



Overseas Development
Institute

Capacity Development for Evidence-based Development Policy and Practice

John Young: ODI, London

j.young@odi.org.uk

Outline

- ODI & RAPID
- Influencing policy processes
- Capacity needs for policy research
- Capacity development in Africa
- RAPID's approach & products
- Impact
- CD in ODI
- Conclusions
- Further information

Overseas Development Institute

- Development Think Tank
- 100 researchers
- Research / Advice / Public Debate
- Rural / Humanitarian / Poverty & Aid / Economics / Policy Processes
- DFID, Parliament, WB, EC
- RIs, TTs, PRIs, NGOs



RAPID Programme

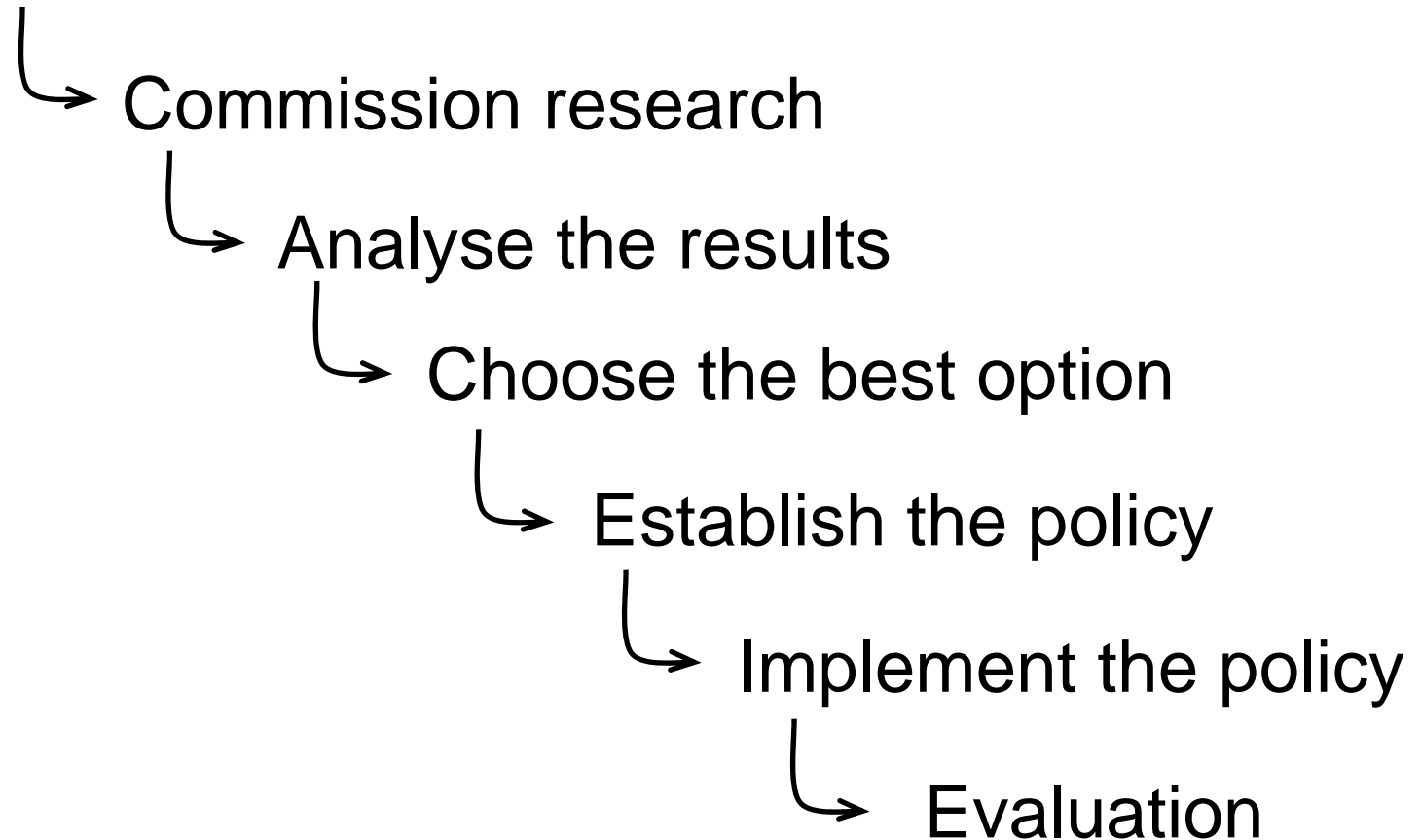
- Promoting evidence-based development policy & practice
- Through
 - Research
 - Advice
 - Public Affairs
 - Partnerships, networks and capacity-building
- Working with:
 - researchers
 - policymakers
 - parliamentarians
 - southern think tanks



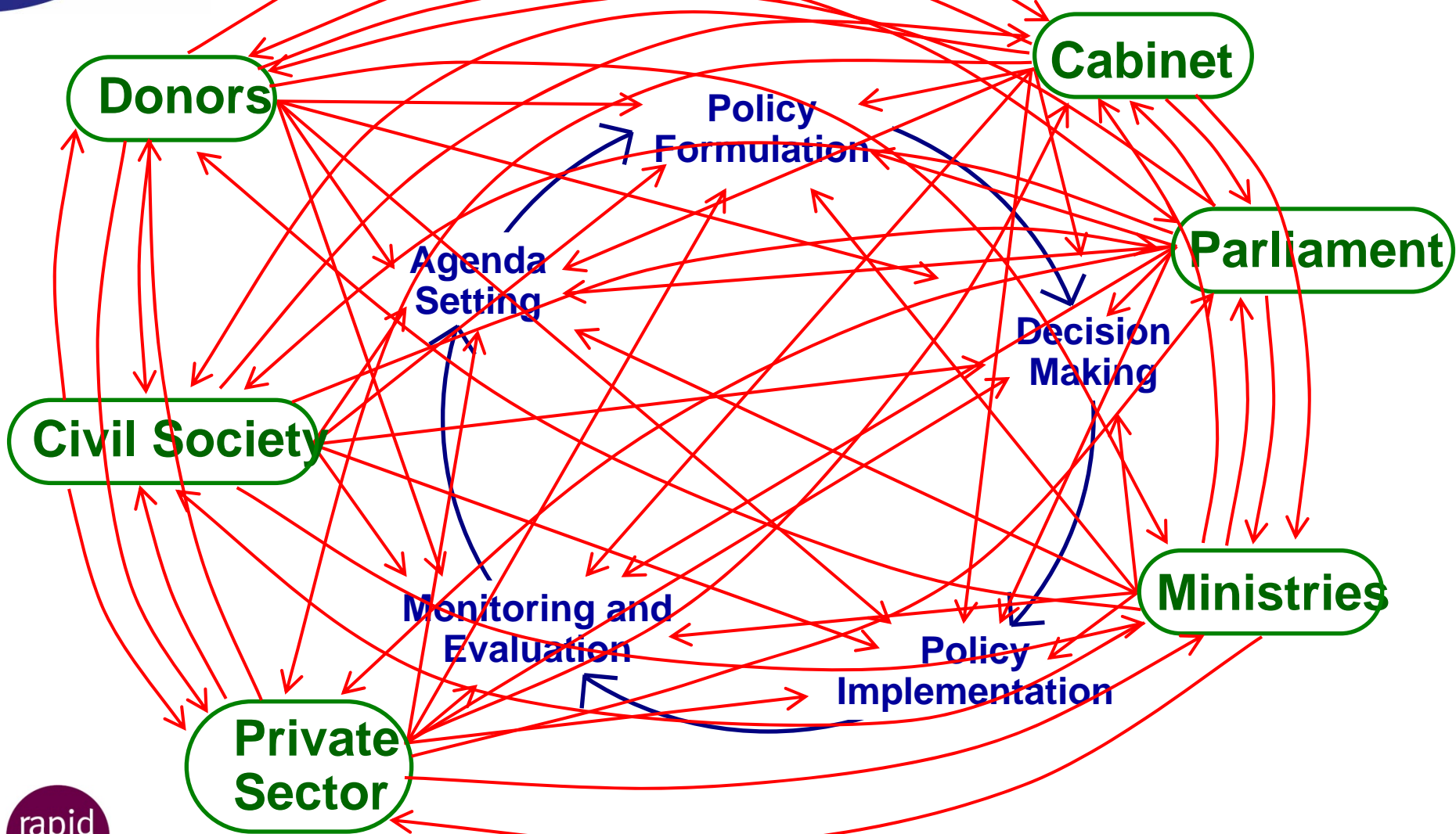
for further information see:
www.odi.org.uk/rapid/
www.ebpdn.org

The linear model

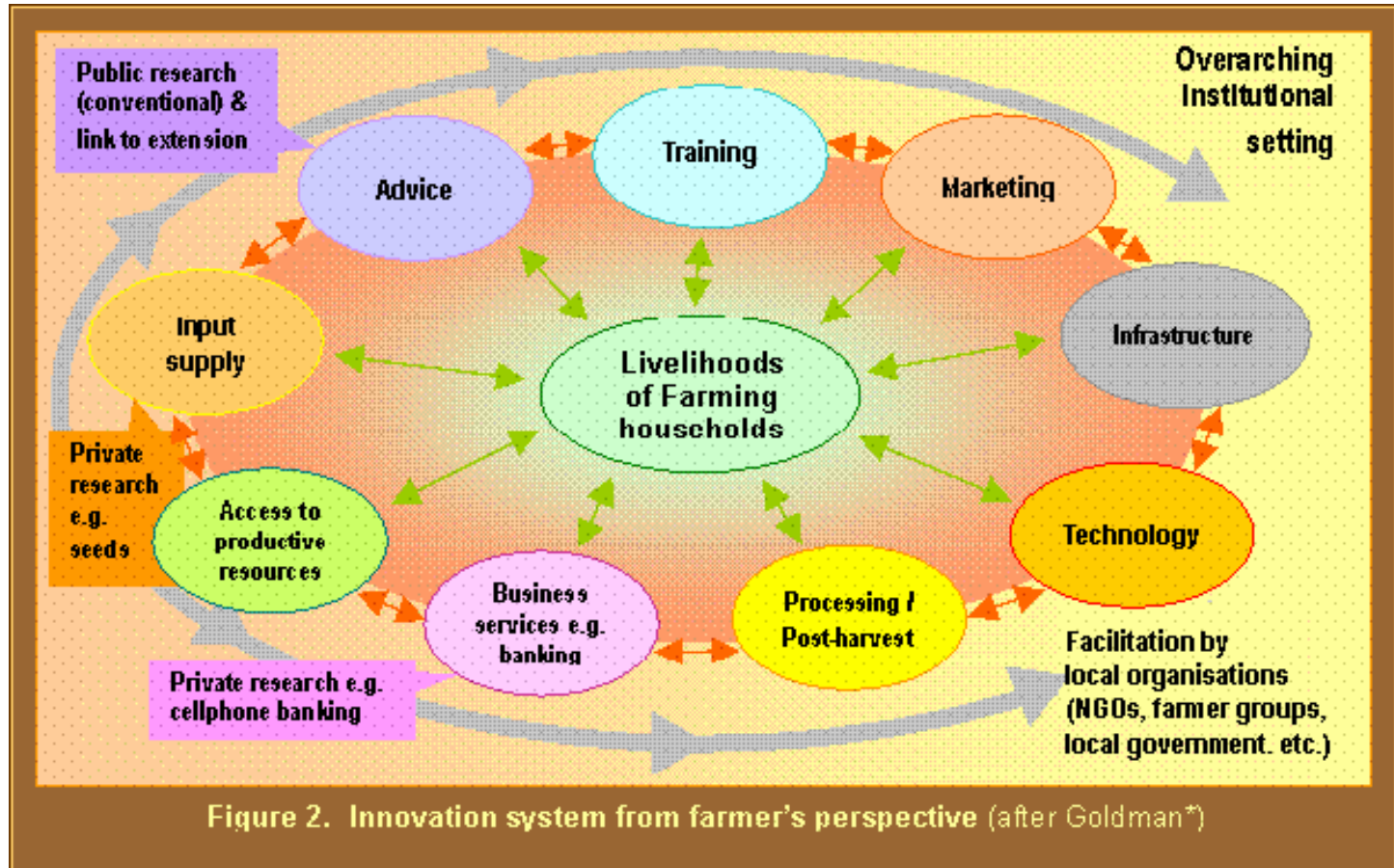
Identify the problem



The complex model



The innovation model



Post-Harvest Innovation Learning Alliance (PHILA):

<http://www.nri.org/projects/PHILA/innovationsystems.html>

RAPID framework

External Influences

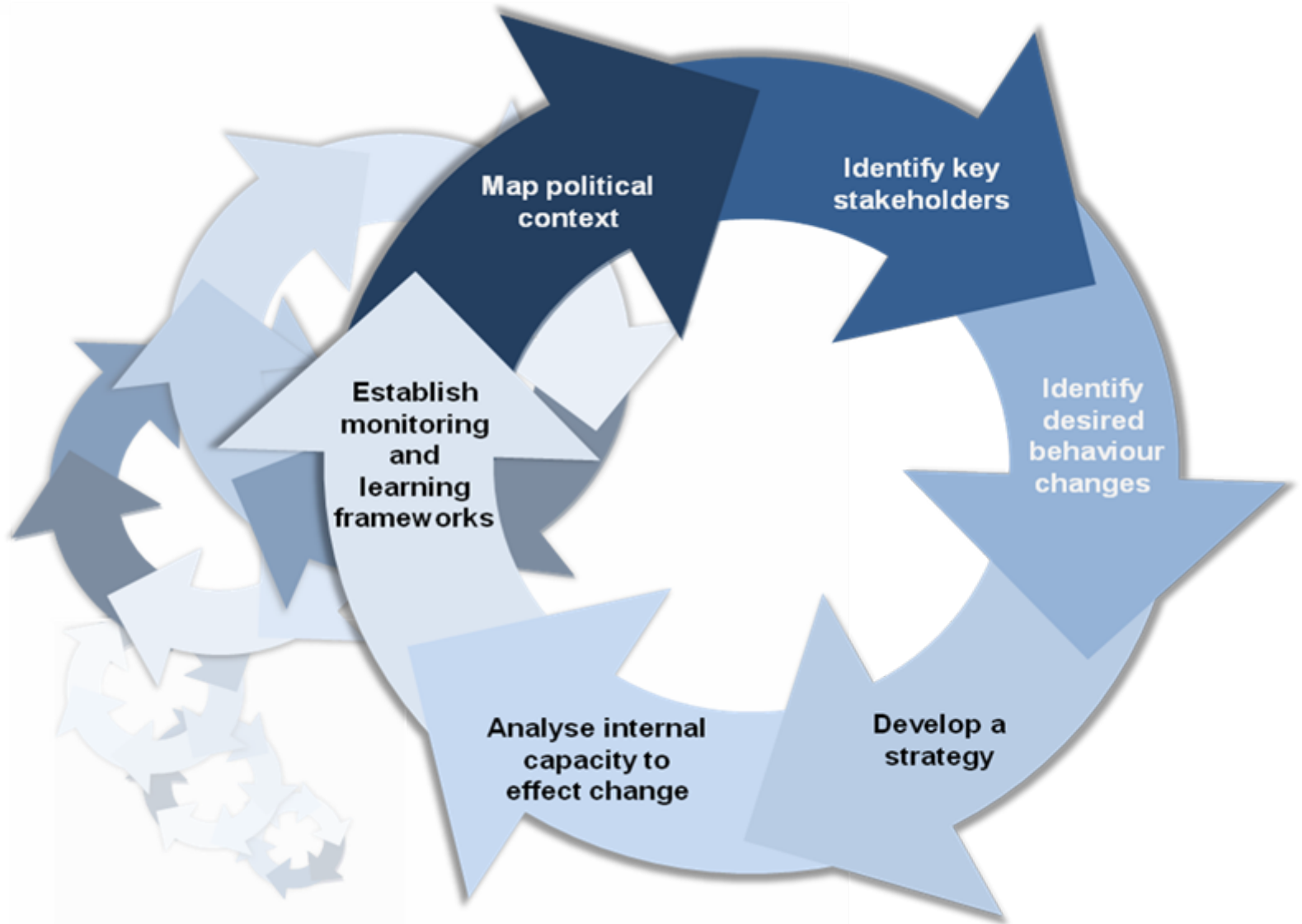
Socio-economic and cultural influences, donor policies etc

The **political context** – political and economic structures and processes, culture, institutional pressures, incremental vs radical change etc.

The **links** between policy and research communities – networks, relationships, power, competing discourses, trust, knowledge etc.

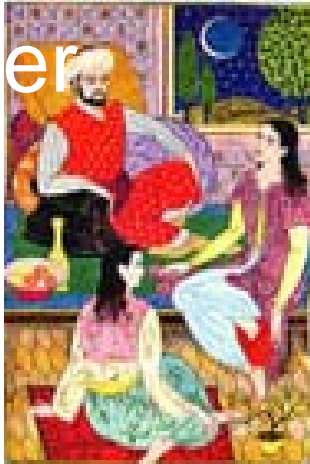
The **evidence** – credibility, the degree it challenges received wisdom, research approaches and methodology, simplicity of the message, how it is packaged etc

ROMA Approach

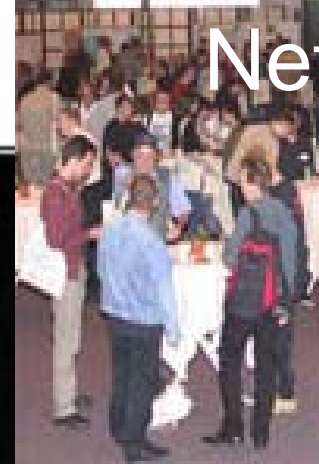


Policy entrepreneur

Storyteller



Networker



Engineer



Researcher



Fixer

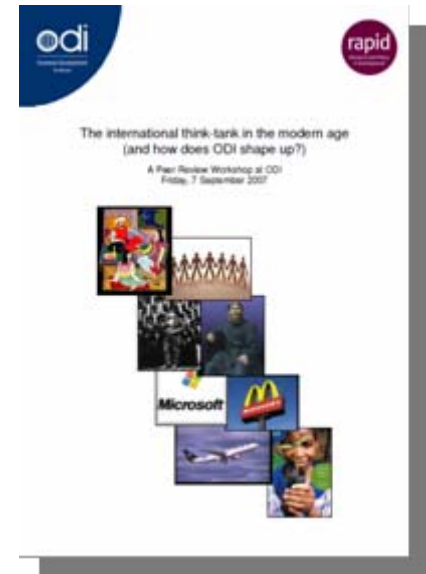


Types of organisation

<i>Message based on</i>	Ideology, values or interests	Applied, empirical or synthesis research	Theoretical or academic research	
<i>Mode of work</i>				
Independent research			“Oxbridge”	Academic Research
Consultancy		Internal think tanks, ideological centres, interest groups, NGOs, lobbies	Applied research centres in universities	Analysis Communications Networks
Influence/advocacy	Greenpeace		Chief scientific advisors / Opinion leaders	Media Politics
				<i>Skills</i>
	Politics	Practical	Academic	Space

Successful Think Tanks

- Independence
- High-level narratives
- Shaping the agenda
- Research-based advocacy
- Many successful models
- Similar generic challenges
- Competition, quality, impact
- Focus
- Strong equitable partnerships.
- Funding is no 1 problem – ‘you are what you eat’



Research CD in Africa

- *Individuals*: improving the skills of researchers, policy analysts as well as think tank leaders;
- *Organisations*: improving structures, processes, resources, management and governance;
- *The system*: improving the environment for innovation – both supply and demand



<http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/details.asp?id=2047&title=research-capacity-strengthening-africa>

Approaches

- Tertiary education
- Research partnerships
- Research networks
- Think Tanks
- Bureaucrats and Parliamentarians
- Civil society
- Communication networks
- Innovation systems
- Integrated approaches



Benefits

- Networks
- North-South partnerships
- Dissemination of research papers
- Enrolment in post-graduate education
- Improved research management
- Enhanced research quality
- Enhanced researcher skills.



Challenges

- No long-term commitment
- Limited impact on policy
- Supply-driven
- Weak quality assurance
- Emphasis on N–S partnerships
- Weak gender analysis and balance
- Lack of industry involvement
- Inadequate M&E mechanisms
- Limited institutional strengthening



RAPID Programme

- Promoting evidence-based development policy & practice
- Through
 - Research
 - Advice
 - Public Affairs
 - Partnerships, networks and capacity-building
- Working with:
 - researchers
 - policymakers
 - parliamentarians
 - southern think tanks



for further information see:
www.odi.org.uk/rapid/
www.ebpdn.org

History

- Rebecca Sutton 1999
- GDN BRP projects 2001-03
- Research and advisory work
 - Communication
 - Knowledge production & use
 - Policy engagement
- Civil Society Programme
- Established *ebpdn* 2006
- Collaborative action-research / capacity development
- Internal role



Strategy 2008-2012

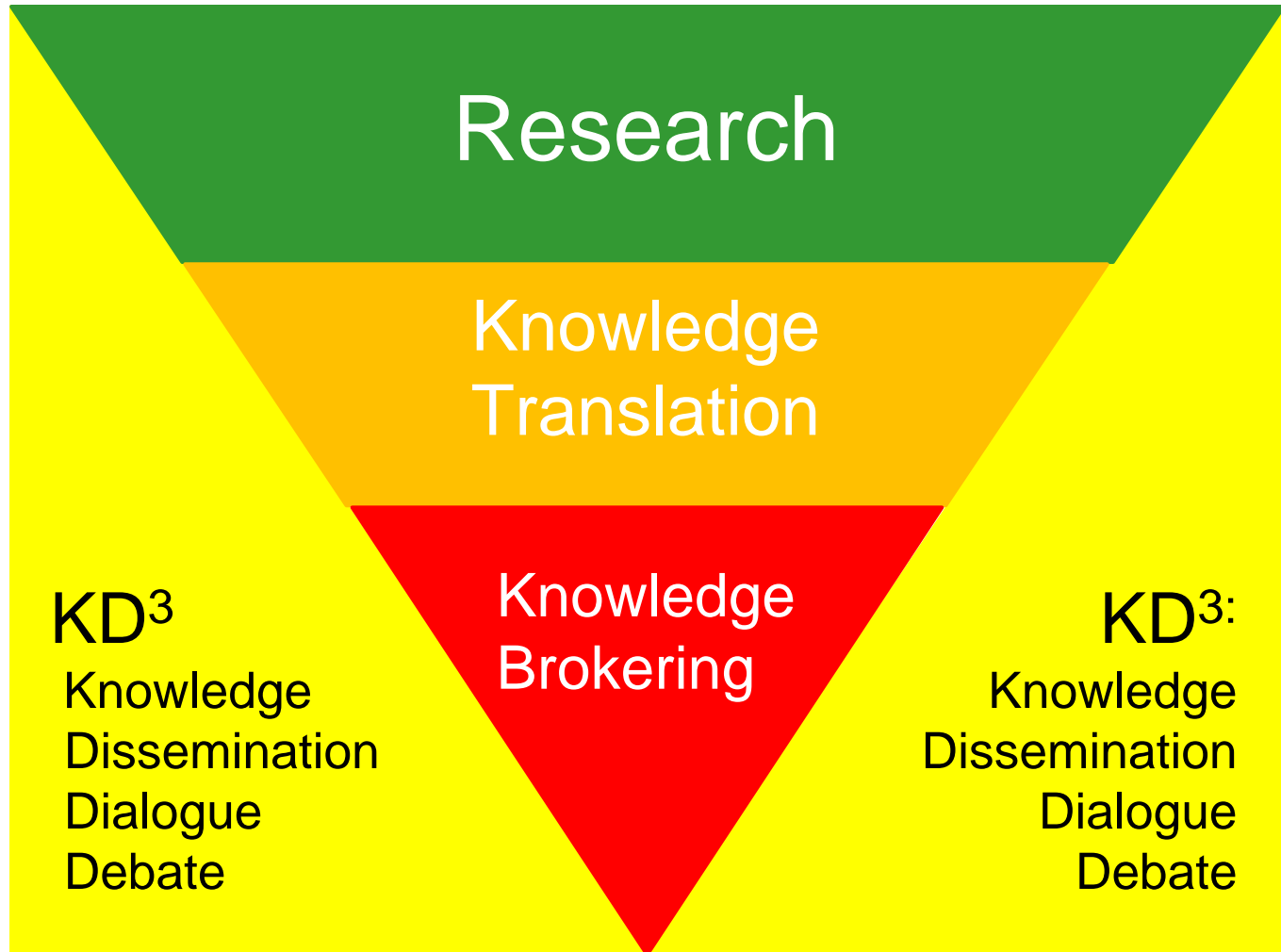
Purpose:

Greater use of research-based evidence for pro-poor development policy in N & S.

Outputs:

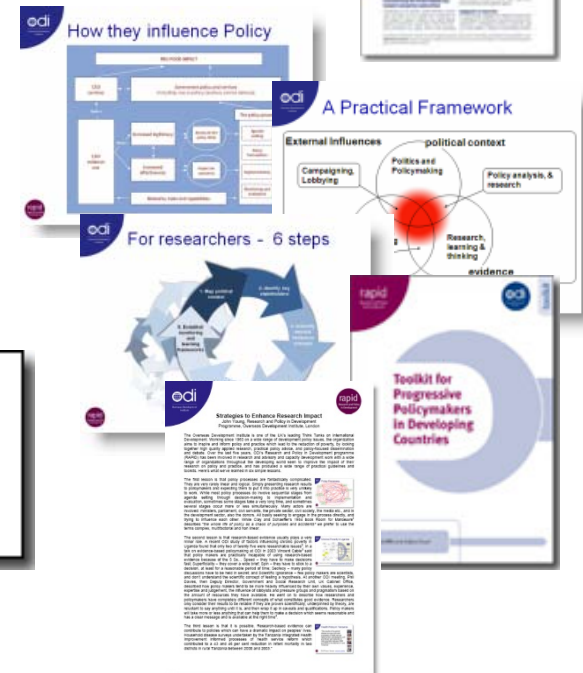
- High quality research, advice & public affairs.
- Network of collaborators established (ebpdn)
- Enhanced capacity of ODI's partners.
- ODI's own capacity enhanced.
- ODI has the necessary internal systems.

General approach



Products

- Research
- Knowledge Translation
- Knowledge Brokering
- KD³



Capacity development

Mutual capacity development through

- Partnerships and collaboration
- Learning-based approaches
- Mixed methods
 - 1:1 exchanges
 - “Socialisation workshops”
 - Practical training courses
 - Collaborative action-research
 - Network facilitation
 - Institutional development
 - Influencing the context

Examples

- Policy workshop for CIDA: *One-off workshops can be effective in the right context.*
- Zambia Land Alliance Land Policy Project: *Demand-driven, builds on local skills, local ownership.*
- *ebpdn: Building coalitions, south-south learning, localising solutions.*
- Long term collaboration: *CAF/VASS, CIPPEC, CEPA, Grupo FARO, ESRF, PDA, MEJN*

Evidence of impact

- Organisations changing processes
- Partner's research quoted in media
- ebpdn broadening horizons
- ebpdn members accessing funding
- RAPID framework in academia
- RAPID approaches incorporated into other organisations' work
- Northern and southern TTs improving internal management systems

CD in IDRC GGP

- Support to 4 IDRC GGP research teams/networks to maximise “impact”.
- Wide range of needs
- Works best if
 - Start from the beginning
 - Issue / client / context – driven
 - Mixed methods
 - Face-to-face then distance mentoring
 - Focus on specific deliverables
 - Address organisational issues



CD in ODI itself

- Increased communications
- Focus on policy impact
- Principles established in strategy
- Investment in themes
- Structural change
- Emphasis on organisational effectiveness
- Investment in information systems integration & business processes

Conclusions

- Donors should spend more for longer
- Context is key – there is no blueprint
- Different needs in different regions
- Many effective organisational forms
- Time & commitment
- Policy-content vs policy process
- Practitioner vs Expert
- Contribution vs Attribution
- Much hinges on individuals
- Things change over time

Further information

- RAPID - www.odi.org.uk/rapid
- *ebpdn* - www.ebpdn.org
- Africa Research Capacity Study (<http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/details.asp?id=2047&title=research-capacity-strengthening-africa>)
- Capacity.ORG on research-policy-practice (http://www.capacity.org/en/journal/archives/research_policy_and_practice)
- Contact: j.young@odi.org.uk
e.mendizabal@odi.org.uk

