Terms of Reference

A. Background

The Global Development Network (GDN) is an International Organization that supports research in economics and social sciences in developing countries and connects researchers and development research institutes globally. Founded in 1999, GDN is headquartered in New Delhi, with offices in Cairo and Washington D.C. GDN’s core business is building research capacity. GDN works in collaboration with 11 Regional Network Partners (RNPs)¹, as well as international donor organizations and governments, research institutes, academic institutions, think tanks and more than 12,500 individual researchers worldwide.

The GDN Board of Directors, along with the World Bank is commissioning an Independent Evaluation² of GDN’s efforts to build research capacity and connect researchers in the developing countries and transition economies to date. The evaluation will seek to provide an objective assessment of the effectiveness³, impact, management and sustainability of GDN’s work. The recommendations and lessons learnt from the evaluation will be used for informing GDN’s Board of Directors and management, GDN’s partners as well as donors.

B. Overview of the Global Development Network

GDN’s vision is to: support researchers in developing and transition countries to generate and share high quality applied social science research to inform policymaking and advance social and economic development.

GDN’s mission is to be: A Global Network that empowers researchers in developing countries, strengthens research skills, and mobilizes research for public policy.

¹ Headquarters of these RNPs are located in Bangladesh, Belgium, Colombia, the Czech Republic, Egypt, Fiji, Japan, Kenya, the Philippines, Ukraine and USA.
² The last such evaluation was completed in December 2007.
³ Effectiveness is used in the sense of ‘development effectiveness’ which subsumes and includes relevance, efficiency and efficacy.
The premise is that significant contributions to development can be made by:

- building developing country researcher’s capacity for presenting evidence-based and analytical Southern perspectives on policy issues to as to strengthen local ownership,
- increasing the participation of researchers in global research networks, and
- cultivating the synergies between researchers and policymakers through policy outreach activities.

GDN has developed the conceptual basis for a sharper, more strategically designed capacity building strategy that aims to effectively respond to emerging external trends, challenges, and opportunities within the framework of its mission, and in doing so, potentially planted the seeds for a sustainable and perennial GDN. The Global Research Capacity Building Program at the core of the strategy (adopted in 2011) is being implemented in an articulated manner, with the redesign of activities such as the Regional Research Competitions, Global Research Projects, the GDNet Program and the Global Development Annual Conference and the introduction of innovative new activities such as the Global Research Competition and the Global Policy Dialogues. These activities intend to incorporate a range of tools which contribute to research capacity building. They include, amongst others, research grants, mentoring, technical and skill-building workshops, peer learning opportunities, South-South Collaboration platforms and the mobilization of academic knowledge to inform public policy. These activities also attempt to enable researcher participation in global research networks and cultivate synergies between researchers and policymakers. GDN’s GDNet Program aims to provide Knowledge Management Services through its online portal for researchers on development knowledge.

GDN\(^4\) aims to work with a variety of key stakeholders who are instrumental in the policy-making process at local, regional and global levels. GDN attempts to promote a vibrant knowledge exchange through its current regional network of researchers (especially early career researchers and mentors), research centers and partners while connecting research with policy-making. GDN’s objective is to be a global network that influences local policies through global exchange and debate.

**C. Evaluation Purpose and Scope**

**Purpose:** In 2013, GDN will have completed fourteen years of building research capacity of researchers in developing countries and transition economies. The GDN Board of Directors is commissioning this Independent Evaluation to provide impartial insight and assessment on the effectiveness and impact of GDN’s strategy and activities. The evaluation will focus on a critical examination of the stated role of GDN and the extent to which it has positioned itself to achieve its research capacity building and networking objectives. This will include consideration of how the GDN’s strategy and activities should be continued or modified. The recommendations and lessons learnt generated from the evaluation exercise are intended to be used in improving GDN’s support to its constituents.

\(^4\) Detailed information can be found on [www.gdn.int](http://www.gdn.int). Additional information on GDN and its activities is provided in Annex 1.
The principal purposes of this evaluation are to:

1. Measure and assess the effectiveness, impact, value for money and sustainability of GDN’s activities to date.
2. Identify lessons learnt and areas for improvement, both for GDN and for the donor community.

Scope: The evaluation will cover all aspects of GDN’s strategy and activities and assess its reach and effectiveness from a global perspective and its outputs, outcomes and impact at an individual level and institutional level (where relevant). It will also assess the extent to which GDN meets the expressed needs of its constituents, namely – researchers in developing countries and transition economies, Regional Network Partners, other partners, donors and the policy community.

The evaluation will cover the time period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2013. The last Independent Evaluation was undertaken till 30 June 2007.

D. Evaluation Questions and Study Design

The evaluation will address the issues and questions in relation to the effectiveness, impact, value for money and sustainability of GDN activities as well as the operational effectiveness of GDN in reaching its stated goals.

The following evaluation issues are illustrative of key evaluation questions in relation to the purpose and objective of the evaluation. The final set of evaluation questions and the articulated study design (including indicators) are to be proposed by the evaluation team in the Inception Report during the preparation for the evaluation, subject to review by GDN. Some of the areas expected to be covered are listed here, but this list is not exhaustive:

• **Overall:** To what extent has GDN achieved its stated objectives?

• **Outcomes, Effectiveness and Impact:** What is the overall impact of GDN activities and how does this compare with what was expected? Did GDN address the intended target constituents and what was the actual coverage? What is the volume and quality of outputs and outcomes of GDN activities? To what extent have activities contributed to research capacity building and networking? To what extent has the research contributed to development? In hindsight, how could the activities have been improved? To what extent were constraints and challenges - both internal and external – faced and addressed in implementing activities?

• **Relevance:** To what extent are GDN’s activities consistent with the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries? To what extent is GDN complementing or competing with other research capacity building initiatives? To what extent are the design, strategic
approaches and priorities appropriate for achieving GDN’s objectives? Are the activities designed to build research capacity and foster networking for researchers in developing countries and transition economies? To what extent have donor’s grant making policies and practices helped or hindered the objective of research capacity building at GDN?

- **Efficiency and Value for Money:** To what extent has GDN been cost-effective? Does GDN reflect value for money? To what extent are there obvious links between significant expenditures and key outputs? To what extent has the financial management, reporting and compliance been adhered to and have they been satisfactory, particularly from the perspective of donors? To what extent does GDN have a clear and realistic plan for resource mobilization and risk diversification?

- **Sustainability:** What is the potential for continuation of the impact and benefits achieved by GDN’s activities? What are the respective roles of GDN and its partners (including Regional Network Partners) in achieving and sustaining the outcomes? To what extent has GDN effectively collaborated with global, regional and country-level partners and stakeholders?

- **Management and Operations:** Is GDN appropriately structured to achieve its stated goal? To what extent have GDN’s management arrangements been effective in facilitating decision making? To what extent does GDN have proper, transparent, accountable and fair management and financial procedures? How effectively and efficiently has GDN carried out its administrative and managerial responsibilities including managing grants and external relationships?

In order to address the suggested evaluation questions, primary data will be collected and secondary information sources will be analyzed. The following components, among others, are envisaged to be part of the design:

- GDN’s monitoring, program and financial data and reports as well as all other relevant documentation to be provided by GDN.
- Surveys and semi-structured interviews with Board members, Regional Network Partner representatives, grantees, mentors, experts and reviewers, donors and other relevant stakeholders – major actors in the field of research capacity building.
- Reviews of funded research output.
- Potential follow up interviews, group discussions or focus groups for obtaining in-depth feedback on issues arising from interviews and surveys.
- Visits to Regional Network Partner organizations or conferences.

**E. Outputs and Final Report**

The following written outputs will be produced:

\[\text{...}\]
• An **Inception Report** to be produced prior to primary data collection will cover the evaluation questions to be answered, a detailed design matrix, and the methodology and work plan to answer the evaluation questions.

• A **Summary Report** to be produced containing findings and recommendations prepared by the Evaluation Team, to be presented to the GDN Board of Directors in January 2014, including a written Management Response from GDN.

• A **Final Report** (more detailed evaluation report) to be prepared by the Evaluation Team. This report will be submitted to the World Bank and GDN Board of Directors in February 2014 and will be shared in the public domain through GDN’s website. The report will also include a written Management Response from GDN. Internal background documentation and analysis on which the findings, conclusions and recommendations are based will be provided in annexes to the Final Report.

The structure of the Final Report should reflect the areas to be covered in the evaluation as described above. Specifically, the Final Report should be a 40-50 page (excluding the Annexes) document organized as follows:

1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction: Statement of evaluation purpose and description of approach and organization
3. General Results: Overall assessment of GDN
4. About GDN
5. Evaluation Criteria, Questions and Final Evaluation Methodology
6. Findings:
   a. Outcomes, Effectiveness and Impact
   b. Relevance
   c. Efficiency and Value for Money
   d. Sustainability
   e. Management and Operations
7. Conclusions and Recommendations: Suggestions for improvements, Lessons Learnt and Recommendations
8. Annex: Introduction to GDN, Terms of Reference, Inception Report, Full Results, Data Sources, List of Interviewees, Data Collection Instruments, Templates, etc.

**F. Qualifications of the Evaluation Team**

The evaluation is expected to be undertaken by a team led by a senior evaluation expert (Lead Evaluator) with demonstrated experience in the area of evaluation, research capacity building and its link to public policy. Senior academics are encouraged to apply.

The qualifications of the Evaluation Team are provided in the Request for Proposals: Independent Evaluation of GDN. Each proposal will divulge any potential or perceived conflicts of interest in undertaking the evaluation.
G. Timeline, Reporting and Budget

**Timeline:** The evaluation timeframe is from June 2013 to January 2014. A timeline, as shown below (is tentative and will depend on the evaluation methodology) reflects the need to complete the evaluation by end-2013:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 2013</td>
<td>Consultation on Terms of Reference for Developing Evaluation Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2013</td>
<td>Desk review of documents and potential travel to the GDN Annual Conference to be held in Manila, the Philippines (19-21 June 2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2013</td>
<td>Finalization of methodology – Inception Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July to October 2013</td>
<td>Data collection and analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 November 2013</td>
<td>Submission of draft report to GDN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 December 2013</td>
<td>Submission of draft Final Report and a Summary Report to GDN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2013</td>
<td>Submission of Management Response and submission of report to GDN Board of Directors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2014</td>
<td>Finalize Final Report incorporating comments from GDN Board of Directors and the World Bank</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reporting:** The Evaluation Team will report to the Evaluation Sub-Committee of GDN’s Board of Directors. As a recipient of funding every year from the World Bank’s Development Grant Facility (DGF), GDN is required to commission independent evaluation every 3-5 years.

The main contacts at GDN will be Prof. Pierre Jacquet, President and Ms. Savi Mull, Coordinator – Monitoring and Evaluation. The Final Report will be submitted to GDN’s Board of Directors and the World Bank.

**Budget:** The budget for the Independent Evaluation is US$ 75,000. The budget amount includes fees for the evaluation team, local taxes, data collection and analysis, travel and miscellaneous expenditures.
ANNEX 1: INTRODUCTION TO GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

The Global Development Network (GDN) is an International Organization that supports research in economics and social sciences in developing countries, and connects researchers and development research institutes globally.

GDN’s Activities

The Global Research Capacity Building Program

GDN’s Global Research Capacity Building Program™ helps social scientists in developing and transition countries develop a mix of skills and knowledge required to become high-performing researchers. This capacity development is a learning and experiential process that progressively builds the aptitude of Southern researchers to become key players in the emerging global research environment, by effectively undertaking and communicating high quality and policy-relevant research in a globally interconnected way.

Through this program, GDN provides:

- Both short-term financial support to successful applicants, as well as long-term support to the best researchers;
- Intellectual support by means of academic mentoring and privileged access to knowledge services; and
- Inspiration and moral support by participating in global scholarly networking venues and lifelong membership, in the largest and most active global network of researchers and research institutes in development.

Ongoing and Current Projects: At A Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Number of Grants</th>
<th>Grant Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional Research Competitions</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>Average size approximately US$ 10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Research Competition</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Grants size up to US$ 32,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening Institutions to Improve Public Expenditure Accountability</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>GBP 2 million in total grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Policy Research to Inform Agricultural Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Approximately US$ 3 million including grants and policy outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanization and Development: Delving Deeper into the Nexus</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Grant size up to US$ 30,,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varieties of Governance: Effective Public Service Delivery</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Total project size US$ 2.16 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regional Research Competitions (RRC) – Phase 1

The RRCs are executed in partnership with 7 of GDN’s 11 Regional Network Partners who are located in different parts of the world. These partners utilize GDN grant funds to identify and support local research talent in their regions. GDN’s RNPs are:

- African Economic Research Consortium (AERC)
- Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development (BREAD)
- Center for Economic Research and Graduate Education – Economics Institute (CERGE-EI)
- East Asian Development Network (EADN)
- Economics Education and Research Consortium (EERC)
- Economic Research Forum (ERF)
- European Development Research Network (EUDN)
- GDN-Japan
- Latin American and Caribbean Economic Association (LACEA)
- Oceania Development Network (ODN)
- South Asia Network of Economic Research Institutes (SANEI)

Global Research Competition (GRC) – Phase 2

GDN launched the pilot round of the GRC in April 2012. The research themes, in line with the prevailing and understudied global development issues are Education and Gender, Food Security and Political, Economic and Social Transformations. Six teams covering 11 developing countries won grants of up to US$ 32,000 each to undertake research for up to 18 months.

Global Research Projects (GRPs) – Phase 3

**Strengthening Institutions to Improve Public Expenditure Monitoring**

The five-year project ‘Strengthening Institutions to Improve Public Expenditure Accountability’ was launched in late 2008 and is implemented in technical partnership with the Results for Development Institute (R4D), Washington DC. The project builds the capacities of 14 partners in 14 developing countries to monitor and analyze public expenditures, processes and impacts to engage with policymakers by providing evidence of efficiency, equity and costs of spending for enhanced public service delivery. GDN has committed over GBP 2 million in grants under the GRP.

**Supporting Policy Research to Inform Agricultural Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia**

The project, Supporting Policy Research to Inform Agricultural Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, aims to help shape North-South and South-South debates on agricultural policies. Approximately US$ 3 million has been deployed under the project for policy outreach. The project explores innovative ways of bridging the research and policy gap. The project supports 10 research teams and spans 14 developing countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.
**Urbanization and Development: Delving Deeper Into the Nexus**

The project, Urbanization and Development: Delving Deeper into the Nexus, provides research grants to support comparative and systematic research that looks across continents and brings together experts from Latin America and Asia respectively to address fundamental issues on urbanization and development, as well as, opportunities for researchers from these regions to engage in meaningful academic collaborations in a globally interconnected way. The project currently supports 5 research teams representing 7 countries in Latin America and Asia with grants up to US$ 30,000.

**Varieties of Governance: Effective Public Service Delivery**

The three-year US$ 2.16 million project, Varieties of Governance: Effective Public Service Delivery, explores the role of formal and informal institutions, at both country and sector level, in the effectiveness (or lack) of public service delivery in the areas of basic education, water supply and transport infrastructure (roads). Sixteen multidisciplinary research teams covering 30 countries analyze the effects of governance mechanisms on service delivery through a political economy lens.

**Global Development Awards and Medals Competition**

The Global Development Awards and Medals Competition (AMC) is a unique competition for promoting research on development and scaling up innovative projects. The annual Global Development Awards and Medals Competition (AMC) recognizes and rewards excellence in policy-oriented development research and deserving social projects from developing countries and transition economies from across the world. Launched with support from the Government of Japan, the AMC provides financial grants and technical capacity building of Southern researchers and NGOs through mentoring and technical supervision by subject matter experts. Every year, 12 awards are given to researchers and development practitioners.

**The Annual Global Development Conference**

GDN’s annual event brings together researchers, corporate leaders, and political figures to discuss important development issues under an umbrella theme decided upon by GDN. It provides an opportunity for young researchers to present their work to a wider audience, and the venue rotates to a different region each year to underscore GDN’s global viewpoint. The conference proceedings are published and distributed to a wide network. The GDN annual conferences attract more than 300 participants every year.

**GDNet: GDN’s Knowledge Services Portal**

GDNet, the knowledge service from GDN, aims to supports researchers from developing countries and transition economies to contribute and debate on ideas in development thinking,
policy and practice by brokering knowledge and building capacity in research communications. The GDNet Knowledgebase brings together and communicates policy-relevant research from the Global South through a collection of thematic and regional windows. It includes summaries of more than 16,500 research papers and profiles of over 12,500 southern researchers.

More information on GDN and its activities can be found on [www.gdn.int](http://www.gdn.int).