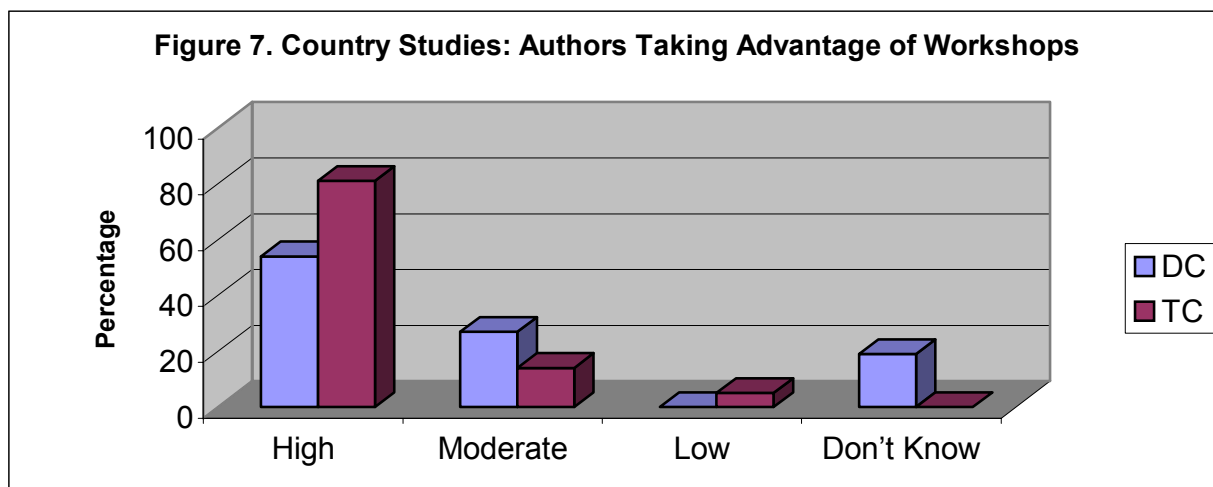


Figure 6 shows that a large majority of DC and TC stakeholders significantly appreciated the impact of workshops on the country studies. This overall perception of the workshops is consistent with a detailed analysis of the regional opening, global review and regional final workshops presented in Annex 12. Among the positive effects of these workshops, researchers highlighted that they had received “showers” of criticism, which were quite useful. The sequencing of regional and global reviews was also stressed by some TC researchers as crucial to achieving the project’s envisaged results.

<sup>25</sup> 33% and 42% of resource persons and all DC stakeholders, respectively, thought that DC researchers were eager to seek the advice of resource persons.



The majority of GRP stakeholders also agree that country study authors were willing to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the workshops. As can be seen in figure 7, this favorable attitude towards benefiting from the workshops is clearer in TC than in DC researchers. A conclusion regarding this matter, however, should be approached with great caution, as almost 20% of DC stakeholders answered 'don't know' or did not answer the related question<sup>26</sup>. This may have been due to several DC researchers and resource persons not attending the global workshop held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (see also Annex 12.)

**Table 15 - Usefulness Ranking of Workshop Activities**

	Regional Opening		Global Review		Regional Final	
	DC	TC	DC	TC	DC	TC
<b>Discussion of proposals or draft studies</b>	1°	1°	1°	1°	2°	2°
<b>Exchanging of lessons learned between researchers</b>	2°	2°	2°	3°	3°	3°
<b>Provision of feedback from reviewers to authors</b>	3°	3°	3°	2°	1°	1°

**Source:** Derived from Annex 12

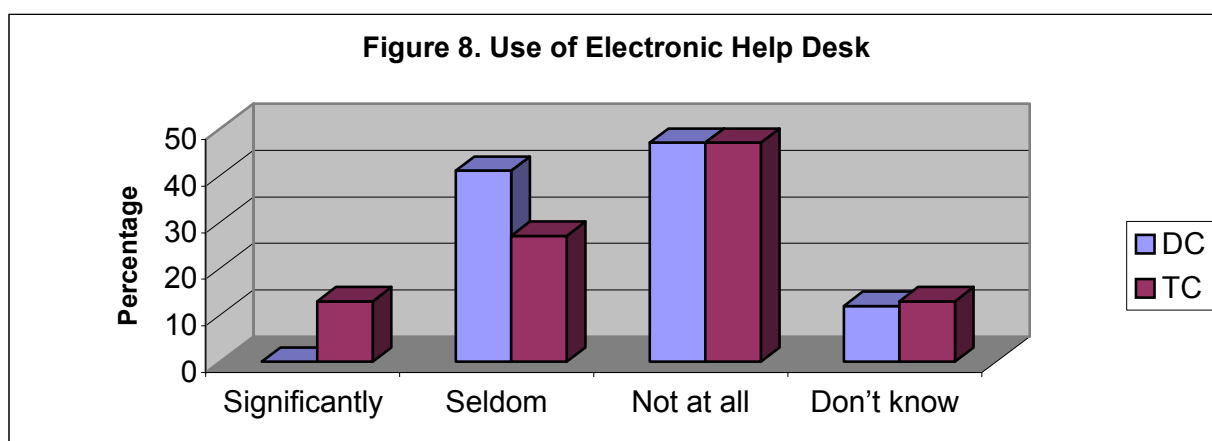
Table 15 ranks the workshop activities most valued by the GRP stakeholders. In the regional workshops, the majority of both DC and TC stakeholders expressed their preferences in a logical and consistent way. In the regional opening workshop, the most useful activity was the discussion of proposals, with the least useful being the provision of feedback to country authors, while in the regional final workshop, where final drafts were discussed, the most useful activity was getting feedback from reviewers, immediately followed by the discussion of the draft papers. Since both rankings are consistent with the outcome expected from “kick off” and review meetings, the conclusion seems to be that the coordinating institutions organized the regional workshops appropriately, delivering the right feedback to the country authors.

<sup>26</sup> See question 17 on “workshops” Annex 4.

This may have not been the case of the global review workshop where, rather than feedback from reviewers, the most useful activity was the discussion of studies as though it were a 'presentation of results' conference. In addition, a significant portion of DC resource persons and researchers do not recall having attended the meeting. This raises the question of how to get the most out of a global review workshop. While the importance of sharing mid-term results between regions cannot be denied, it is also critical that the feedback provided to country authors help them to frame their studies within a global perspective. The latter could be the key input for raising country authors' awareness of whether their studies have the potential to break new ground and, if such a potential exists, what else needs to be done to fulfill this potential. GDN may consider providing this service to other global research projects by hiring reviewers with this specific aim, which was not the case of the global review for the second phase of the GRP.

### 3.3.4 Use of Electronic Help Desks

Country research teams did not use or seldom used electronic help desks, which were set up by the regional coordinating institutions (see figure 8.) When researchers used electronic help desks, they mainly requested specific analytical or methodological assistance from resource persons. However, for the majority of DC and TC researchers, the impact of electronic help desks on the quality of country studies was negligible, mainly due to the fact that very few of them accessed this facility.



Apparently, the negligible use of electronic help desks resulted from five factors. Firstly, electronic help desks were not made available by the regional partners in some regions such as in South Asia. Second was the ineffectiveness of the service. For example, data help was unavailable through electronic help desks according to one TC researcher. Thirdly, regional coordinators do not seem convinced that electronic help desks could provide a readily available service to researchers. Consequently and fourth, it comes as no surprise that several researchers and resource persons were unaware of this support service. Finally, some researchers lack the ability or desire to use electronic help desks. Clearly, for future GDN global research projects there needs to be a major capacity building effort at all levels of stakeholders across the regions if the electronic possibilities opened by the information technology revolution are to be optimized in benefit of development research.

### **3.3.5 Organizational and Funding Issues**

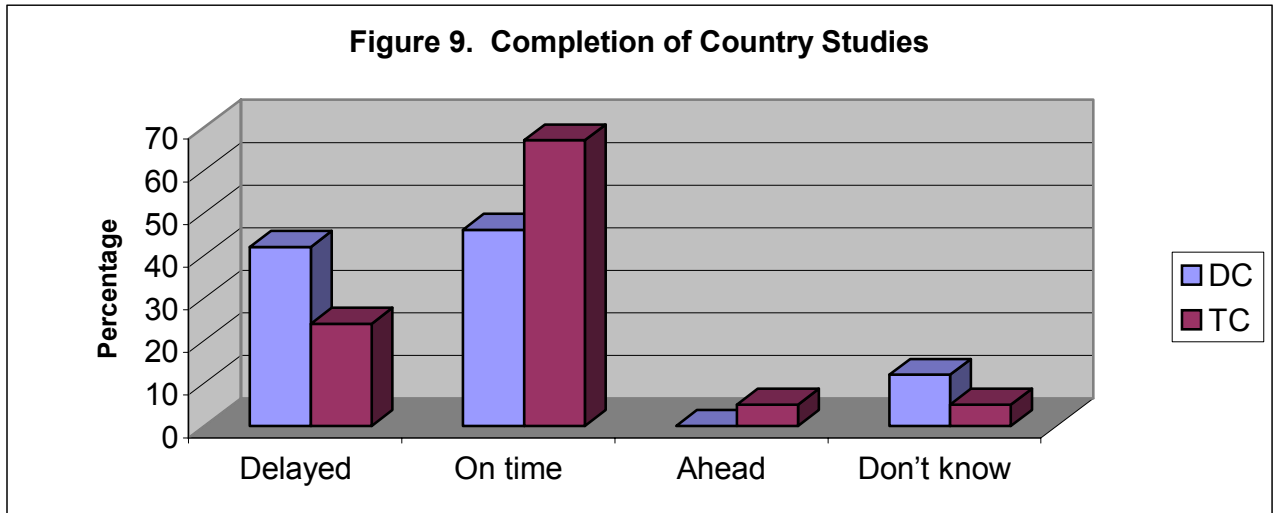
In organizing the second phase of the GRP, the regional network heads were effective in managing the core activities of (i) allocating grants to country authors through a competitive process, (ii) organizing regional workshops, and (iii) providing country authors with the framework and regional thematic papers. In delivering complementary assistance, such as the provision of country data used in the regional regressions, the establishment of electronic help desks or facilitating access to information or publications not available to country authors, the effectiveness of the regional network heads could have been significantly improved. Using the timely completion of activities as an indicator of management efficiency, TC regional networks were more efficient on average than their fellow institutions in DC. In part, this may have been induced by the disparity in the competitiveness of honoraria between both regions, because for TC researchers the honoraria received were competitive but for DC researchers the honoraria were below competitive levels. Another part of the difference in efficiency relates to management weaknesses in regional network heads that need to be addressed to enhance the impact of future GDN global research projects.

Implementing the second phase of the GRP was the responsibility of the regional network heads. This process started with the organization of regional research competitions for allocating the country study grants and followed with delivering support activities, such as the provision of specialized data or the organization of regional workshops.

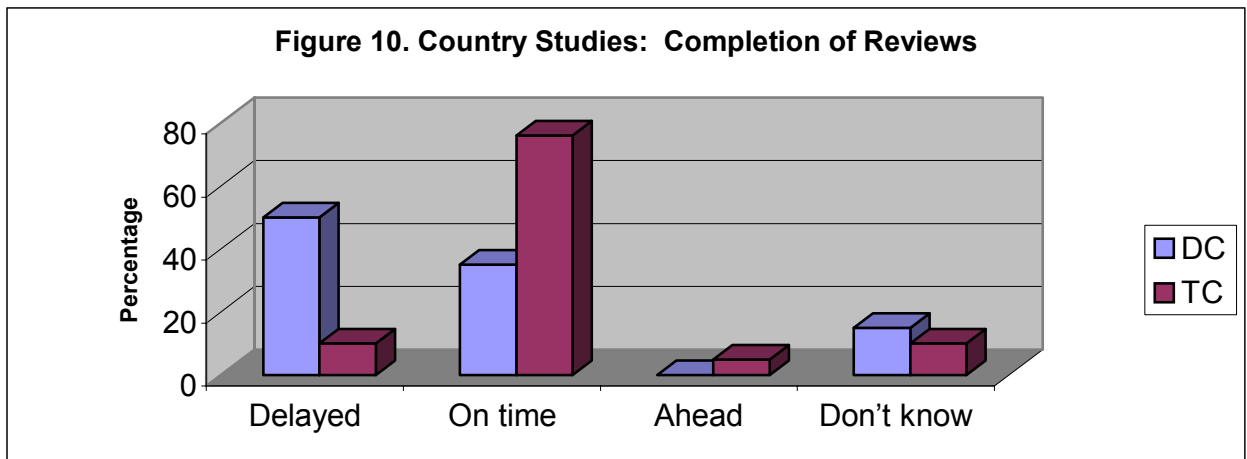
Regional network heads organized the GRP research competition based on their vast experience acquired in organizing competitions. The competitions' calls for proposals were very informative and provided country authors with a clear idea of what was expected from the country studies, as analyzed in detail in [section 3.3.1](#). In addition, the calls for proposals were comprehensive regarding the information they provided about the GRP process, the support that country authors should receive from the regional network heads, and, implicitly and in some cases explicitly, the criteria for assessing the research proposals. Annex 13 presents the call for proposals issued by EERC and LACEA as examples of the competition and transparency promoted by the regional network heads in carrying out phase II of the GRP.

Among the support activities provided by the regional network heads to country authors, the majority of both DC/TC researchers feel that the most important were (i) the provision of thematic framework and regional papers, and (ii) the organization of workshops. The largest minority of DC researchers also considered relevant the provision of sets of annual and five-year data series and details of main regional regression results, while an overwhelming majority of TC researchers does not acknowledge having received this assistance from the regional coordinating institutions. According to one TC regional coordinator, this was because "most country authors had excellent access to their country's data and needed little assistance." The supporting activities of assisting country authors in obtaining publications that were not accessible to country research teams and establishing electronic help desks were largely ineffective in the developing and transition worlds.

Some country authors praised the work of and support received from the AERC and the EERC. For example, one DC researcher mentioned that AERC was "very efficient in providing publications whenever asked, and the training sessions and workshop were well organized." Another TC researcher said, "EERC did a good job both in providing technical, methodological and electronic support and in creating momentum for the project."



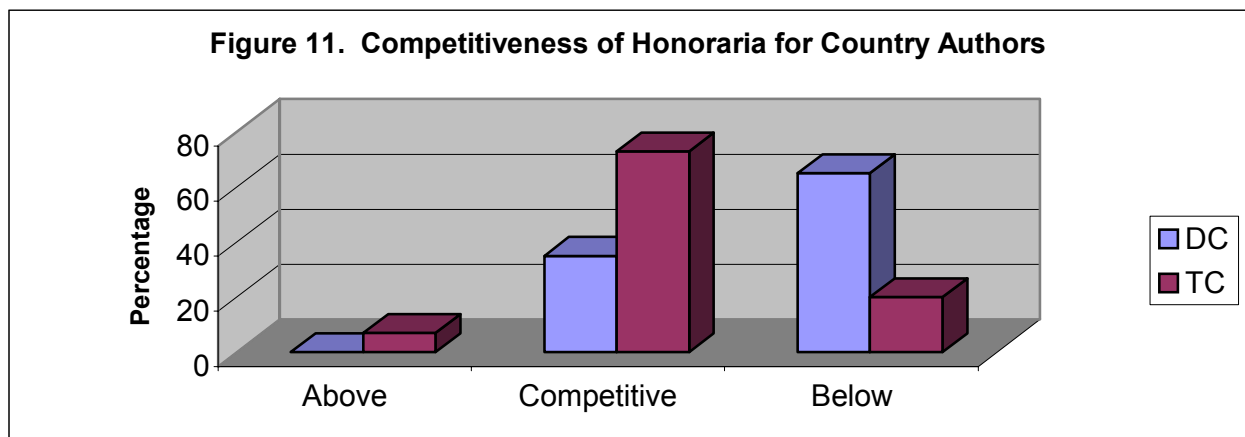
Country studies in TCs were mostly completed on time, while delays affected the completion of DC country studies to a certain extent (see figure 9.) Moreover, in TCs the main reason for delays were unexpected events beyond the control of researchers and the regional network heads. On the contrary, there were two main reasons for delay in DCs. Firstly, there were problems in the research teams themselves. For example, “a country paper was submitted [to EADN] a few months after the regional final meeting was over. The research team did not show up for the global review in Rio. Therefore, in the regional final meeting it was agreed that the country should be dropped from the GRP book for East Asia.”<sup>27</sup> Second were administrative procedures or coordination shortcomings at the regional network level. There were cases when contracts for the country studies would have taken too much time to be prepared and approved by the regional coordinating institutions.



As figure 10 shows, in completing the review of drafts, GRP stakeholders felt that the DC situation worsened with respect to adhering to timetables, while it improved in TCs compared to what happened with the completion of the country studies.

<sup>27</sup> Comment made by a resource person.





The disparity in the competitiveness of the honoraria paid to GRP researchers resulting from the policy of allocating similar research grants across regions (disregarding acute differences in living costs) was highlighted in the assessment of the first phase of the GRP (see [Section 2.2.4](#)). This problem also affected phase II. Figure 11 shows, for example, that for a large majority of TC country authors, the honoraria received were competitive. On the contrary, most DC country authors perceived their honoraria as below competitive levels. In contrast, another DC researcher explained that, “if considered as a pure research activity, the honorarium was competitive. If it is a sort of consultancy, the honorarium was not competitive.” At any rate, the greater enthusiasm for and commitment to the second phase of the GRP by TC as compared to DC country authors that was discovered in this assessment and discussed in this chapter is at least partially rooted in the disparate competitiveness of honoraria between the transition and developing worlds.

### 3.4 BENEFITS TO END-USERS

In this section we assess the impact of the second phase of the GRP on country authors’ quality of teaching and the potential of this study to influence policy and development. It shows that, for researchers and regional coordinators, one clear impact of the project was enhancing the quality of their teaching. A majority of stakeholders also perceives that the country studies have a significant potential for influencing policy makers, development agencies and development NGOs. Unfortunately, this is not associated with a well-defined strategy for reaching the policy development community, particularly at the national level. Most of the dissemination effort seems to be focused on the intermediary community between academics and policy makers and development practitioners. An excessive reliance on influencing this intermediary community and confining the dissemination plan to the project’s last stage may jeopardize the fulfillment of the policy- and development-influencing potential of the GRP. At very least, the organized and systematic contribution of country authors to this end would be largely lost.

#### 3.4.1 *Potential for Influencing Policy and Development*

Most GRP stakeholders feel that the potential for influencing policy and development of the second phase of the GRP is significant. However, a relevant number of resource persons and regional coordinators consider this potential to be moderate or marginal, mainly because the country studies are too general in nature to be useful to policy makers.

To fulfill the potential of country studies for influencing policy and development, the main shortcoming found is the lack of a strategy for disseminating the results at the regional and national levels. This affected the proper coordination of dissemination activities between regional network heads and country teams, creating responsibility voids in the dissemination of the studies' findings at the national level. Thus far, the dissemination of the GRP's results at the national level has depended on the goodwill and initiative of country authors and has been impaired by the lack of funds for translating the reports to the authors' mother tongue and for financing ancillary activities. Notwithstanding, an implicit or default dissemination strategy was also found. In this strategy, it is argued that policy-making and development institutions could be reached indirectly by influencing intermediary constituencies such as academics, consultants, advisors and think tanks. Publication and convocation activities have been prioritized to reach these intermediary constituencies accordingly.

As table 16 shows, most DC and TC stakeholders consider that the country studies would significantly impact on policy makers, development agencies and NGOs. For example, according to one DC country author "the study has been highly appreciated by development economists and development agencies." While DC stakeholders perceive the potential impact on policy makers similar to that on development agencies and NGOs, TC researchers are less optimistic regarding the potential impact of country studies on development agencies and NGOs than on policy makers. According to one TC researcher, that would be due to "NGOs not having sufficient capacity to make use of the recommendations."

The perceptions of resource persons and regional coordinators diverge within and between DCs and TCs. Resource persons in DCs and regional coordinators in TCs are much less optimistic about the potential impact of the second phase of the GRP than regional coordinators in DCs and resource persons in TCs. Apparently, this is because two somewhat opposing views can be found among resource persons and regional coordinators. On the one hand, there are people who believe that the country studies are very relevant to policymaking, development institutions and NGOs. On the other hand, there are others that consider that the country studies are too general in nature and of little use to policy-makers or development agencies.

Beyond regional final and global workshops and publishing the final reports in regional volumes, GRP stakeholders, especially country authors and resource persons, were unaware of the dissemination strategy adopted or proposed for phase II of the GRP. Across stakeholders in DCs and TCs there was nevertheless a shared understanding that the regional network heads were responsible for designing and carrying out dissemination activities. For instance, since the inception of the project, AERC had a contract with Cambridge University Press to publish the results as the Cambridge Economic Surveys of Africa, likely to be a 4-volume set with a synthesis volume and three regional volumes. EERC will publish a more than 500-page-long book with Edward Elgar. SANEI will publish two volumes on the GRP's output with Oxford University Press, each one corresponding to the GRP's first and second phases. EADN is currently making arrangements to publish the GRP's country studies with the Institute of South Asian Studies' publications unit, one of the largest English-language publishers in East Asia. CERGE is still in negotiations for publishing the output of the second phase of the GRP. ERF is also in negotiations with Cambridge University Press/Anthem Press to publish a GRP book that will comprise the theoretical papers (phase I) enriched by the evidence gathered by the country studies (the applied papers.)

**Table 16 - Potential Impact of Country Studies  
(by percentage)**

<b>ON POLICY MAKERS</b>				
<b>DEVELOPING COUNTRIES</b>	<b>Significant</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Marginal</b>	<b>Don't know/ Not answered</b>
Country study authors	41	35	12	12
Resource persons	40	20	20	20
Regional Coordinators	75	0	0	25
<b>All Stakeholders</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>TRANSITION COUNTRIES</b>				
Country study authors	60	33	7	0
Resource persons	100	0	0	0
Regional Coordinators	50	0	50	0
<b>All Stakeholders</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>ON DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES AND NGOs</b>				
<b>DEVELOPING COUNTRIES</b>	<b>Significant</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Marginal</b>	<b>Don't know/ Not answered</b>
Country study authors	41	35	6	18
Resource persons	40	0	40	20
Regional Coordinators	75	0	0	25
<b>All Stakeholders</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>TRANSITION COUNTRIES</b>				
Country study authors	47	47	7	0
Resource persons	100	0	0	0
Regional Coordinators	50	50	0	0
<b>All Stakeholders</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>

**Source:** Derived from the E-survey database

In TCs, around two thirds of stakeholders understood that dissemination of the country studies at the national level is the responsibility of the country teams. Yet only a third of TC stakeholders entertained expectations that the country studies would be available in their national language, and most of them would require additional funding for completing this task, were it eventually requested. As stated by one country author when asked about the translation of his country study: "It makes sense to translate it, but the topic has never been discussed." In conclusion, TC country authors might consider their responsibility disseminating of distributing the studies in their own countries but, with few exceptions<sup>28</sup>, they have no plan or funds to do so.

In DCs, more than 40% of stakeholders did not know who was responsible for disseminating the country studies at the national level, and between 20% and 35% regarded this as the responsibility of the country teams. However, similarly to TC authors, they have no plan for disseminating the results locally and will need additional funding to have the country studies translated into their mother tongue. When this assessment was carried out, one researcher and one resource person from different developing regions coincided that the national dissemination of results had not yet been formally discussed between the regional coordinators and the country authors.

<sup>28</sup> For example, part of the fellowship funds won by a country author helped to publish the Ukraine study in book form.

Although there was no region which formulated a comprehensive strategy for disseminating the country studies' results, the audiences to be targeted for dissemination are likely to be three. In DCs and TCs, the priority would be the actors involved in informing policy debates and policymaking, such as academics, think tanks, policy units, the media, journalists, and so on. The second audiences for prioritization are the multilateral international institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations, as well as national governments through relevant ministries and bureaus. However, when the electronic survey for this assessment was completed, in the best of cases, GRP stakeholders have partially informed senior officers of regional banks, ministers and senior public servants regarding the GRP and its initial results.

**Table 17 - Stakeholders' Expectations on the Incidence of Media for Disseminating the Country Studies (by percentage)**

<b>PUBLICATION</b>				
	<b>Developing Countries</b>		<b>Transition countries</b>	
	<b>Researcher</b>	<b>Coordinator</b>	<b>Researcher</b>	<b>Coordinator</b>
<b>Books</b>	41	75	60	100
<b>Web sites</b>	29	75	60	100
<b>Articles</b>	53	0	73	100
<b>Reports</b>	24	50	33	0
<b>Briefs</b>	6	0	0	0
<b>Memos</b>	0	0	7	0
<b>CONVOCATION</b>				
	<b>Developing Countries</b>		<b>Transition countries</b>	
	<b>Researcher</b>	<b>Coordinator</b>	<b>Researcher</b>	<b>Coordinator</b>
<b>Workshops</b>	35	50	67	100
<b>Conferences</b>	35	50	53	100
<b>Seminars</b>	47	25	53	50
<b>Briefings</b>	0	50	0	0
<b>Speeches</b>	6	0	27	50
<b>E-connections</b>	6	25	27	50

**Source:** Derived from the E-survey database

Table 17 shows the extent to which the stakeholders expect that different publication or convocation media will be used to disseminate the results of the second phase of the GRP. The analysis focuses exclusively on the expectations of researchers and regional coordinators, because the latter are responsible for disseminating the GRP's results at the regional level and, as discussed above and largely by default, the former would be in charge of disseminating the results at the national level. For analysis, these expectations can be divided into two groups. The cells shaded in yellow represent the expectations which are shared by 50% or more of a group of stakeholders. Conversely, if less than 50% of a group of stakeholders share the same expectation, the cells are not shaded.

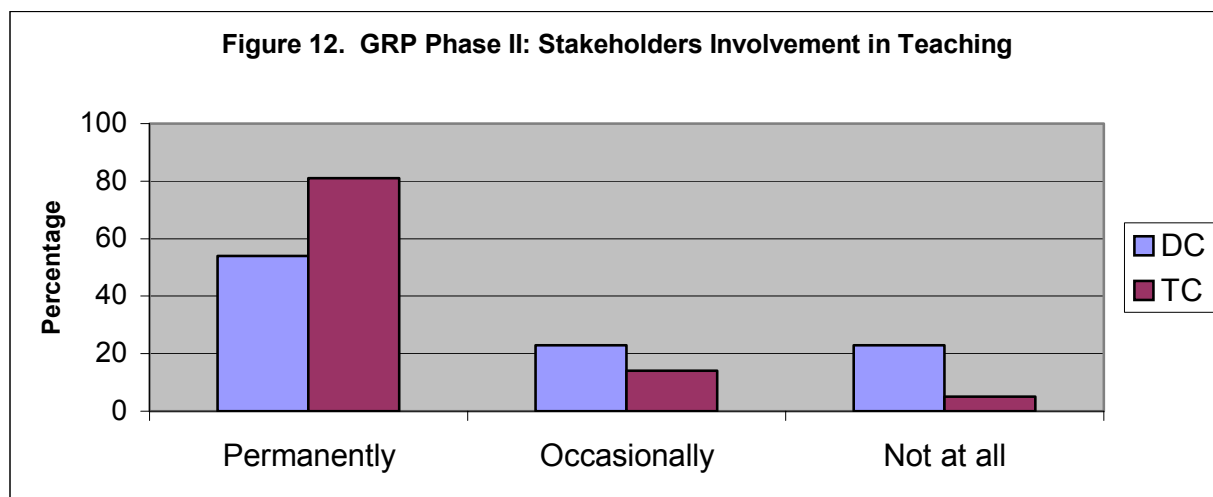
For three out of four groups of stakeholders, 50% or more of their members prioritized the following publication media: (i) books, (ii) web sites, and (iii) articles. Similarly, the following convocation media were prioritized: (i) workshops and (ii) conferences. It is striking that from both types of dissemination activities the media typically aimed at directly informing or influencing policy makers, namely, (i) briefs, (ii) memos and (iii) briefings are excluded. It seems as though a

concerted decision had been made to indirectly influence policy makers mainly through reaching other constituencies such as consultants, advisers or governments' think tanks, which are more likely to be reached by the prioritized dissemination media.

Another feature of Table 17 that calls one's attention is that only the publication of articles is an expectation shared by the majority of DC country authors. Moreover, there is an asymmetry of expectations between researchers and regional coordinators. This may indicate that DC country authors have a vague idea or insufficient information about the plans of regional hubs or GDN to disseminate the country studies. It may also confirm that dissemination at the national level has been thus far left to the initiative or interest of country authors. For example, in Sub-Saharan Africa, country authors mentioned that they have "the intention of presenting the research results for additional comments in a seminar at the university before publishing them in an article" or "the results of the research [were presented] to a number of institutions and to a university audience by personal initiative." Lack of communication or coordination between researchers and regional coordinators in relation to dissemination activities seems to have been less significant in TCs, as the expectations of the majority of regional coordinators and researchers are largely coincident<sup>29</sup> (see Table 17.)

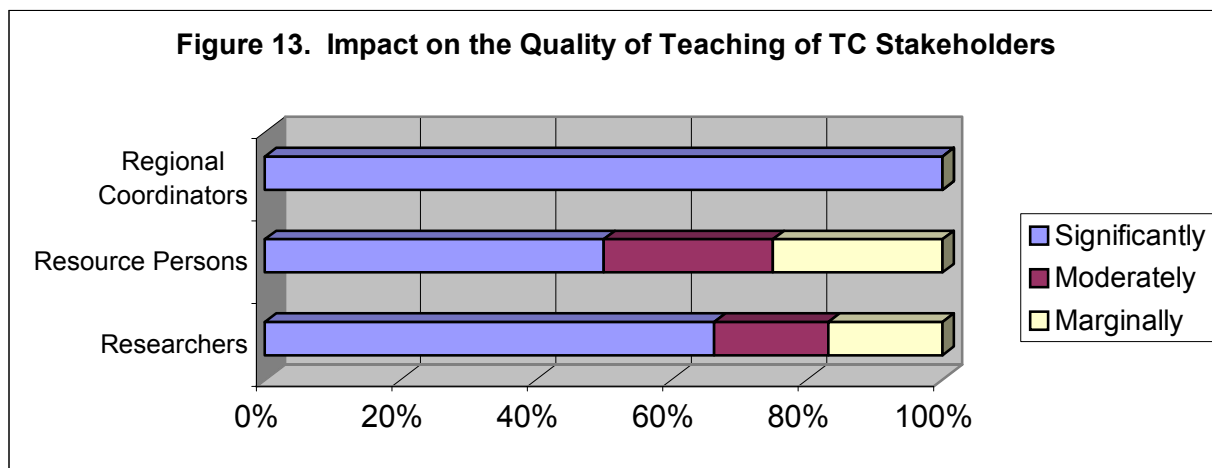
### 3.4.2 Additional End-users' Benefits

As in the first phase of the GRP, an additional benefit of phase II was the significant enhancement of the teaching quality of TC and DC researchers and regional coordinators, who teach in a permanent basis. Since most stakeholders in the second phase of the GRP fit this description, this has been an important by-product or benefit of implementing the country studies.

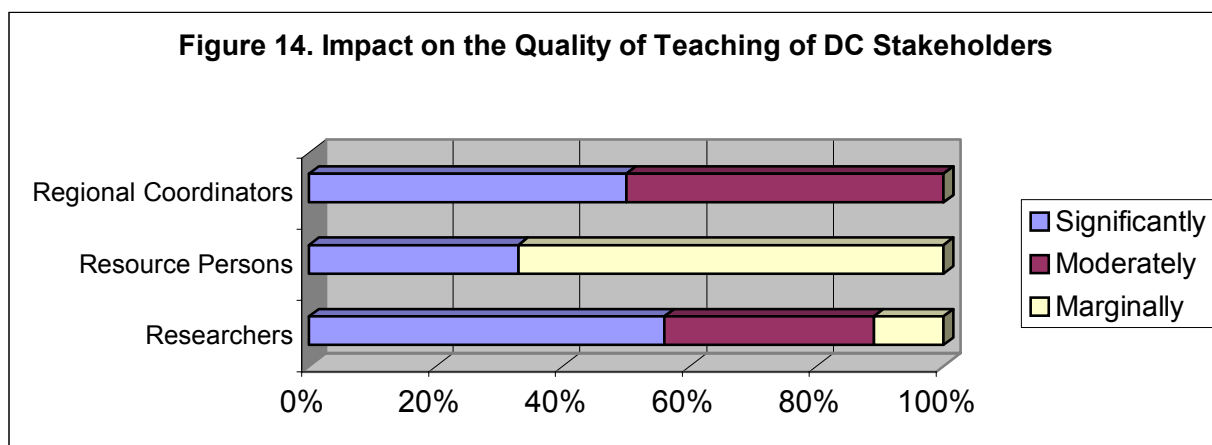


<sup>29</sup> The lack of a dissemination strategy from the very beginning of the GRP's second phase created anxieties in some researchers, as attested by the following comment: "The EERC is still hoping to produce an editorial book as an outcome of the project. From my point of view, this is a complete waste of time and resources. The quality of the reports [varies significantly.] There is no strong editorial board [with] a desire to invest a significant amount of time into the editorial process. Being an editor of books, I know that this process will require a significant amount of time and dedication, and that a western publisher would expect certain quality from a manuscript. My recommendation would be to put more emphasis in future [global research projects] on the dissemination phase from the very beginning, not at the last moment."

Figure 12 shows that between 55% and 80% of DC and TC stakeholders in the second phase of the GRP teach on a permanent basis. For this group of stakeholders, Figures 13 and 14 show the impact of GRP phase II on the quality of their teaching.



TC stakeholders (Figure 13) highly regarded the impact on the quality of their teaching resulting from their participation in the country studies. All regional coordinators, two thirds of researchers and half of the resource persons felt that this impact was significant. For DC stakeholders this effect was less relevant (see Figure 14). Although 56% and 50% of researchers and regional coordinators, respectively, regarded the enhancement of their teaching quality due to their participation in the second phase of the GRP as significant, two thirds of resource persons and half of regional coordinators appraised this effect as moderate or negligible. Nevertheless, the fact remains that, according to most DC/TC researchers, who are also the main beneficiaries of the capacity strengthening effort built into the GRP, the implementation of the country studies significantly enhanced the quality of their teaching.



## 3.5 CONCLUSION

### 3.5.1 *Effectiveness of the Research Partnerships*

The effectiveness of the research partnerships applied in the implementation of the second phase of the GRP cannot be analyzed in isolation. The partnerships were instrumental to a broader approach for accumulating research capabilities and attempting the most comprehensive analysis on growth to date in the developing and transition worlds. According to the GRP stakeholders, this approach — which centered on the production of approximately 70 country studies by mainly national research teams who partnered expertise on national institutions and history with proficiency in modern economic analysis — was effective. This result, however, cannot be evaluated independently from the critical contribution to the country teams from (i) the regional and overview thematic papers, (ii) the common TORs, (iii) the assistance of resource persons, and (iv) the participation of researchers in regional and global workshops and conferences.

The assessment shows that this approach, which included the support of IC researchers in key moments during the research cycle, was cost-effective compared to the alternative of promoting intensive partnerships between IC and DC/TC researchers throughout the research process. Strategic doses of technical assistance or advice from resource persons (IC researchers) are significantly cheaper than funding regional or IC specialists as permanent researchers in country teams<sup>30</sup>. Moreover, this approach avoids threats to DC/TC project ownership.

The analysis also shows that although the approach used for the country studies was effective, this effectiveness would have been enhanced in three ways. Firstly, leakages in the system would have been prevented by not allowing the formation of country teams made up exclusively by nationals living and residing in ICs. Second would have been the optimizing of potential benefits derived from workshops and conferences, which were very highly valued by TC and DC researchers. For example, the mid-term global workshop would have been more useful if external resource persons, different from the regional reviewers, had also provided a critical review of the country studies from a global standpoint. Third would have been a fuller use of the opportunities opened by new information technologies and the Web, such as electronic help desks or E-forums. Apparently, the marginal use of electronic help desks was due to the lack of proper integration of this system this into the second phase of the GRP. This would have required training and technical assistance to both regional network heads and country authors.

### 3.5.2 *Impact on Institutional and Individual Capacities*

Arguably, the greatest impact of the second phase of the GRP was the strengthening of institutional and individual capacities, especially in TCs. Regional research capabilities were enhanced because the second phase of the GRP rested mainly on national economists and regional coordinating institutions efficiently organizing and transparently researching competitions to commission the country studies. In addition, researchers acquired international experience through their participation in regional workshops and international conferences, and by being part of a global research project. Furthermore, a majority of researchers and regional coordinators feel that participating in the GRP significantly enhanced the quality of their teaching. In some cases, the regional network heads played a very proactive and encouraging role. Several stakeholders praised the support and help received from AERC and EERC. The downside was the uniform

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<sup>30</sup> The cost of hiring resource persons was around 2% of the total budget of the second phase of GRP's.

amount of grants for the country studies that created disparities in the competitiveness of country authors' honoraria. At very least, this affected the management efficiency of the second phase of the GRP in DCs and the commitment of DC researchers to the project.

### ***3.5.3 Dissemination and Policy and Development Influence***

The major weakness of the second phase of the GRP was the lack of a dissemination strategy to fulfill the potential of the country studies to influence policy and development. On the one hand, the involvement of policy makers and senior officials of development institutions was not sought during the design and implementation of the country studies. These stakeholders, however, occasionally shared their concerns with the researchers due to the relationship between research institutes and government agencies or because some researchers worked for the government. On the other hand, the regional networks had no policy for involving country authors in the dissemination stage of the project. As a result, the dissemination of research findings at the country level is in jeopardy. A provision for translating the country reports to the mother tongue of researchers was not found. Largely, the dissemination of the country studies at the national level hinges on the good will of the country authors. At the regional level, there was no plan beyond the publication of country studies in books and on the Web. However, it should be noted that several regional coordinators expect to define their respective regional dissemination strategy during 2003.

The assessment showed that GRP phase II implicit approach to influencing policy and development is quite traditional: policy influence is mainly a byproduct of high quality research. There is a dearth of memos, briefs and briefings for policy makers coming out of the GRP. It is apparent that the targeted audience of the GRP would be the intermediary community between policy makers and academics: think tanks, consultants, policy advisors and so on. While there is nothing inherently wrong in this approach, it calls one's attention to the fact that such an ambitious and pioneering global research project like the GRP chose this traditional option without an explicit rationale for its adoption.



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## 4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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In this chapter, the main findings of the PIA are summarized. It presents an overall evaluation of the GRP in relation to (i) quality of research, (ii) capacity building and (iii) policy and development influence. Attention was devoted to offering methodological, organizational and strategic suggestions for future GDN global research projects based upon the pioneer experience of the GRP. The chapter concludes with a brief analysis and suggestions on how to enhance the PIA of future GDN global research projects.

### 4.1 MAIN FINDINGS ON THE GRP

#### 4.1.1 *Quality of Research*

Most stakeholders consider that the GRP's overall objective was met. Generally, there is a more favorable perception of its achievements from TC, rather than DC, stakeholders. This would be because growth has been less researched in transition countries than in developing countries. Neither the GDN nor the regional network heads have yet commissioned an independent evaluation of the contribution of the second phase of the GRP to the literature on growth, probably because the GRP had not yet been completed when this evaluation was carried out. However, the contribution of the first phase of the GRP to growth literature was favorably evaluated by the International Economics Association. In addition, GRP stakeholders feel that, overall, the project's first phase contributed with useful insights. The largest minority of stakeholders also feel that "the microeconomics of growth" and "the markets and economic growth" reviews have to some extent explored new issues in the growth literature but have not broken new ground.

The impact of the research partnerships on the quality of research depended on the qualifications and expertise of the DC/TC researchers. If DC/TC researchers are highly qualified economists of international stature as happened in the first phase of the GRP, IC resource persons do not contribute significantly to enhancing research quality. Otherwise, the strategic doses of technical assistance and training provided by IC or regional economists could have a larger influence on the research quality, as was the case in the second phase of the GRP.

#### 4.1.2 *Capacity Building*

The GRP's impact on capacity building across DC/TCs was very significant. Particularly, in the second phase of the GRP, DC/TC researchers had international exposure at the regional and global levels. They highly valued this experience because of the exchange of experiences and the constructive but wide criticism received in the workshops and conferences. This should be because, unlike IC researchers, DC/TC researchers have few, if any, opportunities to be part of international projects and benefit from international exposure. This would also explain why DC/TC researchers have a much higher appreciation of participating in workshops and conferences than in benefiting from peer reviews. In addition, most DC/TC researchers acknowledge that participating in the project has significantly enhanced the quality of their teaching.

Research partnerships were also very instrumental in enhancing the capacity building component of the GRP. On the one hand, in DC/TCs the most frequently used partnership model was that of linking a national senior researcher experienced in historical and institutional issues with a national

junior researcher highly competent in modern economic analysis. The evaluation shows important levels of joint learning arising from this type of partnership. On the other hand, this partnership was enhanced or complemented by the support received from resource persons — IC and regional researchers — acting as reviewers. The assessment has shown that benefits from resource persons would be optimized if they could act more as advisors and trainees. This would be accessible and possible, at low cost, by fully using the opportunities opened by the Web and setting up effective electronic help desks, which were among the main weaknesses of the GRP. In future global research projects, greater care must be taken to prevent leakages in this capacity building model by not using GDN money to fund country teams formed exclusively by national researchers residing permanently in industrialized countries.

Projects like the GRP could also contribute to the capacity building of the regional network heads. Three areas were highlighted by this assessment. First is an increase in the management capabilities of regional network heads. Second is improving the methodological benefits of combining surveys with case studies in complex development projects. This issue is discussed in detail in [section 4.2.1](#) below. Third is the inclusion of a dissemination strategy in the regional components of a global research project right from the outset. The lack of this strategy has posed a risk to the GRP by significantly limiting the diffusion of its results at the national level, with the corresponding absence of the researchers' role to disseminate their research findings nationally.

#### **4.1.3 Policy and Development Influence**

When this PIA was carried out, it was too early to assess the impact of the GRP on public policies and development. However, it was possible to assess the extent to which the regional network heads had developed a strategy for influencing policy and development, and the activities implemented accordingly. The result is that the regional network heads followed the traditional dissemination approach in which the research findings are disseminated through academic publications and in workshops and conferences. Moreover, regional network heads expect to define their dissemination strategies once the country studies are completed.

One way of understanding these facts is by assuming that the regional coordinating institutions concentrated exclusively on delivering high quality research, because policy and development impact are considered to be a by-product of high quality research. Thus, it is not surprising that the media for disseminating the research results to the academic and broader development community were the traditional workshops, conferences and, printed and electronic publications. Publication and convocation activities targeted to policy makers and development practitioners, such as the preparation of memos and policy briefs were, therefore, very limited. This is quite striking because, during the assessment, a majority of GRP stakeholders expressed doubts or were skeptical about the effectiveness of the aforementioned traditional dissemination activities for influencing specialized policy making and development institutions. This may be an indicator of the low priority given to deliberately seeking to influence policy during the design and implementation of the GRP.

The formulation of a strategy to disseminate the research findings to the broader policy and development community and fulfill their potential for influencing policy must have greater consideration from the outset in future global research projects supported by the GDN. Increasing evidence shows that good research does not spontaneously translate into policy; therefore,

exerting influence over policy requires proper planning and commitment of resources<sup>31</sup>. It must be noted that during the assessment several GRP researchers expressed interest in and good will towards being involved in dissemination activities and more actively influencing policy and development.

## **4.2 LESSONS LEARNED FOR FUTURE GLOBAL RESEARCH PROJECTS**

### **4.2.1 Combining Surveys and Case Studies**

For achieving the GRP's objectives, case study methodology ( phase two of the GRP) was applied and surveys (phase one of the GRP) were instrumental for disciplining the case study work. The methodological strategy in which regional surveys on key topics inform and shape the selection and design of country studies is likely to become a common approach for designing and implementing global research projects under the umbrella of GDN. It is therefore important to examine the GRP's critical methodological stages in detail, in order to draw some lessons for enhancing the effectiveness of combining surveys and case studies in GDN global research projects.

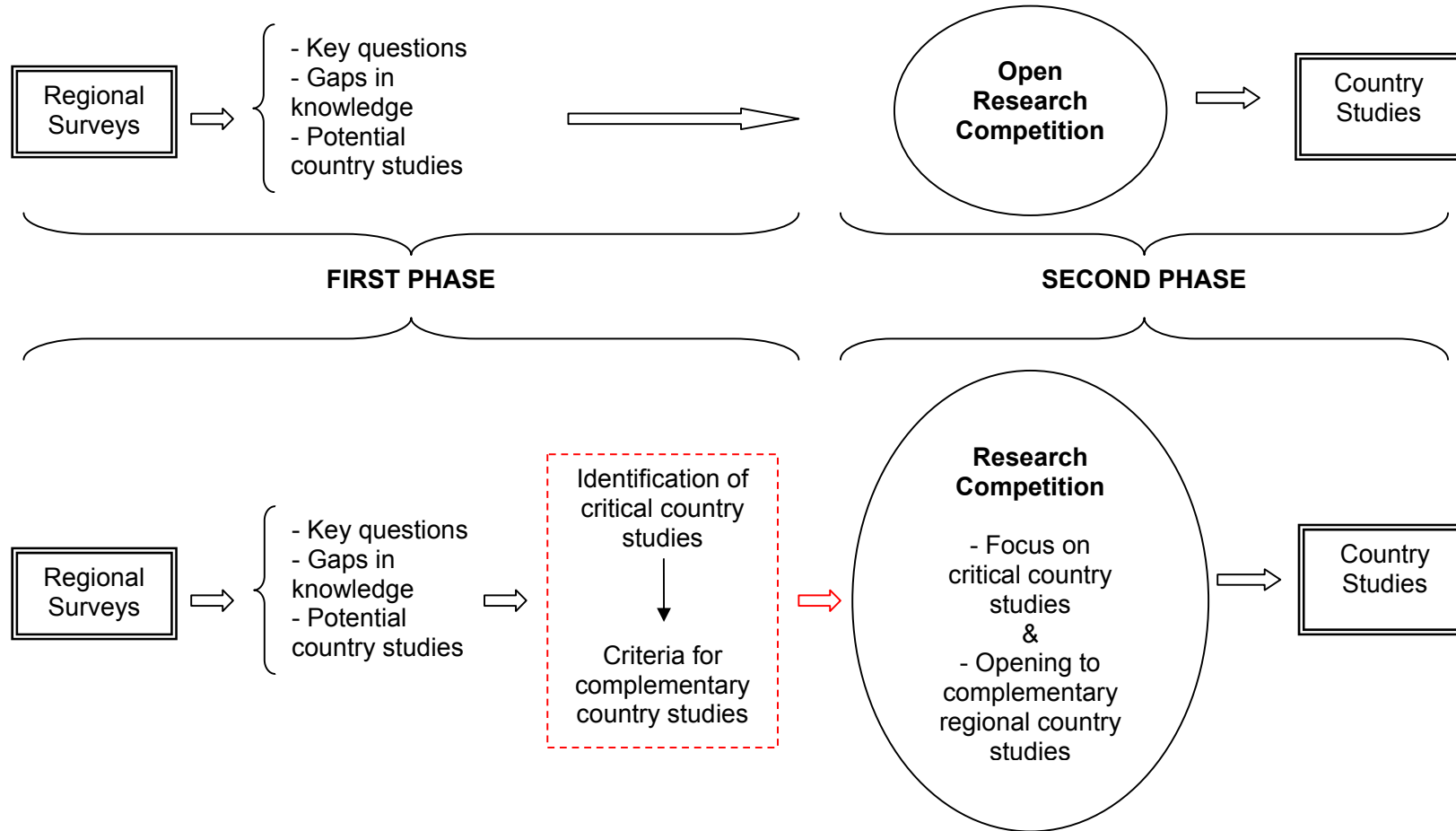
The upper portion of Figure 6 schematically shows the key methodological stages in the implementation of the GRP. Regional surveys on four topics<sup>32</sup> were commissioned by the regional network heads. From these surveys the main outcomes were (i) the key research questions to be pursued in the country studies and (ii) identifying, by topic, the gaps in knowledge to be filled by the country research. Although expected as an important outcome in the design of the GRP's regional thematic surveys, the identification of potential country cases that could demonstrate or challenge the operation of a relevant analytical or theoretical growth principle was only partially achieved. These results informed the formulation of the TORs for the country studies which were selected through regionally organized competitions . The regional competitions were open to every country in the region and proposals were largely called for under common global terms of references.

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<sup>31</sup> See for example "*Cases, Concepts and Connections: The Influence of Research on Public Policy*" proceedings of a conference held in Ottawa, March 24-25, 2003, Evaluation Unit, International Development Research Centre.

<sup>32</sup> The topics were aggregate growth, markets and economic growth, microeconomics of growth and the political economy of growth.

Figure 6. Case Study Methodology in GDN Global Research Projects



Country authors considered the main benefits of the regional thematic surveys to be that they provided a useful guide into the topic analyzed and key questions to follow up in the country studies. Accordingly, the TORs provided researchers with a useful outline and key questions to address in the country studies. Country authors were much less satisfied with the regional thematic reviews in relation to the identification of areas warranting additional work and countries which diverged significantly from regional trends. Some country authors felt that the TORs, rather than seeking to break ground on economic growth analysis, were much too focused on chronology and pro-poor growth strategies. One can argue that these shortcomings originated in the weak assembly of the regional surveys and country studies. This weakness could have been averted by clarifying the main methodological outcome to be derived from the regional surveys, and making the according adjustments to the regional research competitions for the country studies.

In the lower part of Figure 6, the suggested adjustments for combining surveys and country studies in GDN global research projects are depicted. During the analysis of surveys, a main outcome would be **a regional issues paper**. This paper should provide an explanatory framework, which would identify (i) a short list of critical country studies which have the potential to shed light on key topics because of their uniqueness within the explanatory framework developed<sup>33</sup>; and (ii) the criteria for choosing complementary or additional country studies that are not included in the list mentioned above. Complementary country studies are needed to optimize the comparability or ability to replicate the country studies on key topics across the regional sample<sup>34</sup>.

Accordingly, the research competitions organized by the network heads would not be called as an open competition where every country is on a similar footing for selection. Instead, a two-pronged research competition is suggested where all countries should be able to make their case. On the one hand, proposals for the short list of critical country cases, which were identified in the regional issues paper, would be called for. On the other hand, an open research competition would request proposals for selecting the complementary country studies. Each proposal for a complementary country study must state why their country should be included in the project through explaining their potential to contribute to or challenge the explanatory framework developed in the survey studies. Note that these suggested adjustments would provide regional coordinating institutions with greater flexibility to better fit the country studies to the regional development priorities. Moreover, this would not reduce the global consistency of the regional results, as comparability across regions would result from highlighting a country's particular position against the analytical framework developed by the regional surveys, which should be analytically or theoretically consistent with each other. It is precisely the accommodating of extreme or disparate cases into a consistent theoretical framework which is a major strength of the case study methodology.

Because of the country-oriented capacity building and analytical objectives of the GDN-supported research, case study methodology is likely to be in high demand for global projects and research competitions. The PIA of the GRP and the evaluation of the GDN regional research competitions<sup>35</sup> have shown the need for strengthening capabilities of using case study

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<sup>33</sup> See footnote 18 for an example related to the GRP .

<sup>34</sup> An attempt in this direction is the “discriminant analysis” presented by McMahon & Squire, editors, 2002, (Chapter 1.) The problem with this analysis was, however, that it was not available for the Prague workshop and, therefore, not used in the TORs for the country studies. It was produced as a way of synthesizing the regional thematic studies, but not as a methodological device for informing the selection of the country studies.

<sup>35</sup> See, “An Evaluation of GDN Supported Regional Research Competitions. Executive Summary” by Gary McMahon, 2002, GDN internal unpublished report. Washington D.C.

methodology in development research at the regional and country levels. Therefore, it is suggested that GDN should consider the setting up of a technical assistance project addressed to their regional partners to encourage a more efficient use of case study research strategies on development research. In a second stage, the regional network heads could establish similar projects for their country-based research partners. Such a project may establish a temporary small team of case study experts to (i) recommend ways for optimizing the application of case study methodology in GDN projects and programmes, (ii) design a case study training program for the regional partners of GDN, and (iii) advise GDN and regional partners on using case study methodology in specific projects and programs, including the use of case studies for influencing policy and development.

#### **4.2.2 Cost-effectiveness of Research Partnerships**

The implementation strategy of the GRP was effective in meeting its objectives, which demonstrates its appropriateness for future GDN global projects. The implementation strategy had three main components. First was the use of “**combined**” research partnerships, where teams of DC or TC researchers with different capabilities or expertise were assisted at strategic moments i.e. during the refining of the country plan or the mid-term review by highly qualified IC or regional scholars (resource persons.) Second was exposing DC/TC researchers to a regional and global exchange of ideas on the same subject through workshops and conferences. Third was providing researchers with assistance for obtaining data, access to specialized information and technical assistance on line.

The **combined** research partnership is cost-effective compared to more intensive and broader partnerships where IC and DC or TC researchers work together throughout a research project. First, a combined research partnership maximizes the resources allocated for supporting DC and TC researchers. Second, it brings different knowledge, expertise and abilities from the DC or TC principal researchers, which, according to the stakeholders in the second phase of the GRP, was very effective for joint learning and improving research standards. Third, resource persons only provide input at critical moments, preventing, in practice, threats to project ownership by DC/TC partners. Moreover, the cost of resource persons was below 5% of the total cost of the project. Even if the item for resource persons honoraria were increased two or three times, these expenses would represent a tiny fraction of a project’s total budget.

Not only are regional and global workshops and conferences a very effective capacity building mechanism, by giving DC/TC researchers international exposure, but they are also highly valued by DC/TC researchers. Apparently, participating in a GDN global research project provides researchers with the strong incentives of traveling abroad and exchanging experiences with foreign colleagues, which strengthens their commitment to the country studies and the overall research project.

In the GRP, the weakest component of the implementation strategy was the complementary support activities provided by the regional network heads in terms of electronic help desks. Although the stakeholders did not find this component at all critical to achieving the GRP’s objectives, it could be argued that this is not inherent in the component itself but in its poor implementation. Were this situation changed, the impact of using electronic help desks would be quite significant for the success of a global research project. This would at least require (i) electronic help desks to be available in all regions; (ii) the persuading of regional coordinators of

the potential advantages of a properly functioning electronic help desk; and (iii) the training of stakeholders on how to fully exploit electronic help desks and other E- or web-related technologies for facilitating development research.

### **4.2.3 Funding Globally but Managing Regionally**

Organizationally, the GRP could be summarized as a project that was funded globally but managed regionally. On the one hand, the global network, which was a World Bank project at the beginning and later on passed to the GDN, were responsible for raising the funds for the GRP and coordinating the formulation of the TORs for the GRP's first and second phases. On the other hand, the regional networks were responsible for commissioning the regional thematic and country studies and managing the implementation of the GRP, including the holding of workshops and conferences.

Although this organizational approach has been largely effective, in practice some lessons were learned that would be useful for future GDN global research projects. There is a need for some coordination across regional network activities, such as mid-term global reviews, general overseeing of regional components of global projects to assure that they adhere to the same timetables, and global dissemination of the project's output. This function can only be properly performed by the GDN. In fact, the GDN secretariat became the de facto GRP coordinator during the mid-term global review in Rio de Janeiro. Greater participation from the regional networks in the formulation of global projects' TORs could have an important pay-off in terms of the regional relevance of the research output. Several GRP stakeholders complained that the limited regional input in the formulation of the TORs for both phases of the GRP affected the quality of the research output.

To balance the subsidiary relationship between the GDN and the regional networks, an agreement which regulated the grants provided by GDN was used. This apparently produced inflexibilities, particularly in the management of funds by the regional networks which, in cases such as the AERC Growth Project and the honoraria for DC researchers, affected the most efficient allocation of the resources available, with the resulting negative impact on outcome quality. The suggestion is that the GDN should have greater coordinating power over the regional networks for future global research projects, which should be compensated by granting the regional networks more flexibility in the management of their funds under parameters and procedures agreed upon with the GDN.

## **4.3 ENHANCING PARTICIPATION IN PIA OF GLOBAL PROJECTS**

Finally, it is worth highlighting one lesson learned in carrying out the participatory impact assessment of the GRP. The use of an electronic survey is a cost-effective alternative for undertaking the PIA of a global project such as the GRP, which reached seven regions and around 70 countries. However, it is also a time-consuming activity for the survey participants, as they have to review and propose impact indicators in the first round of consultation, check that their suggestions have been adequately incorporated in the revised questionnaires, and fill in the questionnaires in the second round of consultation. Clearly, it would be reasonable to compensate them for their participation in the surveys, since the respondents have to invest such a significant amount of work and time in them.

Payment for fully participating in the electronic survey would likely have not only increased the rate of responses in the two consultation rounds, but would also have encouraged participants to pay

due attention to the definition of indicators in the first round of consultation, where their participation was very limited. However, the effect of such a provision on the evaluation budget must not be underestimated. Should US\$ 100 per respondent have been paid to compensate his/her participation in the GRP assessment survey, more than US\$ 15,000 would have been needed to cover this item alone. In contrast, an amount of money at least fifteen times greater than that suggested for compensating GRP stakeholders participation in the electronic assessment survey would have been needed to hold the regional PIA workshops.



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