

SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH SYSTEMS

*Investigating the challenges of
doing research in developing countries*

About the Program

The production, diffusion and use of locally-grounded social science research is key to democratic debate and planning for sustainable development. The Global Development Network (GDN) has launched an innovative program to investigate the challenges of doing quality social-science research in developing countries. Informed by a two-year pilot in 11 countries (2014-2016), this program partners with national research institutions in developing countries to assess local social science research systems.

Building on the current discourse on knowledge systems, the program puts forward a full-fledged definition of what a research system is, and operationalizes it to investigate the national environment for social science research in three main dimensions: context, actors, and systemic features.

Assessments are completed by applying a Doing Research Assessment tool, i.e., a method for systematically analyzing the strengths, weaknesses, challenges and bottlenecks that affect quality and policy-relevant social science research. The program represents an innovative opportunity to learn about, and act on, the status and future of social sciences in developing countries.

The program is structured in three interrelated steps: implementing the Doing Research Assessments at the national level; curating a global dataset and analytical benchmarking of research systems; and developing practical resources to support action on strengthening research systems. The program will produce both national and global reports, all datasets will be available in open access, and all outputs will be translated in accessible outreach material to support awareness and action on social science research.

Doing Research Assessments are underway in 2019 in Bolivia, Indonesia, Myanmar, and Nigeria. GDN is competitively identifying on a rolling basis additional institutions and funding to implement the Doing Research Assessment in more countries.

See advisors and national focal points overleaf

Program

Doing Research:
Assessing & Benchmarking
Social Science Research Systems

Pilot Funding

US\$ 785,000 from the
Bill & Melinda Gates
Foundation, Agence
Française de Développement,
French Ministry of Foreign Affairs
and International Development,
and Swiss Agency for
Development Cooperation

Scale-up Funding

US\$ 143,000 from the
International Development
Research Centre

Location

Developing Countries
2019 | Bolivia, Indonesia,
Myanmar and Nigeria

Duration

2014 - 2016 | Pilot
2017 onwards | Scale up in
developing countries

Global Advisory Committee

- ✓ Fred Carden, Founder, Using Evidence and Former Director - Evaluation, International Development Research Centre
- ✓ Anindya Chatterjee, Regional Director Asia, International Development Research Centre
- ✓ Shanta Devarajan, Senior Director for Development Economics (DEC), World Bank
- ✓ Gargee Ghosh, Director, Development Policy & Finance, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- ✓ Patrick Guillaumont, President, Foundation for Studies and Research on International Development (FERDI)
- ✓ Heide Hackmann, Chief Executive Officer, International Science Council
- ✓ Jon Andri Lys, Executive Secretary, House of Academics, Sciences Switzerland (KFPE)
- ✓ Lynn V. Meek, Professor, University of Melbourne and Founder, LH Martin Institute
- ✓ Eunice Muthengi, Deputy Head, Department for International Development (DFID) East Africa Research Hub
- ✓ Aleko Sarris, Emeritus Professor, Department of Economics, University of Athens
- ✓ Nelson Torto, Executive Director, African Academy of Sciences
- ✓ James Wilsdon, Vice-Chair, International Network for Government Science Advice and Professor, Research Policy, Sheffield University

National Focal Points

- ✓ Bolivia: Center for the Studies of Social and Economic Realities (CERES)
Principal investigator: Luis Pablo Cuba
Scientific and Technical Advisor: Hebe Vessuri, Emeritus Researcher, Venezuelan Institute of Scientific Research and Visiting Professor, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
- ✓ Indonesia: Centre for Innovation Policy and Governance (CIPG)
Principal investigator: Inaya Rakhmani
Scientific and Technical Advisor: Fred Carden, Founder, Using Evidence and Former Director - Evaluation, International Development Research Centre
- ✓ Myanmar: Centre for Economic and Social Development (CESD)
Principal Investigator: Ngu Wah Win
Scientific and Technical Advisor: Charlotte Galloway, Director, Australian National University's Myanmar Research Centre
- ✓ Nigeria: National Center for Technology Management (NACETEM)
Principal investigator: Abiodun Egbetokun
Scientific and Technical Advisor: Andy Frost, Head, Food and Markets Department, Natural Resources Institute