



SADRN

SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH NETWORK

Event:

Policymakers' workshop to review capacity building

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indigenous **growth**

About SADRN....intro

- Southern African Development Research Network (SADRN) was launched in August 2007 as a broad-based policy and research network.
- Funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC); managed by Trade and Industrial Policy Strategies (TIPS); with a Steering Committee providing strategic oversight
- SADRN was initiated to:
 - build capacity focussing specifically on research in the southern and eastern African region;
 - increase the supply of research in the region;
 - strengthen evidence-based policy-making.

About SADRN....structure

- Implemented through a network approach partnering with institutions in the region to host thematic working groups (TWGs)
- BIDPA is TWG host for Trade & Poverty
- UoM is TWG host for Trade in Services
- TIPS is TWG host for Industrial Policy

About SADRN.... approach

- TWGs were tasked with increasing supply, as well as policy relevance of research in their respective areas
- Strengthening links between researchers & policymakers
- Providing technical support to young researchers

About SADRN.... outcomes

- In the end a total of 24 research papers were funded
- Some demand driven research was done, e.g. by BIDPA
- Capacity building & training activities were undertaken e.g. mentoring of young researchers; training on trade & poverty analysis methodologies, as well as on industrial policy concepts

About SADRN - results....

Mixed views wrt SADRN success.....

- Over-ambitious, esp. with regards to aims of bldg + utilising existing policy research/development capacity
- Some good research outputs, but much effort required in terms of supporting researchers to refine & improve papers
- Importance of universities in the region to housing research capacity BUT disjuncture between researchers & policymakers remains
- Difficulties encountered in engaging policymakers in a continuous, integrated manner – limited demand driven research; policy impact?
- Some useful training & capacity building, but continuity thereof & transition into policy impact nebulous...

Way forward.....

- Given mixed success of SADRN & similar initiatives, SC agreed that a new model of implementation is reqd
- Importance of aligning such initiatives to clear policy impact critical
- SC proposed a workshop to inform a new way of structuring such policy research & development support

Key objective of workshop....

How do we build & utilise policy research & absorption capacity within the region to maximise its positive impact on development?